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Editorial

Dipane Hlalele, Adre le Roux and June Palmer

This special edition of the *Journal of Education* emanates from presentations of the 2015 South African Education Research Association (SAERA) conference held at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein. SAERA was established to bring together South African education academics and researchers into a unified research organization. The association provides, amongst others, an opportunity to promote research and academic collaboration, link research policy, theory and practice, encourage the promotion of research quality, and help develop the next generation of researchers.

The theme of the conference from which the articles published emanated is: *Strengthening Educational Research for Sustainable Futures*. The conference succeeded in providing space to reflect on the nature, purpose and role of educational research at present, in anticipation of unpredictable and complex futures. Securing education for sustainable futures has to be understood within the context of complex ecologies that involve historical, structural, political, environmental, and ethical dimensions.

The peer-reviewed articles in this edition tackle the theme of the conference in various ways. Grounded on postcolonial theory and drawing from the move by the South African government at the turn of the 21st century to spearhead the conception of what then President Thabo Mbeki referred to as an African Renaissance, Marshall Maposa argues that while the macro-level of power produces the dominant discourses, the micro-level of the citizen also contributes to the discourses that permeate the history textbooks. The author employed critical discourse analysis to analyse a sample of four contemporary South African history textbooks with a focus on the chapters that deal with post-colonial Africa. At a descriptive level of analysis, the textbooks construct the African being as five-dimensional: the spatial, the physical, the philosophical, the cultural and the experiential notions. The article concludes that there are ambiguities and the imprecisions that characterised most of the constructions of the African being in the analysed textbooks.

Lesley Wood and Merner Meyer draw our attention to the criticality of participation in service-learning through Creative Arts Education and submit that participatory approaches are likely to yield win-win learning opportunities for campuses and communities. This article reports on attempts to create a service-learning experience that allowed students and community youth to learn with and from each other. Data were generated in four cycles of a participatory action research design, using visual, art and text-based strategies. The thematic analysis indicated that the process gave participants a better understanding of each other's lived realities; that it helped to level out unequal power relations; and that the reciprocal learning boosted development on personal and professional levels.

In search of *learning for sustainable futures*, Tendayi Marovah and Melanie Walker advanced arguments for a human development approach to citizenship education. The paper is divided into five sections which start with a conceptualisation of sustainability followed by a brief discussion of underlying four human development values as applied to education. The values are equity, participation, empowerment and sustainability. The third section provides an overview of the study methodology. Thereafter, the paper presents empirical data demonstrating how policy stakeholders experience the operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies. The last section encompasses a synthesis of policy processes and practices showing how the human development framework provides a helpful lens for interpreting the various complexities and contradictions that emerge from the data, and so potentially opens up new avenues for interventions that seek to advance learning for sustainable futures.

In addition, Frans Kruger traverses *posthumanism and educational research for sustainable futures*. Tapping into Karen Barad's (2007) concept of intra-action and Rosi Braidotti's (2013) nomadic posthumanism, this article to problematised the notion of educational research for sustainable futures, rejected the hierarchical dualism of Cartesian objectivism, which places the human above the non-human, and challenged the stable self-contained subject that presuppose a dialectical relation to the other on which most educational research is premised. Instead, in drawing on the work of Barad and Braidotti, subjectivity is posited as always in the process of becoming-other through the actualisation of new relations. In light of such a subjectivity, the article pondered the implications for educational research for sustainable futures.

Furthermore, four avenues of thought are proposed on how educational research informed by posthumanism could contribute towards sustainable futures.

Eureta Rosenberg, Presha Ramsarup, Sibusisiwe Gumede and Heila Lotz-Sisitka added a somewhat ‘strong specialisation’ tweak to sustainable futures. The authors argue that education has contributed to a society-wide awareness of environmental issues, and we are increasingly confronted with the need for new ways to generate energy, save water and reduce pollution. New forms of work are emerging and government, employers and educators need to know what ‘green’ skills South Africa needs and has. This creates a new demand for ‘green skills’ research. The authors propose that this new knowledge field – like some other educational fields – requires a transformative approach to research methodology. In conducting reviews of existing research, the authors found that a transformative approach requires a reframing of key concepts commonly used in researching work and learning; multi-layered, mixed method studies; researching within and across diverse knowledge fields including non-traditional fields; and both newly configured national platforms and new conceptual frameworks to help us integrate coherently across these. Critical realism is presented as a helpful underpinning for such conceptual frameworks, and implications for how universities prepare educational researchers are flagged.

The final paper by Nimi Hoffmann, Yusuf Sayed and Azeem Badroodien reports on the initial results from a representative survey of teachers in the Western Cape regarding their views of professionalism and accountability. The authors note that this is the first survey of its kind in South Africa. Preliminary analysis of the data from 115 public schools suggests that teachers at no-fee schools, who are predominantly black women, report facing the greatest institutional burdens and the greatest need for institutional support, particularly from the state. Related to this, they tend to stress pastoral care-work as central to being a professional, while those at fee-paying schools stress their claims to pedagogical knowledge and job prestige. This indicates that teachers at different schools are subject to different and unequal institutions (or rules), where the kind of school that teachers work at often reflects their race and gender positioning. This implies that the concept of a bifurcated education system, characterised by different production functions and outcomes for learners, should be expanded to include teachers and deepened to include institutions.

At its fourth conference in Cape Town towards the end of October 2016, SAERA once again provides a platform for members to engage head-on with South Africa's educational challenges, and to reimagine a system within which the children, students and adults of our country can flourish. It will focus on institutional cultures, practice-based teaching and learning endeavours, and the centrality of curriculum and pedagogy in revitalising teaching and learning. The conference aims to contribute to a knowledge base that builds on research being done to reimagine education in the light of the complex and diverse challenges that confront education for sustainable change. It seeks to consider research that goes beyond schooling by also addressing current matters concerning higher, further and adult education. The conference focuses, among others, on questions of policy, language and literacy, educational psychology, inclusion, social justice and equity

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The construction of the African being in South African history textbooks

Marshall Maposa

Abstract

This study is rooted in the move by the South African government at the turn of the 21st century to spearhead the conception of what then President Thabo Mbeki referred to as an African Renaissance. This move entailed cultivating an African consciousness; education being one of the key tools. With textbooks still playing a critical role in the education system, I analysed South African National Curriculum Statement-compliant history textbooks in order to understand the construction of the African being. I employed a critical discourse analysis methodology to analyse a sample of four contemporary South African history textbooks with a focus on the chapters that deal with post-colonial Africa. At a descriptive level of analysis, the textbooks construct the African being as five-dimensional: the spatial, the physical, the philosophical, the cultural and the experiential notions. The interpretation is that the African being is constructed as multidimensional. I use postcolonial theory to explain that while the macro-level of power produces the dominant discourses, the micro-level of the citizen also contributes to the discourses that permeate the history textbooks. Indeed, the production of textbooks is influenced by multifarious factors that when the discourses from the top and from below meet at the meso-level of textbook production, there is not just articulation but also resistance, thus producing heteroglossic representation of the African being.

Background, contextualization and introduction

By the turn of the 21st century, the then South African President, Thabo Mbeki, had espoused the concept of an African Renaissance as one of the objectives of his country's domestic and foreign policy (Mbeki, 1999). Originally articulated by Cheik Anta Diop from the 1946 to 1960, the African renaissance, in its idealistic sense, envisaged a marked shift in the form of African consciousness on which African unity, renewal and development can be based (Diop, 2000). Although the appeal of the African Renaissance endeavour has diminished since the end of Mbeki's tenure in 2008, one of its significant impacts was the transmutation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002.

Mbeki's positioning of South Africa in the African Renaissance project is noteworthy if one considers South Africa's position on the African continent. South Africa boasts one of the continent's largest economies and its relative political stability has earned the country significant influence. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that Mbeki is quoted to have said on his return from exile: "It was very clear that something had happened in South African society, something that didn't happen in any other African society. The repeated observation is that 'These South Africans are not quite African, they're European'" (Adebajo, 2004, p.175). Therefore, Mbeki's (1996) *I am an African* speech can be viewed as rebuttal of the notions of South African exceptionalism on the continent. It should be noted that the issue of the Africanness in South Africa is topical even in the present-day and more discussion of scholarly arguments on Africanness will be done in the literature review section of this article.

Discourses at the macro-level also echo the scholarly arguments. For example, President Zuma is quoted to have claimed: "Even if I live in the highest building, I am an African . . . Because if you are not an African, you cannot be a white, then what are you" (*City Press*, 3/11/2012)? Yet, despite such an unequivocal pronouncement, the same man brewed a storm with this contentious statement on debate over e-tolls: "We [South Africans] can't think like Africans in Africa. It's not some national road in Malawi" (*Mail & Guardian*, 22/10/ 2013).

The two speeches by Zuma quoted above show two things about discourses on Africanness at the macro-level. On one hand, they uphold the Africanness of South Africans, the connotation being that Black South Africans are African. This discourse is not just unofficial, seeing as official documents in South Africa mainly refer to Africanness with racial connotations. For example the census results by Statistics South Africa (2012) stated that the racial groups found in South Africa are Black African, Coloured, Indian/Asian, White and Other. These official categories support the use of the term African with reference to Black people. On the other hand, the second speech questions the Africanness of South Africans (including Blacks). This contradiction can then be taken to be reflecting the contending discourses on Africanness in South Africa. It should be noted though, that there also exists another contending discourse on how everyone who lives in South Africa is sometimes referred to as African. This is the case with Thabo Mbeki's *I am an African* speech and the case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup during which slogans such as 'We are all African' were promoted and all participants and visitors were told they

were ‘Welcome home’ on the pretext that Africa is from where all humankind, in an evolutionary sense came.¹

Discourses on Africanness are also evident at the micro-level. For example, one Khaya Dlanga wrote on news24.com (4 January, 2011) that “White people are African too!” This was in response to an article by Sentletse Diakanyo titled “We are not all Africans, black people are!” These social media engagements provide evidence of the debates on Africanness in the South African context. Evidently, there is no agreement on what constitutes an African being. While people do not necessarily always share the same point of view, there is need for a sustainable conception of Africanness considering South Africans have to interact with other Africans.

The interaction between South Africans and people from other African countries has increased as a result of intensified immigration. According to Statistics South Africa (2013), 141 550 temporary resident permits were granted by the Department of Home Affairs in 2012 alone, with the top two contributing countries being Zimbabwe and Nigeria. This excludes the large numbers of illegal immigrants that have found their way into South Africa as economic and political refugees. There has never been any official confirmation of the number of illegal immigrants, but the South African Police Service (2009) estimated the number to be as much as six million, the majority being Africans. Considering the schisms that result from immigration, conceptions of the African being are important. Harris (2002) assembled a collection of newspaper articles representing African foreigners as “a disease or a plague descending onto the country” (p.176). Not only do the media influence its audience; they also write to satisfy a market, meaning that these negative discourses might be acceptable in certain sections of the society. This has been manifested by spurts of xenophobic violence, the worst of which was in 2008 when approximately 62 people died (McKnight, 2008). It should be cautioned though that xenophobia is not an exclusively South African phenomenon as there are numerous other cases throughout the African continent and the world (Tadjo, 2008; Duponchel, 2013).

The issues raised above reflect some of the discourses on Africanness within the South African context at both the macro and micro levels. One of the ways through which the tensions evident in such discourses can be eased is through education, particularly school history. Even the then Department of Education

¹ An example is the Mogale City website which was headlined ‘WELCOME HOME: Mogale City welcomes visitors, football fans and the 2010 FIFA World Cup teams to the city of human origin.’

(2000, p.6) conceded that while everyone possessed a form of consciousness, “the value of the formal study of history is that it aims to develop this latent consciousness into a conscious consciousness”. This means that school history can also develop within learners an African consciousness. The officially sanctioned historical narratives can be found in textbooks. However, my literature search did not show any study that has been done on how history textbooks construct the African being. It is on the basis of such a background that I undertook this research with the following key question in mind: How is the African being constructed in contemporary South African History textbooks? The aim of the study was therefore to analyse the textbooks and understand the nature of the African being that is constructed therein.

Literature review

I consulted literature that deals with discourses on Africanness, which is, in other cases, referred to as Africanity (Dei, 1994; Mazrui, 2005) or African personhood (Fairfax, 2011). Literature shows that the African being is not a straightforward construct. Through history, the criteria that have been used to qualify one as an African ranged from geographical location, race, language, culture and attitude to experiences (Armah, 1999).

At a simple level, reference to geographical location or habitation is often used to determine who a person is. In this sense, for instance, an inhabitant of Africa is basically then regarded as an African. While this is an easy criterion for Africanness, it should be noted it has its complications. To confirm this, Van Dijk (2006, p.19) quotes South African writer, Zakes Mda to have asserted that, “until about 100 years ago the inhabitants of the continent did not generally refer to themselves as Africans . . . They recognised and celebrated primarily various identities that were based on ethnicity, clan, family, gender and class.” And with increased globalisation and migration, defining Africans by geographical location is now open to further criticism. In an effort to qualify Africanness, Mazrui (2005, p.70) maintains that all indigenous inhabitants of Africa can be classified as “Africans of the soil”. In reference to the same classification, Dei (1994, p.3) labels himself “a continental African by birth.” While such classifications are meant to reduce uncertainty, both of them unwittingly have a connotation that there are Africans of various kinds.

A related understanding is that Africanness is determined by origin, implying that everyone who is of African heritage is an African. The problem with referring to origin from Africa is that “not only is Africa ‘the cradle of humankind’ but, from a genetic perspective, all people continue to be Africans – at least more than anything else” (Van Dijk, 2006, p.25). While this argument has had scientific support, it remains problematic because there are other aspects – such as race and culture – that continue to be used to differentiate people of the world.

Regarding race, Dei (1994, p.5) categorically states that “African is a race.” This is in line with Pan-Africanism which also applies Africanness synonymously with Blackness (Mboukou, 1983). However, Blackness in itself is an ambiguous concept and it may mean different things in, say the USA and South Africa (Hollinger, 2005). These differences have meant that some people would then be viewed to be more African than others. An example of a kind of hierarchy developed to determine Africanness is illustrated by Mazrui’s (2005) typology where native Africans referred to as Africans of the soil, while those in the Diaspora are “Africans of the blood” (p.70). The position of Arab Africans then becomes tricky considering that some race theories regard them to be of “Caucasoid stock” thus view them as European in origin (Fage and Tordoff, 2002, p.7).

Race issues also get entangled with other criteria such as language and culture. For instance the term Bantu,² in varying contexts, has assumed both linguistic and racial designations (Fage and Tordoff, 2002). Therefore, the use of language proficiency as a determination of Africanness is evidently fraught with problems. According to Mazrui (2006, p.68) a family only becomes African American “when it loses its ancestral language”. Using this logic a European who settles in Africa and adopts an African spoken language will have lost their Europeaness to become African and as long as they speak their home language they remain European.

Culture has also been considered as a criterion for Africanness. Mamdani (1999, p.129) contends that there is what can be called an African culture and the Creolised people in southern and east Africa are culturally “neither wholly African nor wholly non-African”. The claim here is that, in the case of South Africa, people that are categorised as Coloured are not culturally African.

2

As noted earlier, Bantu literally refers to people, although some linguists have adopted it as a linguistic classification. Under Apartheid it was a collective noun for black people.

This contention is not limited to mixed-race people only, with North Africans being viewed as culturally separate from Sub-Saharan Africans (Grinker and Steiner, 2005). Nevertheless, Dei (1994, p.4) claims that Africans “wherever they may be” have cultural similarities that can be identified in “social structure, music, burial customs, and folk beliefs”. However, not all scholars agree. William (2003, p.243) warns that “talk of African identity in terms of culture is at best precarious”. And Appiah (1992, p.26) further declares that:

Whatever Africans share, we do not have a common traditional culture, common languages, a common religious or conceptual vocabulary . . . we do not even belong to a common race . . . The central cultural fact of African life remains not the sameness of Africa’s cultures, but their enormous diversity.

There is also a tendency to refer to experience as the missing African common denominator. The argument would be that Africans share a common history (usually in reference to Western colonisation) and that experience has shaped them to be who they are to the extent of determining an expected African behaviour. William (2003, p.244) claims that an African should have the memory “of a member of an exploited race”. While it might be tempting to generalise the African experience of colonisation, it should be noted that the actual experiences were not the same and lasted for differing spells.

The loopholes identified by the arguments thus far show how scholars do not concur on what defines an African being. It also shows that not everything that is in Africa is always regarded as African. What is also evident is that views on the African being have been changing over time. Appiah (1992, p.73) quotes the novelist Chinua Achebe to have captured this dilemma, albeit with positivity: “There isn’t a final identity that is African. But, at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence. And it has a certain context and meaning.” This optimistic argument is in line with Ottaway’s (1999) view that invented identities such as Africa and the African can actually become real. It is therefore important to research on how much Africanness is made real in history textbooks. as noted in the introduction, there is a gap in literature on the construction of the African being in history textbooks.

History textbooks have been a central part of the teaching and learning of the subject for over five hundred years in Western education (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991; Sleeter and Grant, 1991; Mirkovic and Crawford, 2003; Crawford, 2000; Nicholls, 2006). The South African education system is still also heavily reliant on textbooks as was demonstrated by the Limpopo textbook saga whereby some schools in the province were bereft of textbooks

leading to government investigation, not just in Limpopo, but in other provinces such as the Eastern Cape (Madonsela, 2013; Chisholm, 2013).

The language that is used in the history textbooks is crucial to the construction of what Naseem (2008, p.25) refers to as “educational discourse”. The language being referred to includes the “use of metaphors, codes, previously accepted conceptions, connotations, and other semantic devices” (Frier, 1998, p.196). The words in the History textbooks are connected with various concepts, consciousness included, and through an analysis of the language in the textbook a researcher can discover how the concepts are constructed and the nature of the text book producer’s thought processes (Donlan, 1980; Foster and Crawford, 2006). In order to understand the language, one should have an understanding of the meaning of text, be it verbal or visual LaSpina, 1998; Janks, 1997; Väisänen, 2008. Such scholarly views therefore guided me to analyse South African history textbooks in order to understand their construction of the African being.

Theoretical framework

In this study, ‘post-colonial’ refers to a temporal marker while ‘postcolonial’ refers to the theory (St-Pierre, 1997). The major contributors in the postcolonial theory include Fanon (1961), Said (1978), Spivak (1993) and Bhabha (1994). They challenge the dominant Western discourses that they claim to be the foundation of colonialism. Critics, however, warn that the effects of colonialism cannot be wiped out and “the return to one’s ‘native’ land is a paradigmatic impossibility” (Baker Jr., Dovey, Jolly, and Deinert, 1995, p.1047). This therefore makes hybridity a characteristic of postcoloniality (the condition of being postcolonial). In Mbembe’s view, (as cited in Hitchcock, 1997, p.236), this “‘chaotic plurality’, one in which there is conflict and contradiction are the very mark of postcolonial ‘being’”.

Postcolonialism generally refers to studies engaging with the legacy of European colonial systems. There are different forms of postcolonialism and this study is theoretically framed within discursive postcolonialism. According to Hitchcock (1997) the uniqueness of discursive postcolonialism is in that it “assesses the condition of postcoloniality as a discursive construction” (p.233). Evidently, the role of theory in this study is to inform methodological decisions, since it foregrounds discourse as a crucial aspect of

understanding postcolonial constructions. Discourse is informed by the linguistic turn, whose basic premise is that “meaning does not exist outside language” (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis, 2006). Therefore since the linguistic turn, text has ceased to be viewed as written language only, but according to Halliday (as cited in Alba-Juez, 2009), “text is everything that is meaningful in a particular situation” (p.6). Discourses create and make concepts real through the process of “actualisation” and these ideas are modified into dominant discourses through a process of articulation (Howarth, Norval and Stavrakakis, 2000). Therefore educational media such as history textbooks become tools for the dissemination of the discourses from above and the users become “disciplined subjects” of such discourses (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis, 2006, p.112).

Methodological considerations

Employing purposive sampling, I consciously selected four History textbooks from different publishers in the country as summarised in Figure 1 below. I chose four contemporary history textbooks for analysis. The sampling was purposive based on the textbooks’ fitness of purpose for the study (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster, Payze, Prozesky and Boshoff, 2008).

Title	Author(s)	Date of publication	Publisher
<i>Textbook 1 (Shuters history Grade 12)</i>	Bartels, J. <i>et al.</i>	2006	Shuter & Shooter
<i>Textbook 2 (Making history Grade 12)</i>	Claire, H. <i>et al.</i>	2007	Heinemann
<i>Textbook 3 (Focus on history: Looking into the past Grade 12)</i>	Friedman, M. <i>et al.</i>	2007	Maskew Miller Longman
<i>Textbook 4 (Oxford in search of history Grade 12)</i>	Bottaro, J. <i>et al.</i>	2006	Oxford University Press

Figure 1: The research sample³

International trends in textbook research show that researchers more often than not do not analyse entire textbooks. Instead they select particular sections or themes in the textbooks which they view to be of relevance to their research focus (Cobble and Kessler-Harris, 1993; Holt, 1995; Mazel and Stewart, 1987; 2003; Ogawa, 2004; Aldridge, 2006; Romanowski, 2009). Based on such evidence from literature, I elected to generate data from the chapters which focus on themes on post-colonial African history. The relevant theme in the textbooks featured as ‘Uhuru’, a Swahili word for freedom. This was the most appropriate theme since it is the only theme in the curriculum that deals with post-colonial Africa and my study focused on the construction of the post-colonial African being. I made use of two of Nicholls’ (2003) and Pingel’s (2010) criteria for analysis: descriptive author’s text (narrative); and visuals (such as illustrations, photographs/pictures, maps, tables, statistics, graphs and other sources).

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology is not specifically fashioned for history textbook research. However, its relevance is based on its emphasis on language and context. The context within which the textbooks

³

I analysed NCS textbooks as the CAPS books were not yet produced when this study started. The CAPS Grade 12 textbooks were only distributed for use in 2014 and by that time, I had already finished my analysis.

are produced influences the discourses of Africanness that emerge from the textbooks. The link between power and educational media such as textbooks is explained by the concepts of the macro-level and micro-level of discourse. Van Dijk (2003) explains how discourses operate at the macro-level of the power holders and at the micro-level of the average citizen. Using this thinking, it can be argued that dominant controllers of the context (usually the politicians) purvey certain discourses which play a part in the construction of an African consciousness within the ordinary citizen. At a micro-level, schools and educational media (particularly textbooks) also purvey their discourses which either augment or sometimes contest the construction done from the macro-level. Studying from such a perspective helps to identify where these levels meet and Van Dijk (2003, p.354) calls this meeting space the “meso-level” of discourse.

Since there are several variations of CDA I focused on Norman Fairclough’s (1995) CDA which entails three dimensions of discourse analysis: description, interpretation and explanation. Although I and present the findings according to these three dimensions of analysis as I did not analyse them as independent, as one would not make sufficient meaning without the others (Janks, 1997). I relied heavily on the article by Janks (1997) which is an example of how Fairclough’s CDA was applied in practice.

For the descriptive analysis, I selected five aspects of functional grammar; lexicalisation; referential cohesion devices; the use of nominalisation; the use of active and passive voice; and patterns of transitivity (Janks, 1997, p.335). These aspects are linked to Halliday’s (1985) systemic functional linguistics. I also applied visual semiotics though which visuals are signs which comprise signifiers that represent a particular meaning (the signified). The interpretation and explanation relied on literature, theory and the context. These methodological moves are fully explained in another article (Maposa, 2015).

Description of findings

Through the analysis, data was coded and grouped into themes. Eventually the analysis produced five major themes. These themes are presented here as notions that actualise the African being. The five notions represent the manner in which the African being is constructed in the textbooks and they

are: the spatial, the physical, the philosophical, the cultural and the experiential. Within these themes there were both constructions and contestations of the description of Africanness and there were also some findings that overlapped across themes.

The spatial notion of the African being refers to the African as determined by space. This notion revealed that while the continental space was a factor, it was not always the determinant of Africanness. There are references to Africans both in Africa and abroad (*Textbook 3*, pp.49; 90). However, the description also showed that there are some people in Africa who might not qualify as Africans. For example, *Textbook 1* (p.101) refers to “whites living in South Africa”, rather than saying “white South Africans.” The former implies a sense of not belonging to South African while the latter implies belonging through citizenship. The visual text constructed the African being to be either born or found in the African continent, with the emphasis of those from sub-Saharan Africa. There was also notable exclusion of South Africans and people from islands of Africa. In fact, both forms of text denote the exclusion of some people on the African continent from Africanness, especially so when race is considered. Therefore, the spatial notion of the African being is constructed in ambiguity.

Regarding the physical notion, race features as a major criterion of Africanness. The African being is constructed in both the verbal and visual text as Black. In fact, all the textbooks use African and Black interchangeably. In addition, the textbook visuals feature almost entirely Black characters such as Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, Mobutu Sese Seko, Haile Selassie, Julius Nyerere and Idi Amin. However, the use of the term “Black African” in *Textbook 3* (p. 95) seems to qualify that there are other Africans who are not necessarily Black. None of the textbooks explicitly refers to the Africanness of racial groups such as Arabs. For instance, Abdul Gamal Nasser is mentioned in reference to him being a Pan-Arab leader who “believed in unification across borders” leaving his Africanness rather ambiguous (*Textbook 1*, p.64), while Whites are excluded from Africanness. In addition, although there was some female representation, the African is physically represented as largely male. In *Textbook 3*, there are only two mentions of women, the first being Miriam Makeba, a musician (p.96), and the second being the citation of women’s organisations opposing post-colonial African dictatorships (p.101).

In the construction of the cultural notion of the African being there was representation of aspects such as language, arts, tradition, religion and, to a lesser extent, ethnicity in the verbal text. *Textbook 2* and *3* raise the linguistic diversity of Africans while English, French and Portuguese retain the tag of “colonial languages”. However, the same textbook contradicts itself by regarding Soyinka’s novel, *The Interpreters*, (written in English) as “the first truly African novel” (*Textbook 3*, p.95). The visual text focused more on dress and gender roles. Even though there were also cases of generalisation of the African being, African culture was constructed as flux, with strong evidence of the acceptance of hybridisation of cultures. Figure 2 shows examples of normalisation of hybridisation in terms of attire and accessories. Therefore, the African being is largely represented as a cultural hybrid, with a marked representation of the influence of Western culture. Where a distinction is made, African culture is represented as traditional, while Western culture is represented as modern.



President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, President Apollo Milton Obote of Uganda and President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya



▲ *The mixture of different worlds is seen in this photograph from 1973 of a voter storing his voter's card in his snuff horn.*

Figure 2: Examples of normalisation of hybridisation (*Textbook 2*, p.49; *Textbook 4*, p.88)

The experiences that make the African being are represented as largely negative. All the four textbooks emphasise post-colonial African problems such as lack of development, wars, poverty, and oppression by both internal and external forces. They identify the 1960s as the only period of notable positive experience and there is little reference to the contemporary experiences of the 21st century. South Africans are excluded from most of the negative constructions of Africa, The visual text describes some positive experiences such as access to education and cases of gender equality. However, most of the experiences that could be considered as positive are also represented as fundamentally symbolic. There are also contending representations of the agency of the African being in the textbooks as the Africans are, in some cases, represented as victims, while, in other cases they are as participants in determining their own fate.

The final theme was on the philosophical notion of the African being which was constructed through the representation of concepts and values that were associated with the African being. The concepts in the textbooks include Uhuru, Ubuntu, harambe, Ujamaa and chimurenga. Evidently, most of such concepts are in Swahili and not from different parts of Africa. There are also African variations of otherwise universal concepts. These include “African Renaissance” (p.79) and “African nationalist” (*Textbook 1*); “African unity”, “African identity” and “African elite” (*Textbook 2*); “African traditions”, “African literature” and “African novel” (*Textbook 3*) and “African music, art and literature” (*Textbook 4*). Here, the representation was that of an African being with hybrid philosophies with a mixture of African communalism and Western thoughts. The philosophy of the African being is also represented as ideally progressive and positive, but practically negative, particularly because it has led to the negative experiences previously identified. Nevertheless, the African being is constructed as having a positive outlook for the future, which is also idealistic. Visually, the African being is constructed as someone who has their own epistemology as revealed by ideals and values of equality, unity and cooperation in some of the pictures in the textbooks. However, practically the African being is constructed as having a philosophy which enables oppression and inequality.

Interpretation of findings

The spatial notion reveals that, on one hand, an African is someone who is from the continent of Africa. Such a construction tallies with the typology of Africanness as presented by Dei (1994) and Mazrui (2005) who refer to

Africans by birth and Africans of the soil respectively. However, the emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, thus excluding North Africa and the islands, speaks to cases of exceptionalism to Africanness, whereby their inhabitants are excluded from the African discourse (Grinker and Steiner, 2005; Mamdani, 1999; Collins and Burns, 2007). The complication is furthered by the finding that, even in sub-Saharan Africa, some people are excluded from the African designation. This is especially so in South Africa whereby other criteria such as race come into play. It is also on the basis of race that the textbooks, on the other hand, do not delimit Africanness to inhabitants of the African continent, but also to the Diaspora. As a result the meaning of the spatial notion of the African being is unstable, as was discussed in the literature review, leaving it to other notions to stabilise it.

The physical notion showed the African being represented as largely Black and male. There is evidence of African nationalist discourse which equals Africanness to Blackness (Mazrui, 2005; Mboukou, 1983; William, 2003). It tallies with discourses in South Africa whereby Black people are officially referred to as Africans. This meaning of Africanness, leave population groups such as the Arabs and Whites in a position of ambiguity, if not exclusion to discourses of Africanness, while Black people out of Africa become included. Nevertheless, linguistic choice of “Black African” (though very limited) can also be interpreted to imply that there are other Africans who are not Black as contended by Armah (1999). The representation of the African as male speaks to the oft referred to perpetuation of patriarchy and as part of a broader problem of women not featuring in history textbooks in general (Fardon and Schoeman, 2010).

The cultural notion of the African being in the verbal text was interpreted to have more complicated meanings. African culture is represented as homogenous on one hand, thus relating to arguments by Dei (1994) and Grinker and Steiner (2010) that there is some form of cultural uniformity amongst Africans. On the other hand, it is constructed as multifarious (Appiah, 1992; William, 2003). But what further complicated the meaning is that African culture is also represented as hybrid, but is still acceptably African. In fact, the hybrid representation is the most dominant. This construction speaks Baker Jr. *et al.* (1995) reminder that returning to native wholeness in a post-colonial society is practically impossible, such that all postcolonial phenomena are invariably hybridised. It can be concluded that cultural hybridity is the hallmark of the post-colonial African being in the textbooks.

The African being is also represented as having undergone largely diverse, thus hybrid, experiences. But as was the case with the experiential notion of Africa, there is evidence of a level of a dual assumption when it comes to the African being. As shown in the description of findings, many of the negative experiences that are attached to the African being are generalised to sub-Saharan Africans, in this way excluding the North Africans, South Africans and the islanders. This exceptionalism can be connected to Mbeki's lamentation that South Africans seemed not to be quite African (Adebajo, 2004). Another key finding is that the experiential notion is differentiated between that of the political elite and the African populace. Therefore the experiential meaning of the African being in the verbal text is also unstable and depends on to whom it is being referred. This contradicts William's (2003) assertion that Africans should share a common memory of experiences. Africans are represented as having together suffered mainly negative experiences.

Finally the meaning of the philosophical notion of the African being is more generalised than contested within the analysed textbooks. The construction of a largely uniform African philosophy was based on the adoption of concepts such as Uhuru as African concepts which can be used as common denominators. African philosophy is also represented as part of the global knowledge system to which it both contributes and from which it borrows (Guèye, 1999; Gupta, 2012; Ocholla, 2007; Sefa Dei, 2002). The contribution of South Africa in this regard is not portrayed as considerable as most values and concepts that are referred to are from other African societies.

The interpretation showed that the meanings of Africa and the African being were riddled with multiple meanings with hybridity and ambiguity which Bakhtin (1981) would refer to as heteroglossia. The strong featuring of ambiguity gives credence to Guèye's (1999, p.247) view that some of the criteria that have often been used to determine Africanness are "purely phenomenal, superficial dimensions". I noted in the literature review that Armah (1999) states how aspects such as geographical location, race, language, culture, attitude and experiences have been used to qualify one as an African. The textbooks that I analysed confirmed some of these notions, but other notions also emerged from the analysis.

These constructions show how the two concepts cannot be taken for granted, such that while they are sources of emotional contestations, other quarters have even dismissed them as imaginary and non-existent (Van Dijk, 2006).

However, other scholars such as Ottaway (1999) contend that while Africanness is invented, it can actually become real. The constructions in the analysed textbooks manifest this process of the two concepts being actualised through discourses. This interpretation is supported by Chinua Achebe's statement that: "There isn't a final identity that is African. But, at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence" (Appiah, 1992, p.73).

Explanation of findings

The description and interpretation of findings showed the ambiguities and the imprecisions that characterised most of the constructions of the African being in the analysed textbooks. In Mbembe's view, (as cited in Hitchcock, 1997, p.236), the multiple dimensions of the African being reflect "chaotic plurality,' one in which conflict and contradiction are the very mark of postcolonial 'being'." This means that it is impossible to have stable meanings in a postcolonial condition because not all the effects of colonialism can ever be undone (Baker Jr. *et al.*, 1995, p.1047). It should also be noted that a post-conflict society such as South Africa is usually characterised by contending views, especially as it is founded on trying to come to terms with its past through embracing multiculturalism (Rüsen, 1991).

The findings further showed how the ambiguities construct an African being consciousness that is idealistic rather than fully actualised. Discursive postcolonialism further elucidates that since discourses are socially constructed, their meanings are not only contextual but are always in a state of erasure and "always elusive, always deferred, always multiple, always somewhat paradoxical" (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis, 2006, p.103). Indeed, the African consciousness that is constructed in the textbooks is elusive, deferred, multiple, and somewhat paradoxical. The textbooks therefore confirm that the African being is what Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000, p.8) refer to as an "empty signifier" – an object that is never fully meaningful such that people rely on the meanings that they get from sources like textbooks.

Exceptionalism was also a key finding in the construction of the African being. Although South African exceptionalism was not the only form of exceptionalism, it is significant for my findings because South Africa is the country in which and for which the textbooks analysed are produced. As illustrated in the background to this study, the 'othering' of Africans who are not from South Africa, particularly those from Tropical Africa is evident in

the everyday contextual discourses in South Africa. It is also worth noting that even Western and South African discourses tend to generalise Tropical Africa, thus promoting South African exceptionalism (Mamdani, 1999). One of the reasons for such exceptionalism is the time frame of the post-colonial period (McClintock, 1993). Most of the history of post-colonial Africa that is covered in the analysed textbook sections occurred while South Africa was still under Apartheid. However, there are other historical references in other parts of Africa that occurred when South Africa was post-Apartheid.

The South African exceptionalism in most representations in the textbooks implies that the textbook users (learners and teachers in the South African education system) are meant to have a unique collective national consciousness rather than a collective African consciousness (Rüsen, 1993; Soysal, 2006). This is what Miller, Gurin, Gurin and Malanchuk (1981, p.495) refer to as a group consciousness which entails “identification with a group . . . regarding the group’s relative position in society along with a commitment to collective action aimed at realizing the group's interests.” This means that the South African learners and teachers who use the selected textbooks may develop a confusion of different types of consciousness which is similar to the double consciousness about which Du Bois and Fanon wrote (Moore, 2005).

It is not always prudent to be formulaic and determinist about social sciences. Nevertheless, I argue that the nature of the African being that is constructed in the textbooks most likely leads to the polar affect, which, according to Miller *et al.* (1981), is a preference of the group one identifies with over others. The evidence is that the only time ‘we’ was used was in any of the analysed textbooks, it was in reference to South Africans. According to al-Badarin and Maagerø (2008) the use of the first person plural (we/us) is common in countries where the educational discourse is dominated by the promotion of a nationalistic group consciousness. This has already been proven with the cases of South African exceptionalism that is found in the analysed textbooks. On the ground in the South African context, nation-building discourses are evident as demonstrated by the common use of concepts such as ‘simunye’ (we are one) and ‘rainbow nation’. Literature abounds on how nationalism, for all its positives, can also be malignant through othering (Hammett, 2011). In the case of this study, people from the rest of Africa, particularly Tropical Africa, are constructed as the other – just as discourses of othering were noted in the introduction to this paper. If South Africans see themselves as different from the rest of the African continent, then they can possibly develop the

polar affect which has the potential to contribute to misunderstandings such as xenophobia. This possibility of such a development was explained by Aldridge (2006, p.663) who argues that silences and occlusion mean that learners are denied “access to relevant, dynamic, and often controversial history or critical lenses that would provide them insight into the dilemmas, challenges, and realities of living in a democratic society. . .” It should be noted, though, that this development is a merely a possibility since, as noted by Paxton (1999), learners interpret text in unique ways.

Nonetheless, because of the contradictions found in the textbooks, the polar affect should not be exaggerated. There are also cases of polar power – which implies contentment or discontent over the condition in which one’s group finds itself. Therefore, despite how negative or how positive Africans are constructed, South Africans are sometimes also constructed in the analysed textbooks as part and parcel of the African situation. It should be noted that the use of the first person ‘we’ in reference to South Africans was only seen once and therefore was not a dominant construction. However, the cases of South African exceptionalism were dominant such that the national uniqueness was evident in the analysed chapters. This is unlike the case in Germany where Soysal (2006) states that the national aspect is almost absent in the History textbooks which foreground the European dimension.

Conclusion

Education for sustainability should empower learners to develop into members of society that can contribute to development with minimum exploitation. With reference to this study, learners of history should, through the textbooks, develop a consciousness that enables unity, renewal and development in a postcolonial condition. This study has shown that while the macro-level of power produces the dominant discourses, the micro-level of the citizen also contributes to the discourses that permeate the history textbooks. Indeed, the production of textbooks is influenced by multifarious factors that when the discourses from the top and from below meet at the meso-level of textbook production, there is not just articulation but also resistance, thus producing heteroglossic representation of the African being.

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A participatory approach to service-learning in creative arts education: a win-win learning opportunity for campus and community?

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Abstract

Service-learning has been shown to be effective in preparing students to live and work in a diverse and rapidly changing society, especially when it is based on a democratic partnership between university students and community participants, resulting in mutually beneficial learning. Yet, in cases where the community is often regarded as less equal due to debilitating socio-economic circumstances, there is a real danger the engagement turns into more of a charity rendering experience, rather than promoting deep learning for all involved. This article reports on our attempts to create a service-learning experience that allowed students and community youth to learn with and from each other. Data were generated in four cycles of a participatory action research design, using visual, art and text-based strategies. The thematic analysis indicated that the process gave participants a better understanding of each other's lived realities; that it helped to level out unequal power relations; and that the reciprocal learning boosted development on personal and professional levels. The knowledge we share in this article will help others to know how to design and implement a valuable and mutually beneficial service learning experience not only in Creative Arts education; but in any discipline where students engage with community.

A Swahilli tale depicts the relationship between a monkey and a shark, a story about two creatures living in two worlds. The shark needs the heart of the monkey to give to his king who is ill and so invites the monkey on a journey with the ultimate aim of killing him, so that the king can live. The monkey agrees to go on the journey because he wants to learn and experience new things. However, the monkey finds out what the shark is planning and tricks him into taking him back to *terra firma* where he escapes from the shark, abruptly ending their brief relationship. Neither of them gained what they really wanted from the experience and both end up with a negative perception of the other and increased distrust. The clandestine motives of one character resulted in both parties going their separate ways with no real gain. Both were disgruntled that they had not benefitted from the relationship.

Often attempts to conduct community engagement result in similar outcomes due to failure to clarify motives, interests and the purpose and process of the relationship (Hall, Jackson and Tandon, 2016). Piggot-Irvine (2012) calls for authentic collaboration between all partners when embarking on community-engaged activities. Internationally there are calls for service-learning experiences to shift from a “philanthropic” (Slamat, 2010, p.104), “paternalistic” (Butin, 2010, p.208), one-sided, interventionist approach to a more collaborative one, underpinned by a dialogic relationship (Freire, 1997), that encourages communication and discovery, indispensable to knowledge and understanding on how to work together to create a more socially just society. This study thus focused on creating knowledge partnerships (Mitchell and Rautenbach, 2005) between community participants and pre-service Creative Arts teachers to engage in art experiences where they could share their respective values, knowledge, and skills in order to learn from and with each other. By embedding art practices in community engagement projects, we aimed to open exchanges of mutual interest and reciprocal visions that would cause our relatively privileged, middle-class students to question their accepted beliefs about the ‘other’, to craft a better understanding of the human commonalities between all people, regardless of their demographic background. Local knowledge is generally not foregrounded in teacher education, as we still tend to ‘train’ teachers to work in well-resourced education contexts (Wood, 2014). By encouraging students and community youth to share art experiences towards a mutual goal, we hoped to counter the more usual approach where service is given to communities by artists (Helguera, 2011), in line with the call for new “terms of engagement” (Erasmus, 2009, p.5) between higher education and communities to foster knowledge democratization. Service-learning has not been included in the formal academic program of Creative Arts education at our institution, hence the need to establish the educational benefit it might hold. The study we initiated was part of a larger interdisciplinary community project and the task for our students was to engage with community youth to aesthetically enhance a plot of land designated as a recreational area in a local township. The main questions that guided our study were:

What can student and community participants learn from the process?

What aspects of the engagement process enhance the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes?

What recommendations can be made to inform the development of future service-learning initiatives in Creative Arts education programs and other disciplines?

We first explain how we conceptualize service-learning as a transformative pedagogy, using art to foster social engagement, before outlining the research methods. We then critically discuss the emerging themes in relation to literature and what implications they have for the inclusion of service-learning opportunities as an integrated educational experience in pre-service teacher education programs in particular, and undergraduate programs in general.

Service-learning as a transformational pedagogy

We draw on a critical, post- modern paradigm to understand service-learning (Rogers, Luton, Biggs, Biggs, Blignaut, Choles and Tangwe, 2013), with experiential learning (Schön, 1995) as the pedagogical foundation. Experiential learning foregrounds contextualization of the learning experience and allows exploration of the relational partnerships with a view to transforming epistemologies and ontologies, accepting social responsibility and recognizing the traditional knowledge base of communities (Schön, 1995). Kolb's (Kolb and Kolb, 2005) experiential theory permits a Mode 2 teaching and learning style, where dialogical engagement is encouraged, as opposed to the transference of undisputed disciplinary 'truths'. Critical theory views service-learning from an anti-foundational perspective (Butin, 2010) which aims to encourage questioning of norms, behaviors and assumptions. It emphasizes the political nature of education and involves a dialectical approach to problem-posing within complex social systems (Freire, 1985). These theories helped us to shift service-learning from the notion of 'expert help' by students towards the fostering of a democratically generated, reciprocal knowledge pool, created from the reflective dialogue between campus and community participants. All participants validated the decisions in the engagement process (Thornton, 2013), thus creating a more equal balance of power, or "democratic intimacy" (Freire, 1997, p.12) that promotes social change through relational experiences.

We expressly wanted to provide our students with an opportunity to dialogue with young people of similar age, but with a very different trajectory of life

experiences. Unless student teachers undergo such boundary-crossing pedagogical encounters, how can we expect them to be inclusive teachers who understand not only the negative influence of a poverty existence on education, but also the assets that such youth bring to the educational project? They also need to recognize and incorporate valuable local knowledge into their teaching to make it more relevant to learners' lived realities (Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), 2006). We need teachers who are empathic, caring and respectful of all people, who see the potential in youth rather than the problems. We used the service-learning opportunity to disrupt previously held assumptions and open up a third space (Engeström, 2001) for the generation of knowledge that will better prepare both students and community youth for professional and personal roles in this unequal and socially unjust society. Art can be used to promote social engagement between persons who would otherwise never have had the opportunity to interact.

Art practices to promote social engagement

The defining elements of socially engaged art (SEA) (Helguera, 2011) include group relationships and exploration of collective experiences through art-based practices. Although the art itself was not the focus in the study, since neither groups were art specialists, it served as a mediating tool to encourage goal directed social interaction between two diverse groups of young people – a pedagogy that can be used in any discipline. As suggested by Helguera (2011), we sought to create a convivial atmosphere to promote collaboration and participation as the participants worked together to plan, design and implement their artistic interpretation of what was needed to beautify this particular community space. SEA praxis is normally staged outside typical art environments to include 'non-art' communities who are willing to engage in dialogue with others. This form of situational learning results in the generation of critical and experiential knowledge (Helguera, 2011), leading to better understanding of self and others. When university students enter complex and unfamiliar situations, social dynamics expressed through cultural codes can be misinterpreted, underestimated or ignored which results in both university and community partners feeling lost, uncertain of how to proceed or even leave them with a negative perception of the other. SEA necessitates an understanding of how interpersonal relations (e.g. power, dependence, conflict resolution, relationship building) can be

negotiated between the parties involved. The conversations that took place between the participants in this study were aimed at arriving at common understandings on the given task (developing art work for the park), raising awareness about problems, debating particular issues and collaborating on a final product (Helguera, 2011). In most phases of the process, the conversations between the participants were the core source of meaningful and mutual knowledge generation. In the end, the pragmatic artifacts created reflected an understanding of the real needs of the community members – they painted large tractor tyres which they then embedded in the ground (so they were not stolen) to demarcate the open space and make it attractive to children as a play area (see Figure 1). Thus, through socially engaged art practices, they could agree on a solution that was aptly suited to this particular environment, rather than an abstract piece of art that would probably have been vandalized or stolen.



Figure 1: Participants collaborating on project

Methodology

We opted for an action research design, since we wished to improve our understanding of how to make the service-learning experience more resonant of our transformational aims. We used Stringer’s (2007) model of looking, thinking, acting and reflecting to inform the participative cycles of (i) relationship-building, (ii) planning (iii) skills application and (iv) reflecting, through which we guided the participants as reflected in Figure 1.

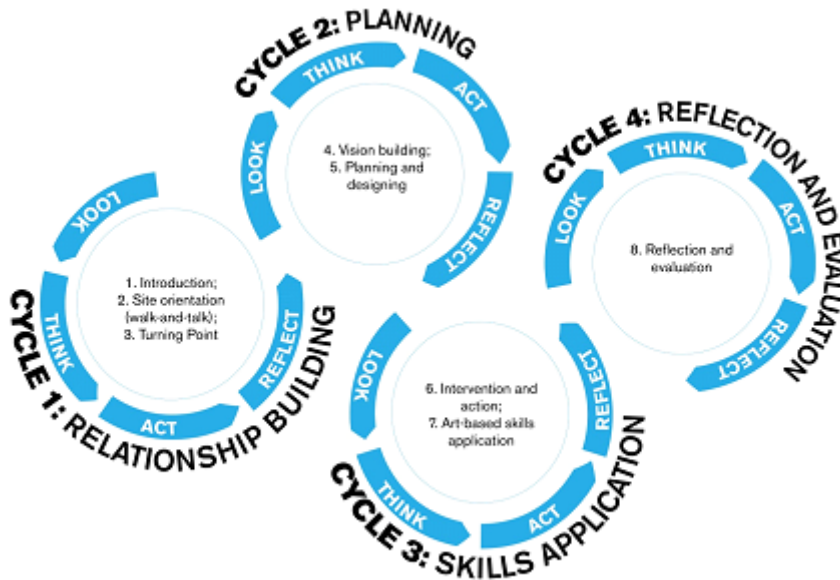


Figure 2: The research design followed

We asked for volunteers from a third-year class of intermediate phase Creative Arts student teachers and two females and one male responded. We then asked community elders to help us to find community participants of similar age (18–21). Three males and one female who were still at school and one female who had completed her final school examination and was working part-time, volunteered. The campus participants were Afrikaans speaking; the community youth were Setswana/Sesotho speaking, therefore the *lingua franca* adopted was English which they could all speak to a certain extent. We chose intermediate phase students, who do not receive specialized art training, as we wished to avoid them appearing as ‘experts’. Data generation was attained through eight practical, participatory activities (as outlined in Table 1) in a relational interactive process between participants. We also generated data in the form of field notes from observations and reflections on the process (Creswell, 2009).

Table 1: Data generation process

	Data generation activities	Purpose	Data generation methods
CYCLE 1: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING Activity 1	Introduction of university students and community participants to each other. Discussion of expectations and process.	Introduction and orientation about project and to each other	Informal group discussions, audio recorded and transcribed
Activity 2 a/b	a) "Walk-and-talk" activity: icebreaker: walk to the site while talking to each other. Participants establish perceptions of each other and the site b) Turning Point exercise : Participants share three life experiences that they learnt from	Orientation to site and purpose of engagement. Mapping the problem / area: find out how participants experienced the learning environment, talking about real-life issues in an area. Start to think about challenges and how can be solved. Reflect on experience. Building trust and sharing commonalities in both parties' lives to establish solid base for working processes.	Participatory group discussions Own observations
CYCLE 2: PLANNING Activity 3	Interactive vision building activity and wish list. Clarification of themes and needs analysis. How do they "see" the site in future? Agendas and research purpose discussed - challenges, expectations and possibilities mentioned	Critical skills development. Determine commonalities of thought - which factors can facilitate or hinder the process of partnership between the participants? Do they have common goals and similar outcomes? Discuss, reflect and compromise	Informal group discussions: Visual mapping
Activity 4	Interactive visual / conceptual working process. Own ideas / planning and combine with existing visual designs of the community. Discuss and analyze designs and cooperate in finding solutions and a mutual platform to start project.	Technical skills development: establish a working relationship: Identify own strengths - expectations re. each others contribution, knowledge sharing, critical thinking. Negotiating process and positions, working relations. Stimulate own ideas and get a broader picture of overall project	Informal group discussions; Visual designs
CYCLE 3: INTERVENTION AND ACTION Activity 5 a/b	a) Community participants visit the botanical gardens - introduced to public art in the garden ; b) Introduction to arts & craft studio where they observe students' projects of public sites	Outreach and professional skills development: Establish deep understanding of each other's works in sharing knowledge and creating awareness of other possibilities that could be incorporated. Present and share ideas. Accommodate complexity by embracing different insights from different worlds. Extending knowledge base working in trans-disciplinary working environments.	Observation of artefacts (Public art) and small scale park models. Informal group discussion
Activity 6	Interactive teamwork and art-based skills application activity painting of available resources - e.g. tractor tyres in different colours	Combining art-based skills in a working relationship: work collaboratively on a product. Task orientated: who is doing what? Finding roles in painting process. Strengths and weaknesses are identified in the process and with the participants. Complete tasks	Informal group discussion. Painted artefacts
CYCLE 4: REFLECTION AND EVALUATION Activity 7	Focus group interviews conducted with two groups.	To augment the information gained through discussion groups and to address each question on establishing partnerships. To determine the value of the engagement between two different communities.	Semi-structured separate group interviews

For the purposes of this paper, the visual and text-based data were thematically analyzed by both of us independently, before coming together to reach consensus (Niewenhuis, 2010). Triangulation of data sources, use of re-coding and full description of the research process increased trustworthiness (Creswell, 2009). Ethical clearance from the institution ensured the study adhered to the obligations of informed consent, voluntary participation and right to withdraw at any time. Participation by the students did not count towards any formal assessment.

Discussion of findings

Three main themes emerged from the data analysis that helped us construct answers to our research questions. We discuss the themes below, supported by *verbatim* extracts from the data and relevant literature. To identify the origin of the extracts we use the following codes: Cn (community participant); Sn (student participant).

Theme 1: The process allowed participants to gain insight into each other's worlds and disrupt stereotypical assumptions

The initial discourse of the two groups revealed their stereotypical perceptions of each other and the roles they would play in the study. The community participants perceived the students as “helpers” (C2) who would teach them everything, positioning themselves as ‘non-experts’ who had little to offer to the process, while the students were concerned primarily with their own learning and learning *about* the community youth, rather than *with* or from them:

It will be nice. . .because they are too smart (C1); . . .everything they coming with [bringing along] it's fine (C4); Then we can help each other. Like maybe, one of them could help with mistake [s we make]. . . (C3).

. . . I also want to learn about their cultures (S2); I also want to learn stuff about myself. . . What I can do and what I can't do. And to help them. Yes [laughs] (S1).

The interaction between the participants helped them to begin to question deep seated assumptions they had about each other, particularly on the side of

the students. In our diverse and unequal society, being able to understand the experiences and perspectives of those from different backgrounds is a vital life-skill, all the more so for prospective teachers who wield an inherent power over the cognitive and value formations of learners (Bennell, 2004) and need to explore their own attitudes and values to be sure that they are not perpetuating divisive worldviews and practices. Both groups moved out of their comfort zones to participate in the engagement process, which helped them to shift their stereotypical thinking and tendency to ‘other’. The students in particular were prompted to view learning differently, to “redefine who the ‘servers’ are in relation to the ‘served’ and how boundaries continue to keep these two groups apart” (Hayes and Cuban, 1997). Thus art was used as a mediator to disrupt thinking (Helguera, 2011), with the experiential learning approach providing a platform for dialogical engagement (Kolb and Kolb, 2005) towards better understanding of each other.

It could also be argued that the participants used stereotypical discourse in the beginning because they had to process a rather complex situation and this served to simplify “a complex environment”, giving them a “cognitive schema” to process the situation (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick and Esses, 2010, p.9). Towards the end of the engagement period, the students admitted that they had used an ‘othering’ discourse because they did not know how to address the community participants:

We don’t know how to say the other, to say the children or the students or the people from the Ikageng, that is why we said the other people (S1).

Students started to become more aware of how they were perceived by the community participants and saw the need to offer support with the aim of assisting community participants to become proficient themselves:

I think I realised that we weren’t necessarily there to help them, but just to support them in the things they want to do. . . So that they can help themselves (S3).

The views of students were initially somewhat patronizing, influenced no doubt by our deep rooted colonial and Apartheid history (Killen, Richardson and Kelly, 2010), assuming that life in the community was not pleasant:

. . .the parents must create a safe place at their home, so that uhm, I just think that our parents are more protective, I can be wrong, over us, because I don't know why. But uhm, in our culture or my culture, we are not afraid to say something is wrong, like alcohol abuse or whatever. But to them it is quite normal; alcohol abuse, it's every second person (S2).

However, they gradually became more understanding of the community youths' reality and even expressed admiration:

I think the youth there grow up long before we are grown. They must be adults when they are actually still children, because they must take care of themselves or a younger brother or sister (S3).

An almost envious tone started to emerge as students began to reposition the community participants' life as freer than their own, which in turn led them to question their assumptions:

. . .I always thought it was the unsafest place, uhm, but it's just how they live. It, is not that unsafe as we people think it is, it's just. . .there is a stereotype over there, there is a stereotype about townships, well specific that area (S3).

Everything [in our lives] is planned for us but they take it as it comes, but they enjoy every day and they live full-out every day (S2).

People are products of individual cultures, moulded from the values and morals inculcated by families, friends, communities, educational institutions, and religious affiliations (Duncan and Brooks Taylor, 2013), and such "knowledge in the blood" (Jansen, 2009, p.4) can only be changed by interacting in a safe, yet challenging environment. The students compared their planned lives to the community participants' freer lifestyles which helped them to critically reflect on their social values and behavior to challenge their prejudicial attitudes and stereotypical expectations (Killen *et al.*, 2010), a fundamental aim of critical theory.

As they interacted and learnt experientially through the relationship building and orientation exercises in the community setting, participants began to develop a higher level of empathy for each other's situation and showed signs

of wanting to learn from each other. The students understood the importance of establishing a rapport with the community participants:

. . .we had to get to know each other more, and that, that, I think that makes it easier (S3); We had to understand what they feel, how they feel and how we feel (S1).

I wouldn't normally tell anyone about my feelings, but it came to an end that I had to express my feelings too. I was like trusting them, I had, I had this trust in them. . . (C3).

Students began to compare their privileged lives to the harsher realities of the community participants, which prompted them to give community members more space to express themselves. Thus the art-based activities mediated a social exchange to strengthen personal relationships contributing to the building of trust, opening up spaces for meaningful conversations (Helguera, 2011). This allowed the community participants to take a more active part in the planning, design and creation of the artefacts:

They were always willing to, willing to do something ... because they showed up for every meeting, they were on time for the garden when we went there and they were open minded about everything (S1).

Participants started to acknowledge the value of opening up to each other's worlds, and that differences were not as deep as they imagined:

They teach me that if you are a people, you can do things, even with different cultures, you can make one group of people and discuss things, making good things (C4).

I was walking with the white people and the black people, we are just tell them about this park, this park, they are to, it will be nice, and our communities will be watching their park, . . .see that people can walk together there, white and black (C1).

I think all the youth experience the same situations, because it doesn't matter what your colour is, or your gender or something. Everyone has to deal with drugs, and alcohol, and death, and divorce. So I think it is the same everywhere (S1).

Becoming part of a group has potentially adaptive dimensions in terms of nurturing an individual and forming a caring society (Dovidio *et al.*, 2010), something that is especially important for prospective teachers to learn. Through such interaction, deep-seated assumptions are troubled and the individual is challenged to rethink how they relate to others.

Theme 2: The PAR process shifted power relations

The students associated leadership with confidence and regarded these two qualities as important attributes in the interactive process with the community participants. The evidence indicated that they were pleased that the initial quietness of the community participants as “passive acceptors of domination” (Freire, 1985, p. 81) changed during the process and that the community participants started to voice their opinions:

They were afraid to tell their ideas, because they didn't know if it was wrong or right. . .they thought automatically that we must always be right and they wrong (S2).

I at first thought maybe they don't have that, uhm, leadership qualities, but that is not the case. . .think it was a case of being shy (S3).

It became clear that the community participants initially positioned the students as more knowledgeable than them. The students also initially thought they had better ideas and the community participants were happy to follow their lead. The PAR process, underpinned by a critical paradigm, aims to promote a more liberated, non-hierarchic orientation that emphasises dialogic conversations during the working process (Freire, 1985). This happened on a micro-level between students and community members, as the students began to do less and listen more, giving the community youth more space to display their knowledge and skills.

Power is relational and changes as relationships change (Duncan and Brooks Taylor, 2013). The students started to question the value of ‘expert’ power, showing preference for a more democratic leadership style:

Everybody gets a chance to talk, . . .everybody decides what this person must do and he must also decide. . . (S1).

Maybe in a group you must, uhm, not necessarily have a group leader, but everybody gets a chance to uh, to talk and then everybody decides what this person must do and he must also uhm, decide if he wants to do it. Everybody must all agree what the person must do and he should also (S3).

The students started to value the collaborative working process as a means to overcome shyness and to encourage mutual engagement. The accommodating attitude of the students reflected their willingness to listen and encourage talk – much needed qualities for teachers. They acknowledged their own potential and expressed it honestly, but also discouraged dominant positions (Birks and Mills, 2011), treating everybody as equal partners and trying to create a positive interactive experience for all. They effectively moved closer to a shared form of leadership where they learned to negotiate their positions instead of taking dominant positions and forcing their viewpoints on the other participants.

Theme 3: Participants experienced personal and professional development through the interactive process

Students and community participants learned to share their life experiences as well as their visions for the park, engaging in learning experientially through a variety of interactive activities. Meaningful service-learning provides a sense of purpose, connection, relevance, and usefulness, which requires time and effort from all and includes everybody's voices in the planning, implementation, and evaluating phases (Duncan and Brooks Taylor, 2013). The participatory methodology enabled participants to work collaboratively in groups, acquiring oral and written communication skills, and opened up leadership possibilities which contributed to their personal and professional development.

The experience was a somewhat humbling one for the middle-class students, leading to a realisation that they needed to be more empathic:

And they taught me, uh, cause I saw how they are, their living, and uhm, they learned me to be more appreciative of what I have today and not complain so much (S3).

We had to understand what they feel, how they feel and how we feel (S2.)

The ability to empathise with others and accept personal responsibility for contributing to a better society are essential skills for teachers to possess and model to learners (Binkley, Erstad, Herman, Raizen, Ripley and Rumble, 2010). Other professional and personal competencies such as communication, collaboration and patience were also improved through their interaction in the group.

The students affirmed that the research process helped them to become more tolerant and aware of the importance of understanding diversity:

I had to learn patience, because when we try to explain something to them like the idea of the tyres, they don't understand on the spot (S1).

I think we also learned from them, how to interact with different cultures and how to approach a project like this. How to share. (S2)

Acceptance of diversity requires excessive self-evaluation, especially in relation to others who may have been regarded as inferior in terms of class, race, gender or other groupings (Freire, 1997).

Language was one of the communication barriers they had to address during the process. Language is a powerful tool which can create or decimate, empower or oppress and is one of the main barriers to learning that students will encounter in the multicultural classroom. One of the community participant's poor command of English necessitated constant translation by another community member, but this sensitized them to the need to find creative solutions to minimize the barrier:

You can, in a class room, and with them as well, you can use somebody that understands both languages quite well. Their language and English and Afrikaans, doesn't matter, so that they can translate it to them or to you (S3).

They learnt to use visual material and physical examples such as the mock-ups of the park to clarify concepts:

I think, uhm, they got a better understanding when they saw the pictures and the uh, projects, this miniature sculptures that we made. I think they then only realised, or they got a better, uhm understanding of what, what we are trying to do (S2).

The students recognised the value of practical applications to complete tasks act as substitutes for spoken words, providing mediating possibilities towards a better understanding of the concepts and specific problems which in turn enabled shared completion of the tasks.

Participation in this project also exposed the students to many other sources and aids that could be applied in their future classroom teaching. The collaborative brainstorming during the vision-building exercise involved a number of communication skills: talking, listening, writing, looking, and drawing. The students did not just hear, but listened intently while they wrote down suggestions made by the group during the vision-building discussions. The community participants recommended that the students write on the charts as they wrote more quickly. Allowing those with stronger writing skills to write, enabled the others to talk and think about possible solutions. Drawing pictures and using different coloured text enhanced the community participants' understanding of the concepts. The students showed appreciation for the community participants' skills in the process (they know how to cut the edges (of the designs] when they paint.) They also realised how they could apply this learning in their future teaching:

I think it also helps to realise that one day when we work, we must, uhm, involve the community and how to approach a project like this. So if we, as teachers, want to do something like this in the community, we must be able to go and not be afraid and put the learners at ease, because we know it's safe and it is not so bad) (S2).

Thus, the pre-service teachers learned first-hand how to teach in diverse contexts. The students also gained a better understanding of time management and how to apply themselves strategically during the engagement process, by prioritising tasks, an essential quality in a teaching career.

Because you need a lot of time on a project like this, so, and everybody just have that much time in a day. So, you must know what is most important to do first, get it done and this is the time you have for it. So you must be efficient in the time you have (S2).

The students learned to handle unexpected variables and showed willingness to compromise, becoming flexible in unforeseen circumstances. They also became independent role-players, free to voice their opinions in a critical and reflexive way.

In placing emphasis on the personal, the pre-service teachers were challenged to think beyond rigid subject definitions and to consider the place of creativity and the creative processes involved in all areas of knowledge and skills development, not just those traditionally labelled as ‘arts’ or ‘creative subjects’.

The community participants also benefitted from the engagement as they became involved in problem-solving activities and recognised the value of project planning:

Ja, I’ve learned that before we do a park, we must come up with a plan first, before doing everything” (C1).

. . .if you are going to make a park, you must make sure that you’ve got nice plans, that tomorrow that people looking at that park can feel joy (C2).

The learning helped to build self-confidence as they started to express themselves in spontaneous and creative ways; they became engaged in problem-solving activities such as the planning and designing activities of the park, and started to discover their own potential and talents. They also started to exercise some choices in the planning of the artwork which implied that they were venturing out of their private world and comfort zones to search for meaning not only in their own lives but also with others (Duncan and Brooks Taylor, 2013):

. . .he says that the project changed him in drawing, he didn’t know how to draw or paint. So now he was amazed that he can do little things of art (C3 translating for C2).

The process presented opportunities for all the participants to demonstrate their creativity, a concept increasingly foregrounded in discussions about learning. Creativity is not only concerned with highly creative acts, but also pertains to how we live our lives. It relates to how we identify and actively initiate or respond to the challenges and context in which we find ourselves,

how we innovate, make choices, or effect changes (Dymoke, 2013). The community participants started to gain confidence in their own abilities and on a small scale started to develop their talents. Various creative characteristics were noticed in their interaction with art; they became curious, noting all the different types of public art; started to elaborate on their ideas, paying attention to detail and to make drawings of their observations. The engagement process helped the community participants to stretch themselves, to take small steps in discovering their own hidden potential, and to become less naive and more critical and dialogical in their thinking (Freire and Macedo, 1995).

Painting the tyres together during the last activity was another group exercise which benefitted the community participants allowing them to socialise, mixing work with play. The students started to move more into the background, allowing the community participants to take over and do the painting work. With this slight behavioural change, we noticed that the students were allowing the community participants to empower themselves by giving them a chance to work on their own with the paint and brushes. Both groups recognised each other's' strengths and applied themselves in collaborative ways to complete the tasks. Some painted, others mixed and stirred the coloured paints. They were talking, listening to music, and joking – getting to know each other on a more personal level:

I liked it when we actually painted, because then we started to speak about each other's' personal lives as well (S2).

He says that he is going to tell the others that it is all about designing and making art, so they should enjoy it . . . he is going to tell the others . . . they talk a lot, they interact with the students (C3 translating for C1).

The painting activity allowed technical skills to surface as the participants simplified complex ideas into ones that were practical and do-able. They were able to demonstrate their technical abilities and their power to contribute in a non-threatening setting (Duncan and Brooks Taylor, 2013).

Conclusion

Unlike the monkey and the shark story, which ended in increased distrust, disgruntlement and no lasting benefit for either party, the participants in this project did form a working relationship that allowed them to learn and grow in ways that can only enhance their future engagement as citizens and teachers. We embarked on this study to find out how a participatory service-learning experience in a creative arts program could enhance both student and community participant learning. Based on our findings, we can conclude that a participatory process is well suited for this purpose, as it is grounded in values that foster knowledge partnerships, rather than positioning the validity of one group's knowledge as superior. Respect, shared power, collaboration and democratic decision-making helped all the participants to critically reflect on their previously unquestioned assumptions about themselves, the 'other' and what implications these held for their future interaction as citizens and professionals. Our own critical reflection on the process has revealed a number of lessons that will add to the body of knowledge about the use of arts-based practices to engage students and community in mutually beneficial learning experiences that will promote the embodiment of values that underpin a socially just society.

We learnt that it is important to introduce *relationship building* exercises as a basis for engagement with the art process of ideas formation, planning, design, making, and reflecting. Unless this is done, the limited time allowed by the academic syllabus will make true engagement difficult. There is also a need to provide *various art-based practices* and art forms so that participants can choose between the different activities and apply their own artistic abilities which can range from merely observing and appreciating, to drawing, painting, making, or assembling. Similarly, the art-based process should not be approached rigidly, but should be *flexible* according to the needs of the participants and their levels of understanding. The process should determine the end-product which may very well be different from the initial ideas and planning at the beginning. It is vital to accommodate a *variety of hands-on activities* to improve the participants' various creative and communicative skills, rather than promote domination by a few skilled participants. Finally, we also recommend developing some tools to help participants regularly *reflect* on their experiences, rather than relying on them being able to compose their own reflections, something that they all struggled to do. This study has thus provided a needed working methodology, applicable to any

discipline, that can be added to the array of existing service-learning strategies.

However, working in a participatory way presents its own challenges. It is time-consuming, since students and community members have to first form a working relationship before they can focus on the project *per se*; language and cultural differences have to be navigated and negotiated; and transport costs have to be accommodated. If the service-learning component of a module is not compulsory, there is the risk that most students will choose not to participate, as was the case in this study. However, the benefits of such an experience offer strong justification of why more undergraduate programs need to include such a component in their initial design.

The evidence we presented in this article supports our claim that the participatory service-learning experience helped to generate experiential knowledge that led to better understanding of self and others. This can only benefit the participants and ultimately society, as they hopefully share and embody this learning within their families, their social circles and their workplaces. Participatory service-learning experiences thus hold the potential to influence social change towards a more inclusive society. Through creative arts-based practices, the students and community members were introduced to dialogical processes, moving away from learning in campus-based classrooms towards creation of contextual knowledge which is purposeful, meaningful and responsive to social challenges. Hopefully, the introduction of such learning experiences into pre-service teacher programs, and undergraduate programs in general, will help to close the gap between the two worlds of the monkey and shark, leading to a deeper understanding of diversity and the importance of using education to promote reciprocal learning and collaboration towards a better world – a win-win situation for all.

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Learning for sustainable futures: a human development approach to citizenship education

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Abstract

Situated in debates on citizenship formation through higher education, this paper contributes to literature on policy processes and practices in the operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies, a citizenship education course in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges. This is in order to evaluate the extent to which these practices and processes support the principles of human development which are linked to sustainability. This paper argues that a human development approach focusing on four values: empowerment, participation, sustainability and equity is significant in reimagining policy processes and practices that contribute towards learning for sustainable futures. Drawing on interview data of two mid-level policy stakeholders, from a qualitative research study, the results indicate that policy processes undertaken in the introduction and operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies do not reflect and uphold democratic principles contributing towards human development, social justice and hence sustainability. The contested democratic space in the broader context of the course has a bearing on the policy processes and practises adopted by policy stakeholders.

Introduction

Education for sustainable futures has to be understood within the context of complex ecologies that involve historical, structural, political, environmental, and ethical dimensions. 'Human development' and 'sustainable learning' are current 'catch' phrases in education broadly, higher education and various other fields. Together with related concepts such as equity, for example, sustainability, tend to conceal the absence of precise meaning of what it means to educate citizens for critical democratic citizenship. When used as a catch word, the term sustainable learning loses much of its value in

understanding the complexities of citizenship formation in higher education. As such, it is necessary to interrogate the notion of learning for sustainable futures, what it means, and why it is helpful in understanding citizenship formation in a higher education context. There is vast literature on critical democratic citizenship in education (McLaughlin, 1992; Ranger, 2004; Nyakudya, 2007, 2011; McCowan and Unterhalter, 2009, 2013; Boni and Gasper, 2012; Boni and Arias, 2013; Munikwa and Pedzisai, 2013), there is limited focus on policy practices and processes linked to sustainability. Thus, this conceptual and empirical paper provides a useful focus point for a discussion of policy processes and practice in relation to learning for sustainable futures.

The difference between the perceived meaning of sustainable learning, critical democratic citizenship and the ways in which this is translated into policy is one example of how competing critical citizenship claims play out in citizenship formation in higher education. Critical citizenship in this case is understood as the form of citizenship which allows active participation of citizens in the political affairs of their country (Nussbaum, 2002; 2006; McCowan and Unterhalter, 2009; 2013; Boni et al. 2010; Walker and Loots, 2016). This way, citizenship education is so important to today's conflicting world. As suggested by UNESCO (2001, p.1) making reference to the ultimate goal of education for sustainable development, citizenship education should seek "to empower people with the perspectives, knowledge, and skills for helping them live in peaceful sustainable societies". From this claim, this paper argues against processes and practices that avoid active participation of citizens in programmes which affect them.

The paper is divided into five sections which start with a conceptualisation of sustainability followed by a brief discussion of underlying four human development values as applied to education. The values are equity, participation, empowerment and sustainability. The third section provides an overview of the study methodology. Thereafter, the paper presents empirical data demonstrating how policy stakeholders experience the operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies. The last section encompasses a synthesis of policy processes and practices showing how the human development framework provides a helpful lens for interpreting the various complexities and contradictions that emerge from the data, and so potentially opens up new avenues for interventions that seek to advance learning for sustainable futures. In the next section, the paper conceptualises sustainability, learning for sustainable futures and how these relate to citizenship education.

Conceptualisation of sustainability

More than three decades after the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (UN, 1987) defined ‘sustainable development’ and put the concept of sustainability on the global agenda, the concrete meaning of this term and its suitability for specific cases remains disputed. As noted by Marovah (2013) sustainability is usually seen as a guide for economic and social policy making in equilibrium with ecological conditions. It is with this understanding that concepts around sustainability – including sustainable learning are interrogated. Sustainable learning – takes its cue from millennium development goals that were later translated into sustainable development goals. Stallmann (2010) suggests that sustainability should be understood as more expansive and multi-layered. As such it is applicable in many areas such as development, environment, education and policy formulation. This paper thus relates sustainability to education with a focus on advancing human development, providing access to justice for all and building effective and accountable institutions leading to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.

Learning for sustainable futures is thus understood as learning that seeks to ‘meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (UN, 1987, p.8). Drawing on the human development framework, sustainability is considered as a moral obligation necessary for the advancement of democracy and social justice (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1990). In this light, the potential role of citizenship education in advancing human development and the deepening and strengthening of democratic values cannot be underestimated. This means, citizenship should be about empowered citizens who enjoy substantive freedom and equal opportunities to actively participate in decision-making processes in their polity. At the same time, active participation increases citizens’ confidence and participation in conventional political processes, enhancing citizens’ sense of belonging in society, ensuring respect for the law, and fulfilling citizens’ duties towards the state (McCowan and Unterhalter, 2013). From a citizenship education dimension, learning for sustainable future should be framed as more than learning about knowledge and principles related to sustainability (UNESCO, 2012). In other words, it should be transformative in its broadest sense, with creating more sustainable societies as its central goal.

This paper thus asserts that to achieve learning for a sustainable future, citizenship education should be hinged on “problem-based and exploratory forms of learning” grounded on critical, creative and change-oriented participation (UNESCO, 2012, p.5). Based on this assertion, the creation of stronger, healthier and more equitable communities is central to learning for sustainability, making it imperative to focus on policy processes and practices towards this end. The next section discusses the role of four human development values in advancing policy processes and practice linked to sustainability and learning for sustainable futures.

Human development values

At the heart of the human development framework are four principles, participation, equity, sustainability and empowerment, which this paper considers as linked to learning for sustainable future. The principles are in tandem with UNESCO’s (2012, p.10) multifaceted approach to sustainability focusing on areas such as “ecological, environmental, economic and socio-cultural; local, regional and global; past, present and future; human and non-human”. The four human development principles also question predominant approaches to policy practice which may turn out to be unsustainable for example the top down approach used in the operationalisation of citizenship education in Zimbabwe. Through the principle of empowerment the paper advances a transformative approach to sustainability, moving beyond awareness to incorporate real change to values and policy practices in citizenship education. The principle of equity demands a context specific model of engaging citizens simultaneously acknowledging that “there is no one way of living, valuing and doing business that is most sustainable” (UNESCO, 2012, p.10). In the same manner, the level of participation is not homogeneous for all citizens in different contexts, but is determined by contexts and individual attributes. From this understanding, defining human development as “creating an environment in which [citizens] can develop their full potential and lead productive and creative lives in accord with their needs and interests” advances sustainability (UNDP, 1990, p.1). Therefore, sustainable human development should not be measured by how much material gain or profit is achieved in the process of human activity, but rather by how much value has been added towards improving citizens’ potentials, choices or freedoms to be or to do what they perceive as valuable. However this does not mean that economic considerations should be

neglected (Walker, 2012). Rather, the point as argued by Sen (1999) is that, a country's Gross Domestic Product does not tell us how the wealth so gained is distributed across the population, nor does it give insights into the quality of growth achieved.

Drawing on the interconnected human development values: empowerment, participation, equity and sustainability, curriculum innovations at higher education level should endeavour to put people at the centre. Not only viewed as skilled manpower, but as the wealth of the nation, and as individuals of moral worth, and not the means of development (including educational development). Alkire (2010) and Ibrahim (2014) explain that empowerment as envisaged in human development entails ensuring that people are capacitated to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Participation gives space to individuals and groups to be actively and meaningfully involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy and curriculum as well as pedagogical processes and practices. The participation of citizens including youth/students ensures that decisions made and opportunities created do not jeopardise the choices and opportunities of future generations. Equity on the other hand guarantees equality, fairness and social justice so that whatever processes and practices are undertaken uphold these guarantees across different dimensions like gender, age, political affiliation and many others. Sen (1999) argues that human development is concerned with the basic development idea of advancing the richness of human life rather than the economy in which human beings live, which is only part of it. This resonates with ul Haq's notion: "The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time" (UNDP, 1990, p.10). Since people also value achievements that may be unattainable or not necessarily measurable in income or growth figures, such as greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, and a sense of participation in community activities, the objective of development in ul Haq's words "is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives" (UNDP, 1990, p1). This vision of enlarging citizens' choices and freedoms to pursue what they value to be or to do is in line with learning for sustainable futures understood as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The emphasis on choices and empowerment, which other studies on National and Strategic Studies seem not to emphasise, offers a better perspective for

the formation of critical democratic citizens (Ranger, 2004; Tendi, 2010; Nyakudya, 2007, 2011; Mavhunga, Moyo and Chinyani, 2007, Munikwa and Pedzisai, 2013). Closely connected to the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices in order to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes, is participation. Participation, a process through which all members of a community or organization are involved and have influence on decisions related to development activities that will affect them, is feasible where citizens are empowered. In other words it is not enough to have representation which is voiceless or powerless (Fraser, 2009). In the same way, to decide by consensus where there is no equitable distribution of power among citizens concerned is a subtle way of perpetuating injustice and is thus unsustainable. In this case, the human development values under discussion add value to citizenship formation by emphasising empowerment, participation, equity and sustainability. Equity extends the notion of the interconnectedness of humanity by enabling the accommodation of marginalised and oppressed minority groups within society. In addition, equity is a way of managing society in a sustainable way since the ability or capacity of something to be maintained or to sustain itself is based on the level of participation, empowerment and distribution of power and resources. A framework which is silent on these values defeats the course of sustainable learning and the formation of critical democratic citizens.

Turning to its limitations, the human development framework fails to adequately capture institutional and structural arrangements which may enhance or inhibit the realisation of the four values explained above. For example, in the Zimbabwean context, whilst advocating for citizens to participate in activities affecting them in their state, citizenship education offers limited discussion on how to deal with structures of power which inhibit participation (Ranger, 2004; Tendi, 2010). Yet, the human development values' effectiveness in fostering critical citizenship is dependent on the existence of a reciprocal relationship between democratic politics and democratic education. Walker (2010, p.221) argues that "higher education is located within society and social change; changes in higher education might influence society as much as society in turn shapes higher education". Accordingly, a democratic system of education is indispensable to further democratic citizenship, in as much as democratic citizenship is crucial for democratic education. Although this assumption is normative, it is necessary as a standard towards which we should work.

In the next section the paper discusses the methodology chosen for the investigation of the extent to which National and Strategic Studies advances human development values.

Methodology

Without losing a firm theoretical base influenced by a human development framework, this section outlines the rationale and decisions taken regarding the design, the sample, data collection, organisation and analysis. The process and procedures were iterative, complex and ever-changing throughout the study.

This paper draws on empirical data from a doctoral study, collected between February and May 2013. The study was qualitative and interpretive in nature. The aim was to generate an in-depth understanding of practice and processes in the operationalisation of NASS in two case studies. While surveys are effective in providing statistical relations between selected variables, they are less effective where an in-depth understanding of perceptions of and attitudes towards a phenomenon are required. Thus a case study was preferred despite criticisms levelled against it, in terms of lack of generalisability, because it is more context-specific, and therefore important to understanding a phenomenon in its specific situation (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2003).

Despite the first author's positionality as both a lecturer in National and Strategic Studies and a researcher, the analysis of data was guided by both the particularity of the moment and a genuine commitment to advancing the formation of critical citizens contributing to human development and upholding social justice. He joined the college ten years after the introduction of National and Strategic Studies in teacher education. At each level of this empirical research: the planning, collection of data in situ and its analysis, philosophical, historical and educational approaches complemented each other by providing: a clear conceptual understanding of issues; the spirit of questioning; and consciousness of the context in which the formation of critical democratic citizens takes place.

The study involved 31 volunteer participants, two mid-level policy stakeholders, 24 student participants and five lecturers from two participating primary school teacher colleges. The doctoral study made use of qualitative

methods that include semi structured in-depth interviews of all the 31 participants, focus group discussions with student participants, class observations and document analysis. Participants' names are anonymised in line with ethical considerations.

The focus is on evidence from two mid-level stakeholders, Simboti and Madamombe. Simboti was purposively chosen by virtue of his post at head office of the Ministry Of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development under which teachers' colleges are administered. Madamombe, selected through snowballing, is from the University of Zimbabwe which grants associateship status to all teachers' colleges scattered throughout the country. Simboti and Madamombe were interviewed at their respective work places after getting approval from the Ministry Of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development. The interviews were on average one hour long each. Their experiences are interpreted from a policy perspective. While Simboti is stationed in Harare, he constantly visits and holds meetings with college Principals for various purposes including quality control. Madamombe is a lecturer in one of the departments at the University of Zimbabwe but is engaged in several duties related to teacher education including external examination and academic writing in the Department of Teacher Education. The fact that there are only two mid-level policy stakeholder views represented in the broad study and in this paper is acknowledged as a limitation since their views are not necessarily representative of all who were involved in National and Strategic Studies' implementation. However, this does not undermine the invaluable insights gleaned from their experiences.

With the help of the second author, who was the supervisor in the study, the qualitative data was analysed using NVivo software. All qualitative data was open-coded initially to allow participant voices to emerge and guide the identification of themes. Thereafter, a second round of thematic coding was also done. The paper focuses on one of the emergent themes -policy practices and processes. The iterative process involving two authors of different backgrounds, enhanced rigour simultaneously limiting subjectivity in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

In the next section, the article reflects on the conditions of possibility for advancing policy practices contributing to human development and learning for a sustainable future using human development values to guide the argument.

The context of the introduction of NASS

By discussing the context, the aim is to understand the degree to which the context provides a good grounding for advancing critical citizenship which is directly linked to sustainable learning. This is because critical citizenship entails forming citizens who are empowered to actively participate in the affairs of their polity (McCowan and Unterhalter, 2009, 2013; Fraser, 2009). Four developments relate to the context: the introduction of draconian laws like the Public Order Security Act⁴ and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act,⁵ the redefinition of citizenship in an exclusionary manner, the introduction of National Youth Service⁶ and the revision of the national curriculum (Phimister, 2005; Raftopoulos, 2009; Daimon, 2014). The increased use of executive powers by the president became an important lever through which a directive to introduce citizenship education in tertiary institutions was made using well placed officials.⁷ In such a context, it is doubtful whether it is possible to teach or learn citizenship for sustainable futures. The interests advanced in this context of limited citizens' participation, are of those in power.

The critical voice provides an opportunity for the citizens to demand their space by challenging structures of power which are repressive. The two informants views about the context in which National and Strategic Studies

¹ Passed in 2002 and restricted freedom of assembly; to criticise the government and President; and to engage in, advocate or organise acts of peaceful civil disobedience.

² Restricted the culture of secrecy prevalent in most democratic systems it suggests that access to information is not seen as a right but a privilege that government officials dispense at will, Read more on <http://www.freedominfo.org/2012/08/report-excoriates-zimbabwe-access-environment/>

³ National Youth Service was introduced in July 2001 focusing on instilling youth with the following five values: National Identity, Patriotism, Unity and Oneness, Discipline and Self Reliance. Participants spend three months in training camps, after which they are required to complete a one month service project in their communities. (See Ministry of Youth Development: <http://www.mydgc.gov.zw/nys.htm>)

⁴ All ministers were drawn from ZANU PF senior members who were often members of the party's highest decision making bodies and what was decided in the bodies of ZANU PF became government policy (See Raftopoulos and Muzondidya (2013).

was introduced, though at times contrasting, provides insights on the level of participation of citizens. Although Simboti was not explicit on why he was not comfortable with discussing the context, some of his responses provide some hints, *“These political arguments do not get us anywhere and this is exactly what made people to resist this course from the beginning.”* From his statement it is clear that he regards discussing the context as a political issue and that during the initial stages of the introduction of National and Strategic Studies, the course was resisted because those who resisted thought the course was political. However, Simboti does not deny or accept the allegations that the course was introduced for political expedience specifically to buttress ZANU PF support which was waning *“So whether the government was beleaguered or not, the idea of coming up with a person who is broad minded is very noble”*.

He however admits that the context influences the policy processes and operationalisation of a curriculum innovation.

How these things [policy processes] work depend on a number of things including how the economy is performing, the social and the political situation. We have a lot of polarisation to the extent that we cannot claim that the people who are teaching National and Strategic Studies are perfect people.

Simboti does not mention any relationship between the introduction of National and Strategic Studies and the Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (1999), which, if it was important, as a mid-level policy stakeholder he would have known. Apart from that he does not cite any policy document communicating details of the government’s decision to introduce National and Strategic Studies. This as suggested by Sigauke (2011) means the decision to introduce National and Strategic Studies was influenced by political motives not necessarily related to policy.

Turning now to Madamombe’s thicker and more critical responses when compared to Simboti’s, he explains:

There are two different issues that are emerging here, what was intended by those who pushed for it and what then obtained on the ground. I am saying those who came up with the programme are coming from a position where they are saying there are so many forces that are against ‘us’ but us not being the nation of Zimbabwe but us referring to

a political party. There was need to help inculcate within graduates from learning institutions a certain kind of thinking. What I commend them for doing is that when we crafted the syllabus for National and Strategic Studies in the teachers' colleges we were not influenced by our political orientations, perhaps that justifies the kind of question that you are pursuing that is this perceived or real.

The way Madamombe separates issues into various dimensions helps us understand different possibilities motivating the introduction of National and Strategic Studies. At one level are the intended outcomes for the state, which are represented by the mid-level policy stakeholder participants and at implementation level we get insights on what obtained in practice from the lecturer participants and the student participants. Which means, the intended goals and what then obtained is different. The disjuncture between official precepts and its practices also emerged in McCowan's (2009) study on citizenship education involving Brazilian cases. A number of factors contribute to these disparities. These nuances help us understand why Simboti, a senior official at head office, has been hesitant to discuss the context. He has to be interpreted as trying to be politically 'correct'. Madamombe further suggests that the Department Of Teacher Education is free from manipulation by political influences. This claim cannot be ascertained in this paper, however. The issue at stake is whether the processes uphold human development values related to advancing learning for a sustainable future.

Madamombe provides more insights in the following statements with more emphasis on the fact that our understanding of the context should not overshadow the necessity of the course:

But then there are other angles that we can look at it from, where you ask yourself, at what stage was National And Strategic Studies introduced? This is when the ruling party is beleaguered when it starts to face real stiff competition, opposition if you want. Then you link this up with other developments where the Border Gezi programmes, National Youth Service is introduced.

Directly linked to the introduction of National and Strategic Studies was growing opposition (Ranger, 2004; Tendi, 2010) and also the introduction of National Youth Service which Madamombe claims

generated suspicion about National and Strategic Studies. He adds that the context was so 'poisoned' that the teaching of the course was somehow dictated by the politics of the day. To him the timing is quite influential through either giving impetus to the innovation or destabilising it. Nonetheless, Simboti and Madamombe agree on the significance of the new course despite its timing or context. Madamombe illustrates how fear infected the context in which, for example, History⁸ was taught at various levels of education.

Yes a lot of fear is experienced and we have a lot of empirical evidence of teachers of history in particular who have been abused mainly in the rural areas for instance and they will shy away from looking at these issues critically. The history syllabus extends to the present and the majority of the teachers are teaching it up to 1980, I am talking about O level and A level history syllabus on Zimbabwe because of fear of tackling the post-independence era because they realised that it's not all rosy that they will be teaching, there is a lot of negatives a lot of 'warts' that they have to point out and they will not resonate well with certain sections of our society. Even where people have not been approached and told don't teach this, there is self-censorship. That self-censorship is not mere cowardice which cannot be understood. It is understood there has been a lot of violence against these people. People have lost limbs, people have lost lives because of this, that's my own opinion.

On the other hand Simboti claims not to be aware of the existence of fear "fear of what? There is no need to fear, there is no need to be afraid of anything". What is surprising is how Simboti and Madamombe claim that National and Strategic Studies seeks to form critical citizens. If Madamombe was genuinely concerned about the advancement of critical citizenship, he would realise how difficult it is to teach for criticality in the context of fear, just as he noted in the teaching of History.

⁵ National and Strategic Studies has a component of History which has been named Patriotic History by scholars such as Ranger (2004, p.215) "Patriotic history' is intended to proclaim the continuity of the Zimbabwean revolutionary tradition. It is an attempt to reach out to 'youth' over the heads of their parents and teachers, all of whom are said to have forgotten or betrayed revolutionary values. It repudiates academic historiography with its attempts to complicate and question. At the same time, it confronts Western 'bogus universalism' which it depicts as a denial of the concrete history of global oppression.

This section presented evidence on mid-level policy stakeholder participants' perspectives on the interpretation of the relationship between the context in Zimbabwe and the introduction of National and Strategic Studies. While Simboti chose not to say much about how the context influenced the introduction of this curriculum innovation, Madamombe sees the political side of the introduction of National and Strategic Studies as a response to growing opposition. To him, as suggested by several critics of citizenship education in Zimbabwe, it was the desire for political survival by the ruling elites which influenced this innovation (Ranger, 2004; Tendi, 2010; Sigauke, 2011). He sees the fear of the government's brutality extended to the citizens through various coping strategies in education and society including self-censorship. As a senior official in the Ministry Of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development, Simboti seeks to maintain the official position and focuses on implementing what is handed down to him by government without questioning. Basing on the importance placed on citizenship participation by Sen (1999); McCowan and Unterhalter (2009; 2013) and Sigauke, (2011), the context in which National and Strategic Studies was introduced does not provide a secure grounding for the formation of critical citizenship. In addition the context does not offer a good foundation for effective participation by various stakeholders in deliberations leading to the introduction of National and Strategic Studies. In the next section the paper uses four human development values, directly linked to sustainability, to evaluate policy processes regarding the introduction of National and Strategic Studies.

Evaluation of policy processes and practices

The following evidence relates to perceptions linked to policy processes and practices. What is striking in the evidence is the absence of any policy document to back claims by the respondents. There was a passing reference to Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training by Simboti but not as a fore runner of the introduction of citizenship education or National and Strategic Studies in particular. What Simboti first acknowledges is that the strategy used to introduce this curriculum innovation was a top down approach: "*Well it looks like we used the top down approach it did not come from the bottom. Its government which saw it fit to have it introduced.*" When asked why that approach in particular and not any other more open and people centred approach was adopted, he said "*we are mainly people who follow*

policy, if government says this must be done, that is what we do". Considering that there is a blurred distinction between party and government as explained by Raftopoulos (2013), the party ideologies are filtered into the National and Strategic Studies curriculum. The approach does not provide participants with transformative power, which is the ability to challenge the hierarchies of power which inhibit effective participation of citizens in policy practices and processes (Fraser, 2009, UNESCO, 2012).

Simboti is suggesting that at their level there is no room for questioning instructions. This is also instructive of the *modus operandi* of the policy processes. In his words, without any questioning, the instruction went down the chain of command, *"So the strategy which we used was that we told Department Of Teacher Education that this course is compulsory and every student has to pass National and Strategic Studies in order to graduate"*. More precisely, against the spirit of effective participation and equitable distribution of power and influence (McCowan and Unterhalter, 2009; Boni and Gasper, 2012; Boni and Arias, 2013), Simboti notes **that ""**. Simboti cites a few cases where officials met in regional workshops to claim that other stakeholders were involved *"it's not something that had been done or is done single handedly"*. This does not mean that there was open deliberation for the innovation to be taken aboard. For example Simboti tells us that:

First we had workshops in Nyanga, then the other one in Gweru, another one in Kadoma and then another in Masvingo where we invited all Principals, and Lecturers in that course to an extent that I think that assisted in informing various stakeholders that the course was there to stay.

Whilst workshops can be participatory and a more open and a democratic way of introducing a curriculum innovation, in the above case, they are also a subtle way of coercion in which participants are informed of what has to be done without inviting any criticism. From Simboti's response, the purpose of the workshop *"was to inform stakeholders that the course was there to stay"*. Those outside the system may wrongly believe that the innovation was discussed and well received.

Simboti tells us about the magnitude of the resistance which was experienced when National and Strategic Studies was introduced:

Of course even in teachers' colleges there was some resistance when we started, very stiff resistance. It was quite difficult, we introduced a course which even lecturers themselves were not comfortable with, and even the college administrators were not very comfortable with it. At first it was not given much time and importance on the college timetables.

Besides highlighting the level of resistance, this response also tells us how college administrators and lecturers exercised their agency in negotiating space. The manner in which this resistance was dealt with also tells a story, “*There were some problems; we even punished some of the Principals for that*” (Simboti). In turn administrators’ decision to deploy lecturers perceived as ‘problem lecturers’⁹ to teach National and Strategic Studies also indicates that the course was not well received or taken seriously. Instituting punitive measures is an indicator that for the authorities, coercion worked better for them in place of deliberations. For this reason, the paper concurs with Nussbaum (2011, p133) that “it is bad to treat [human beings] like objects, pushing them without their consent”. For example, workshops organised for principals and lecturers were meant to give directives to participants rather than to provide an opportunity for deliberation. In such a case, lack of equitable distribution of power makes the workshops merely symbolic and perfunctory.

Given this evidence, the paper proposes that the human development values are a potential vehicle for a genuine devolution of power and decision making in policy processes that strengthens claims to people-focused citizenship curriculum. McCowan and Unterhalter (2009) remind us that education is not only charged with values but also promotes the same values. One of the values advanced is empowerment. Considering the top down approach used by the Ministry Of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development as reported by Simboti, the introduction of National and Strategic Studies in teachers’ colleges did not meet this basic value. It is not surprising that under such circumstances the course experienced resistance.

UNDP (1993) underscores the intrinsic value of participation by both individuals and groups as a way of widening access to decision and power. Participation by citizens in their society has intrinsic value since it buttresses

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These are lecturers with disciplinary problems usually referred to as acts of misconduct by administrators.

democracy. The limited participatory nature in the policy processes and practice in this regard directly affects equity which is interconnected to the distribution of citizens' basic capabilities that is freedoms, choices and opportunities to decide on the type of citizenship course to be undertaken. Thus, power was not evenly distributed to fully account for the principle of equity in the human development framework. Subtly, authorities remained in control of both the policy processes and the content of the course. This is not surprising as Simboti has already hinted that "*it was take it or leave. Its either you agree with what we want to do or you are out*". These words depict an inequitable distribution of power. Where equity is envisaged, we would expect collaboration not merely consultations where subordinates would be effectively involved not as mere recipients of instructions. This brings us to the last strand of values for our consideration, sustainability of the opportunities and choices that participants have to say, do and be what they value.

From the UNDP (1993, 1994) definitions of sustainability, policy processes and practice that meets sustainability should not be geared towards establishing a transitory state of affairs. Instead, they should aim to "sustain positive outcomes over time" at individual, group or national level (Alkire, 2010, p.19). Because of the urge to maintain power and influence, this does not come naturally in the policy processes; there must be a deliberate effort to remove barriers that sustain oppressive policy practices and structural injustices. Alkire (2010, p.19), argues that "decision makers need to know not only who is deprived but also who is chronically deprived" and to what extent. She adds that policy processes and practice must include "support for local initiatives that mitigate vulnerability, expand capabilities and sustain these expansions". To achieve this, the interconnectedness of the four human development values should be recognised and exercised. Without citizens' empowerment, there is no active participation and the equitable distribution of power will be diminished and ultimately the legacy that is left will derail continual growth which can be referred to as sustainable.

In the context of limited democratic space (explained earlier in the paper) in which National and Strategic Studies was introduced in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges, it can be argued that policy processes and practices for the introduction and operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies defeats the purpose of learning for sustainable futures. The following factors are notably constraining to this cause: the context of fear, the use of a top down approach with its dictatorial tendencies, limited deliberative space in

‘consultative’ workshops, as well as punitive measures for dissenting voices. Punishment is hardly a good start to make lecturers teach National and Strategic Studies. In this regard, policy processes and practice in the National and Strategic Studies curriculum uses a minimalist approach. Framing policy processes and practice within a human development framework may go a long way in promoting learning for sustainable futures in National and Strategic studies and more broadly.

Conclusion

The paper has conceptualised sustainability as a basis for defining learning for sustainable futures simultaneously linking this to citizenship education. It advanced the human development framework focusing on underlying four values as useful for assessing policy processes and practice in the introduction and operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies in Zimbabwean teachers colleges. The values are equity, participation, empowerment and sustainability. It also provided a snapshot of the study methodology in order to validate the power of evidence provided in support of the paper’s argument. The paper then presented empirical data demonstrating how policy stakeholders experienced the introduction and operationalisation of National and Strategic Studies in a constricted democratic space. In the last section the paper provides a synthesis of policy processes and practices showing how the four human development values provides a helpful lens for interpreting the various complexities and contradictions that emerged from the data.

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Posthumanism and educational research for sustainable futures

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Abstract

Karen Barad's (2007) concept of intra-action and Rosi Braidotti's (2013) nomadic posthumanism are employed in this article to problematise the notion of educational research for sustainable futures. In rejecting the hierarchical dualism of Cartesian objectivism, which places the human above the non-human, I challenge the stable self-contained subject that presuppose a dialectical relation to the other on which most educational research is premised. Instead, in drawing on the work of Barad and Braidotti, subjectivity is posited as always in the process of becoming-other through the actualisation of new relations. In light of such a subjectivity, I consider the implications for educational research for sustainable futures. Furthermore, four avenues of thought are proposed on how educational research informed by posthumanism could contribute towards sustainable futures.

Introduction

We are posthuman – biotechnologies, genetic manipulation, xenotransplanting, robotics and pharmacology. The list goes on. We live in a world that “is radically hybridised, contaminated and integrated” (Snaza, Appelbaum, Bayne, Carlson *et al.* 2014, p.43). According to Hayles (1999) the question of whether we live in a posthuman present is not one of reflection but one that forces us to recognise our position in the world. This recognition, however, has to a large extent not occurred in most educational research that presupposes the human as an ontological given and treats education “as a practice of humanization” (Snaza, 2013, p.38). Thus, although the notion of the human as an ontological given has been critiqued in a sustained manner for at least the last forty years, as reflected in Foucault's (1994, p.387) ascertain that “as the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of a recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end”, this critique, and the implications thereof, is not reflected in most educational research discourse. In this article I explore the call to treat the ‘human’ as “something other than human” (Snaza, 2013, p.50) through a consideration of Barad's

(2003, 2007) and Braidotti's (2013) positions on posthumanism. This I do specifically in relation to how we conceptualise educational research for sustainable futures.

In bringing educational research for sustainable futures into conversation with posthumanism I frame sustainability within a vitalist brand of monism. The vitalist aspect of such a position posits matter, "including the slice of matter that is human embodiment" (Braidotti, 2013, p.35), as a self-organising and generative force, whilst monism foregrounds transversal relationality through proposing the unity of all matter. Furthermore, in drawing on Deleuze and Guattari (1994) and Bogue's (2007, 2011) conceptualisation of time, I work from the premise that the future is both now and to come. Since the present is both what we are and "what already we are ceasing to be" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.112), it allows for an understanding of the future as "the infinite Now. . . not an instant but a becoming" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.112) and the past as a "memory of the present, a virtual double of the present moment" (Bogue, 2007, p.55). For Bogue (2011, p.77) such a conceptualisation of time positions the future as now in that it is "the becoming-revolutionary of our present and to come as the goal [movement] of our becoming". Time is thus reconsidered as an entanglement of the past, present and future. By framing sustainable futures within a vitalist monist ontology and understanding time as entangled hold important implications for educational research practices. One such implication, which forms the basis of this article, is that research concerned with sustainability and futurity cannot be based only on human concerns but should reflect the precarious position of what is conceived of as 'the human' in the posthuman present. Before proceeding it is, however, important to make clear the distinction between the posthuman present and taking up a posthumanist position.

Although the concepts of the posthuman present and posthumanism are related these concepts should not be equated (Braidotti, 2013; Wolfe, 2010). The posthuman present describes the radically hybridised world we presently inhabit. Posthumanism, on the other hand, draws on anti-humanist,¹ post-colonial, anti-racism and material feminist theories in order to critique "the hierarchical dualism articulated by Cartesian objectivism" (Zembylas and Bozalek, 2014, p.39). Posthumanism does, however, not reflect a

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I refer specifically to philosophical anti-humanism that problematises the notion of a universal and unitary human subject (Braidotti, 2013; Foucault, 1994).

“chronological progression or historical moment” that signals the end of humanism; rather, it is a position that seeks to problematise ontological and epistemological perspectives that makes possible conceiving of a human in essentialist terms (Pedersen, 2010, p.242). As such it reflects “the end of the humanist definition of western man” (Weaver, 2010, p.193) through foregrounding the constitutive interdependence of the human, non-human and inhuman along a culture-nature continuum (Braidotti, 2013). Crudely put, in taking up a posthumanist position one is interested in reconceptualising the relations between matter, nonhuman animals, humans, technologies and the emergence of sense in order to experiment with new (post)human subjectivities (Kruger, 2015). Such a reconceptualization problematizes a humanist understanding of relationality; a relationality that always positions the human (but who is the *human* of such a humanism?) at the centre of all inquiry. Through always centering the human, the notion of human exceptionalism (the idea that humans are unique and should be the focus of concern) and human instrumentalism (that believe that humans have the right to control to world) are normalised and become the dominant discourse (Zembylas and Bozalek, 2014). This position is rejected in posthumanism.

I employ Barad’s (2003, 2007) concept of intra-action and Braidotti’s (2013) nomadic posthumanism as conceptual persona (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994) to problematise human exceptionalism and instrumentalism and to consider the implications thereof for educational research practices. Thus, in keeping with Deleuze’s (2004, p.207) assertion that “[t]here is only action, the action of theory, the action of praxis. . .”, I employ posthumanism as a “vehicle to. . . ground our powers of understanding within the shifting landscapes of the present” (Braidotti, 2013, p.75). Furthermore, in taking up the work of Barad and Braidotti I do not claim that their work represent the field of posthumanism. These authors present only two positions within a plurality of posthumanist orientations. What all of these different orientations hold in common is a shared interest to decentre the human subject through re-embedding it in the relational networks that it is composed of. In this article I consider the possibilities such a decentralisation of the human offers us to conceptualise educational research for sustainable futures within the Anthropocene.² My argument unfolds in two parts: firstly, I briefly introduce

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This term, coined in 2000 by Paul Crutzen and Paul Stoermer, refers to the current geological age in which the earth’s ecological balance is being profoundly altered by human activity. It has to be noted that the recognition of the current epoch as the Anthropocene is still under debate.

the concepts of intra-action and nomadic posthumanism and consider the implications of these for what it means to be human. Secondly, I consider the implications of intra-action and nomadic posthumanism for education and educational research, particularly as it pertains to how we conceive of the contribution that educational research can make towards sustainable futures.

Ontological entanglement and intra-action

Physics, specifically quantum mechanics, contribute towards dismantling an ontologically identifiable human. Based on particle-wave duality and quantum entanglement, Barad (2007) proposes that what has become known as ‘the human’ emerges in and as the world self-encounters. This proposition draws on the double-slit experiment that was conducted for the first time by Thomas Young in 1801. Through this experiment Young endeavoured to establish the nature of electrons (and other matter); whether they are composed of particles or waves. The double-slit experiment indicated that matter could take on both particle or wave qualities but not simultaneously. This led the physicist Niels Bohr to propose that materialisation of matter is depended on “the specific material circumstances. . . which is used to measure” (Hinton, 2013, p.178) it. For Barad this means that any “observation itself is only possible on the basis that the effect of the measurement is indeterminable. . .there is no unambiguous way to differentiate between the ‘object’ and the ‘agencies of observation’” (Barad, 2007, pp.113 and 114). The difference that does exist between an ‘object’ and the ‘agencies of observation’ is not *a priori* (ontological) but only emerges in the entangled becoming of these elements. Furthermore, Bohr argued that because one cannot “differentiate any subject and object outside of their entangled becoming, the very particularity of what materialises is at once an instance of the whole” (Hinton, 2013, p.179). In other words, how matter manifest is intrinsic to the process employed to measure such a manifestation. Entities then are not only constitutive of one another but are created immanently through their interaction. This is what Barad (2007) calls intra-action. It is of significance that Barad employs the term intra-action and not interaction. Whereas interaction would refer to two or more separate, pre-existing entities engaging in an encounter with one another, intra-action, in contrast, stresses the ontological inseparability of entities involved in an ongoing becoming-*with* one another. Thus, what we conceive of as reality is not composed of separate things-in-themselves that exists on an ontological level, but rather a

relational phenomenon that is continuously becoming as the world encounters itself. In the words of Barad (2007, p.140): “[t]he world is a dynamic process of intra-activity”. What is the implication of this position for how we conceive of the human? As there exists not separateness of ‘things’ from the perspective of intra-action any “spatial, ontological, and epistemological distinction that sets humans apart” (Barad, 2007, p.136) becomes impossible.

Barad’s position also holds important implications for how ethics is conceived. Her argument for onto-epistemological inseparability moves ethics from the realm of pronouncing judgment on actions in response to an exteriorised other towards questions of performativity and entanglement. Ethics becomes “about responsibility and accountability for the lively relationalities of becoming, . . . the entangled materialisations of which we are part, including new configurations, new subjectivities, new possibilities” (Barad in Dolphijn and Van der Tuin, 2012, p.69). Thinking ontology, epistemology and ethics as inseparable, argues Barad (as cited in Dolphijn and Van der Tuin, 2012, p.69) “makes for a world that is always already an ethical matter”. I return to Barad’s ethics of entanglement and the concept of intra-action later as I consider these in relation to educational research for sustainable futures.

Nomadic posthumanism

Having considered Barad’s (2007) onto-epistemological position, I turn my attention to Braidotti’s (2011, 2013) nomadic posthumanism, taking cognisance of how her position relates to ethics. Whereas Barad draws on quantum mechanics to theorise her posthumanist performativity, Braidotti draws on critical, feminist and post-colonial theories to problematise the human of universal humanism. Her argument for a nomadic posthumanism unfolds along three lines: nomadic subjectivity, an immanent ethics, and a politics of affirmation. At the heart of Braidotti’s (2013) thesis is a rejection of a Cartesian bifurcation of mind/body (matter), nature/culture, masculine/feminine, human/nonhuman, etc. that stands central to transcendental humanist thought. Instead she calls for a nomadic subjectivity that relinquishes the stable, self-contained subject premised on a dialectical relation to the other for a subjectivity that is always in the process of becoming-*other* through the actualisation of new relations. In order to achieve this conceptual shift she draws on vitalist monism. Braidotti avers that

vitalism allows one to reject the notion that matter is lifeless but to instead view it as autopoietic and filled with life. Matter is understood as dynamic, self-organizing and generative.³ Furthermore, through drawing on a Deleuzian reading of Spinoza's substance monism allows Braidotti to posit the unity of all matter;⁴ a univocity of Being. The vitalist monism that informs Braidotti position is the foundation of her posthumanist nomadism; an approach that "combines non-unitary subjectivity with ethical accountability by foregrounding the ontological role played by relationality" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 93). Braidotti (2011) argues that posthumanist nomadism consists of a radical immanence in which the essential distance between the human subject, the social nexus and the environment is suspended (also see Guattari, 2000). Thus, as outward-bound the subject "is fully immersed in and immanent to a network of nonhuman (animal, vegetable, viral) relations... It is an act of unfolding of the self onto the world and the enfolding within of the world" (Braidotti, 2011, p.94). This then is a transversal subjectivity. But even as the nomadic subject is "constituted in and by multiplicity" it is still grounded and accountable because it is "based on a strong sense of collectivity, relationality and hence community building" (Braidotti, 2013, p.49). It is this collectivity and relationality that informs the ethical dimensions of Braidotti's posthumanist nomadism.

The ethical underpinning of the qualitative shift towards relationality and transversal interconnectedness "involves a creative commitment to maximising connections, and of maximising the powers that will expand the possibilities of life" (Marks, 2010, p.87–88). Nomadic posthumanism allows for an immanent and pragmatic ethics which seeks to increase joyful passions through multiplying productive relations. In keeping with vitalist monism, the

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Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 503) allude to the notion that life can be articulated in all matter by stating that "the organism is that which life sets against itself in order to limit itself, and there is a life all more intense, all more powerful for being anorganic". Furthermore, for them the "minimal real unit" of anorganic life is the assemblage (agencement) and "not the word, the idea, the concept or the signifier" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2002, p. 51). I take note that Deleuze and Guattari's position has been criticised by Žižek and Badiou to be naïve neovitalism (Dema, 2007). I will, however, not take up this discussion here as it is not directly relevant to my argument.

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For Spinoza (2006) there exists only one substance (God or Nature). Deleuze (1994) extends and inverts this position through drawing on Nietzsche's concept of eternal return to posit the interplay between difference and repetition. For Deleuze (1992, 1994) the one substance proposed by Spinoza is in fact an always-differentiating process of becoming.

ethics proposed by Braidotti draws extensively on Spinoza's *Ethics* (2006) and Deleuze's (1988a) reading thereof. Crudely put, for Spinoza the essence of a body (human and nonhuman, animate and inanimate) is its degree of power to affect and be affected. Passions, which can be joyful or sad, come from outside a body and is produced when two or more bodies interact. Joyful passions increases a body's power to act, whereas sad passions decreases a body's power to act. According to Braidotti (2010a, p.212) ethical relations constitute relations that are "conducive to joyful and empowering encounters that express one's *potentia* and increase the subject's capacity to enter into further relations". *Potentia* refers to affirmative and creative power. Importantly, this entails that an ethical posture does not take away the power of others to act but instead enables the power of the other "to expand toward unknown futures" (MacCormack, 2012, p.2).

I argue that such an ethics of affirmation can be brought into relation with the notion of sustainability through the concept of *conatus*. *Conatus* can be defined as the desire⁵ of bodies to preserve their essence, in other words their power to act (Deleuze, 1988a). Put differently, *conatus* is the "desire to actualise one's power of becoming" (Braidotti, 2010b, p.151). An affirmative posthumanist ethics is orientated towards enabling bodies to experiment with actualising their power to the fullest extent without crossing the threshold of sustainability (Braidotti, 2006). Within this context sustainability is understood as the place where interconnected bodies enter into a relationship of composition; a relationship in which neither body extends its powers to the point where the assemblage collapses or where *potentia* transforms into *potestas* (restricting, controlling power/*pouvoir*). An ethics of sustainability is thus radically immanent and foregrounds the primacy of productive relations, creative interdependence and co-poiesis. This ethics is also postanthropocentric as it posits that all bodies (the human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic) have the power to act, to affect and be affected. It is through such an ethics that we can practice an affirmative politics that "entails the creation of sustainable alternatives geared to the construction of social horizons of hope, while at the same time doing critical theory, which implies resistance to the present" (Braidotti, 2011, p.267).

Having provided a brief overview of the posthumanist positions taken up by Barad and Braidotti and how their positions inform an ethics of sustainability,

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Desire in the Deleuzo-Guattarian (1983) sense does not refer to a want or a lack but is an affirmative force that produces connections.

I turn my attention to why I think as educational researchers we need to take note of the ideas presented in their work. I also suggest possible avenues for exploration and experimentation with educational research in relation to thinking about sustainable futures.

The problematics of educational research

Arguably the majority of educational research undertaken is premised on the belief that the “world is populated with individual things with their own independent sets of determinate properties” (Barad, 2007, p.19) which results in dichotomous subject/object relations. It is, however, argued by Snaza and Weaver (2014) that such bifurcation between subject and object alienates the researcher from the environment and structures hierarchical relations with the knowing human in the position of power. Such hierarchical structures promote human exceptionalism and instrumentalism. This leads to the majority of educational research being anthropocentric and speciesist as it reserves the centre of the universe, and any conversation about it, to humans. Yet as Bennet (2010, p.108) argues, in a posthuman world “[to] assume a world of active subjects and passive objects begins to appear as thin descriptions at a time when the interactions between human, viral, animal, and technological bodies are becoming more and more intense”. The posthumanist positions of Barad and Braidotti offer us the chance to problematise this “divide between speaking-subjects and mute objects” (Bennet, 2010, p.108) in educational research.

If one takes Barad (2003, 2007) and Braidotti’s (2013) positions seriously that independent entities do not exist *a priori* and as such cannot be acted upon but instead participate in their own immanent materialisation through the relations into which they enter, we have to reconsider *what* we understand educational research to be, *what* we research, and *how* we conduct our research endeavours. For example, when we conduct classroom observations, work with ‘objective’ data during statistical analysis, or code interviews during qualitative research, we cannot treat matter (data) as a static entity that awaits signification by humans, nor can we treat matter as “an uncontested ground for scientific, feminist or Marxist theories [as m]atter is not immutable or passive” (Barad, 2003, p.821). As argued previously, this is because the observer and the observed are fundamentally entangled and ontologically inseparable (Barad, 2007). Similarly, Braidotti’s (2013) brand of vital monism unfolds in her posthumanist nomadism through a relational ontology and non-

unitary subjectivity. In positing a relational ontology humans are neither pure cause nor pure effect but part of a relational becoming-*with* the world. Agency (or the ability to affect and be affected) is not the sole domain of the human but is extended to include all matter.

In recognising the entanglement of time and matter and the immanence of life, educational researchers that work towards sustainable futures should take cognisance of the fact that their research practices are not only receptive of the world, but also transformative of it (Ingold, 2011). This transformative aspect of research is potentially made evident through a posthumanist position that decentres the human subject in favour of affectivity and relationality. Through such a transposition educational research moves from the realm of representation (being receptive of the world) to that of performativity (transforming the world). In following Schechner (as cited in Vannini, 2015, p.8) performativity in this instance is understood as potentiality “waiting to be actualised”. Research as performance thus creates openings for experimentation with “new forms of life” (Thrift, 2008, p.14); that is, different world-becomings that decentres the human in favour of emergent and relational networks along a culture-nature continuum. Such an understanding of how posthumanism can inform educational research for sustainable futures does not necessarily reject humanistic concerns but approaches it from a post-individualistic, relational and affective perspective. Emphasising the performativity of research also potentially allows for the emergence of knowledge beyond the bounds of representation (see for example Murriss, 2016). This is because such research practices would not necessarily be so much concerned with “representing an empirical reality that has taken place *before* the act of representation than they are in enacting multiple and diverse potentials of what knowledge can become *afterwards*” (Vannini, 2015, p.12). Through broadening educational research practices to not only approach the world through cognition but also affectivity and performance permit experimenting with creating different knowledge and creating knowledge differently (St Pierre, 1997). In shifting the focus of examination (and representation thereof) from the actions of humans towards “how relational networks or assemblages of animate and inanimate affect and are affected” (Fox and Alldred, 2015, p.399), I consider four avenues along which educational research for sustainable futures can travel. This is done with particular reference to the posthumanist positions of Barad and Braidotti.

- i. If we, as educational researchers, wish to contribute towards sustainable futures through our research practices, we have to move beyond

universalistic notions of what constitutes the human and the associated concept of anthropocentrism. This sentiment is also echoed by Braidotti (2013), Colebrook (2014), Snaza *et al.* (2014) and Horsthemke (2009) who argue that any politics orientated solely towards the welfare of the human cannot address the challenges faced in the Anthropocene. These challenges include climate change, species extinction, ecological depletion, mass migrations, and increased racial intolerance to name but a few. Arguably, to remain relevant within the current global context through addressing the challenges it poses, and the processes through which such challenges arise, educational research and the educational project at large have to become posthuman and postanthropocentric. Thus, in thinking about sustainability we need to decentre the human and foreground the material-discursive relational networks with which we and our research endeavours are entangled. Doing this, I believe, will allow us to move beyond a politics of representation that seeks to model “the existence of preexisting things” (Rotas, 2014, p.76) towards a politics of performativity and co-poiesis. Such a politics is founded on a relational praxis and seek to both acknowledge the interconnectedness of the material-discursive field, as well as actively establish productive and sustainable relations. Research that draws on such a praxis treats subjectivity as transversal and geo-centred (see Braidotti, 2013, pp.81-89) and in so doing allows for a broadened understanding of what educational research for sustainable futures could entail.

- ii. A posthumanist position allows educational researchers the opportunity to focus on how humans are always already constituted in/through the in- and nonhuman. This is I believe an important onto-epistemological shift; for educational research and practices that endeavours to humanise the human (as is the *telos* of most historical and contemporary education projects) is always structurally bound to practices of dehumanisation (Snaza, 2013). Such dehumanisation occurs through the creation of sexualised others (e.g. women, LGBTI community), racialised others (indigenous people, post-colonial peoples) and naturalised others (animals, the environment and other nonhumans) (Braidotti, 2013). It is through becoming not-human that we start to see human differentiation more clearly and how ‘humans’ are constituted in and through an interconnected world. This would offer us a chance to reconfigure current humanistic identities and practices that are structurally bound to practices of dehumanisation in ways that produce new subjectivities (assemblages that are composed of human and non-human agents) and

practices that have not yet been coded into hierarchical and dualistic systems (Braidotti, 2013). In this context, education for sustainable futures does not merely mean to conduct research that safeguard the position of the human in the future but must involve a more radical project that repositions current research practices in terms of relational onto-epistemologies and entangled time.

- iii. Posthumanism offers an opportunity to experiment with transversal research practices. In thinking about research practices in terms of transversality I draw on Guattari's (2015) use of the term. For Guattari (2015, p.132) interdisciplinary research does not avoid the problematics of compartmentalisation and as such cannot "rethink human life in terms of generalised ecology – environmental, social and mental". In other words, interdisciplinary approaches to most educational research practices are still firmly rooted in a dualistic Cartesian logic and as such is incongruent with the relational ontological perspectives from which posthumanism emerges. In response, transversal research practices build on heterogeneity and heterarchy; "producing effect not of universality" (Deleuze, 1988b, p.91) and transcendence but of singularity and immanence. This means that research is positioned as a socio-political praxis based on the understanding that the emergence of the world is a continuously entangled becoming (Barad, 2007). Research practices rooted in transversality supposes that "no theory can totalise the entire field of knowledge and action. A theory multiplies and erupts in a totally different area" (Baugh, 2010, p.283). Transversal research practices thus encompasses "a transversal movement that sweeps one *and* the other way" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.25) through "lateral affiliations and entire system of networks" (Foucault and Deleuze, 1977, p.212). Transversal research practices draws on an array of fields, including but not limited to critical theory, postcolonialism, feminism, queer theory, critical animal studies, media and cultural studies. For example, research on food gardens at schools offers a way to examine how climate change, structural inequality, gender, agricultural practices, mass consumerism, advanced capitalism, nutrition, curriculum and pedagogy become-*with* on another (see Oosterling, 2013; Rotas, 2014). Not only do the posthumanist positions of Barad and Braidotti challenge discreet disciplines (e.g. education, biology, business studies) and the place of the 'human' within these disciplines, it also provides grounding to experiment with novel methodological practices. The turn to materiality and affectivity have caused an explosion in what has been labelled post-

qualitative, non-representational and post-representational methodologies in recent years (see for example Clough, 2008; Coleman and Ringrose, 2013; Fox and Alldred, 2015; MacLure, 2013; St Pierre, 2013, Vannini, 2015). These transversal research practices and methodologies allow for a material and affective analysis that enables connecting localised micro-politics of material-discursive practices and phenomena with macro (globalised) structures, flows and intensities through positioning research as receptive and transformative of the world.

- iv. Posthumanism challenges one to let go of an ethics grounded in universal humanism when conducting research and to move towards an immanent and relational ethics. Furthermore, because “[w]e do not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because ‘we’ are of the world” (Barad, 2007, p.185) it is not enough to merely acknowledge our own situatedness when conducting research. From a posthumanist perspective we are always embedded and embodied (Braidotti, 2013) in our research practices and context. As such, the knowledge produced through research is not only situated and partial but also performative as “knowing is not bounded or a closed practice but an ongoing performance of the world” (Barad, 2007, p.149). Because we gain knowledge through unfolding with/in the world, all our research endeavours are affective and as such always already political. That is, they concern power relations (in the Spinozist sense). This means that they are also ethical. It is, however, an ethics that moves beyond recognition of the other based on a shared vulnerability towards an affirmative ethics based on interconnectedness, co-poiesis and becoming-*with* the other. In conducting research, we need to carefully consider whether the relations we enter into, and the relations we make possible through our research – human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic – are sustainable and extend the power of the other to act to its fullest degree.

To wonder

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze (1994, p.139) asserts that “[s]omething in the world forces us to think”. It is an interruptive encounter with the unintelligible; it is an affective encounter – “wonder, love, hatred, suffering”

(Deleuze 1994, p.139). Thought produced through such an encounter is intensive and untimely and challenges one to grapple with the limits of understanding and with that which is unthinkable. This is I believe what posthumanism and postanthropocentrism offer us – to stand at the edge of the “failure of human knowledge to gain access to the world” (Snaza and Weaver, 2014, p.6) and to set “up conditions in which we can. . . get free of ourselves and the old concepts that weigh us down” (St. Pierre, 2013, p.226). This precarious position offers us a return to ‘wonder’ at the becoming-world (Bogost, 2012; MacLure, 2013). As educational researchers we should not be afraid to disrupt the (humanist) logic that traps educational research within the instrumentalist confines of always asking a variant of the same question: ‘What works best?’ Rather, as Snaza and Weaver (2014) suggest, a posthumanist and postanthropocentric position allows us to turn this question around and ask: ‘Best for what?’ This is, I believe, a vital first step in starting to think about the possibilities for what educational research might become as we grapple with the problematics of sustainable futures in the Anthropocene.

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Building capacity for green, just and sustainable futures - a new knowledge field requiring transformative research methodology

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Abstract

Education has contributed to a society-wide awareness of environmental issues, and we are increasingly confronted with the need for new ways to generate energy, save water and reduce pollution. Thus new forms of work are emerging and government, employers and educators need to know what ‘green’ skills South Africa needs and has. This creates a new demand for ‘green skills’ research. We propose that this new knowledge field – like some other educational fields – requires a transformative approach to research methodology. In conducting reviews of existing research, we found that a transformative approach requires a reframing of key concepts commonly used in researching work and learning; multi-layered, mixed method studies; researching within and across diverse knowledge fields including non-traditional fields; and both newly configured national platforms and new conceptual frameworks to help us integrate coherently across these. Critical realism is presented as a helpful underpinning for such conceptual frameworks, and implications for how universities prepare educational researchers are flagged.

Introduction

Focus on environment and sustainable development

In any given week a newspaper in South Africa is likely to feature a story demonstrating environmental issues as they manifest in various contexts. At the time of the 2015 conference of the South African Education Research Association (SAERA), the *Mail and Guardian* reported on the national drought (Kings, 2015, p.11). The town of Ficksburg had been without water for weeks. Rivers and boreholes had dried up and cattle was said to “paw at the dry crust of dams”. South Africa was in the grip of the worst drought since

the advent of democracy. Several Departments of Agriculture had declared disasters, and for the second season in a row, the maize crop would fail.

King's article demonstrated a key feature of environmental issues: they have social, economic and equity dimensions and often deep historical roots. The farmers who have been hit hardest by the drought, are those without the capital to weather consecutive crop failures, including the Black farmers who have only recently gained access to land denied by the 1913 Land Act. Also among the worst affected are the workers. In the 2008 drought, Warden township doubled in size with the influx of retrenched farm worker families. Throughout the country, the most vulnerable members of society will suffer as the price of maize, and with it the cost of other basic foods, increases. Steeper food prices have been linked to social violence, and the Marikana massacre coincided with the sharpest increase in the price of white maize in history (African Centre for BioSafety, 2014).

Is the drought an environmental sustainability issue? On the one hand, dry spells have always characterised the region. Farmers supported by government have adapted, to a greater or lesser extent successfully, to the limitations of the known environment. But extreme weather conditions are predicted *to worsen* in southern Africa as a result of an anthropogenic environmental issue, enhanced global warming. For this and other reasons, traditional coping practices will no longer suffice. Environmental issues show up the shadow side of development (Beck, 1986). The previous government commissioned dams and inter-basin transfer schemes that benefitted White settlements and commercial farmers. Such engineering solutions have created new ecological and farming problems (e.g. black fly), and discriminated against the former homelands and subsistence farmers, who seldom benefited from the consequences of water being redirected to the privileged few. Dams and transfer schemes are not *sustainable*. All our major rivers have already been dammed, but not all households have access to water, and the Constitution compels us to share water with *all*, more widely and more equitably.

The *National Water Act of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998) advocated radically new (transformed) ways to manage and govern water, participatory decision-making about the allocation of water, and the need to maintain a minimum flow to sustain ecosystems. The Water Act is one of several national frameworks reflecting a commitment to environmental sustainability

and economically inclusive development. Others include the *National Development Plan* (Republic of South Africa, 2011) and the *Green Economy Accord* (DED, 2011) between Labour, Business and Government, which commits to an equitable (inclusive of the poor), job intensive, low-carbon ('clean') and sustainable development path. All these suggest radically transformed work practices.

The notion of an inclusive green economy introduces a second important feature of environmental sustainability issues: besides 'doom and gloom', they also present *opportunities* for innovation and development. While limited rainfall is a fact of life, we can choose how we collect, use and share the water. South Africa's production systems are water inefficient, so there is room for improvement and innovation. We can also choose how we generate energy – renewable energy alternatives to coal are fast coming on stream. We are in fact witnessing an eco-revolution (Montavaldo, 2009, cited in DEA, 2010) with technological advances to address environmental issues being made at an unprecedented pace, and at the same time, new development opportunities opening up.

Figure 1 shows three generations of eco-innovations, moving from end-of-pipe solutions to closed system or circular economy models in which radical resource productivity and sustainability is built into production and consumption systems from the start. This trend requires new models of process, new ways of thinking, new values and competencies, and therefore also new educational programmes, and new considerations for how to conduct educational research.

South Africa could take advantage of eco-innovations to create new work opportunities, including new work for those losing jobs as their enterprise becomes ecologically unsustainable. There are already more people employed in environmental and water related jobs in South Africa (800 000 at a conservative estimate) than in mining (DEA, 2010). A leading local study (Maia, Giordano and Kelder *et al.*, 2011) indicated that South Africa could create jobs by investing in resource efficiency, sustainable transport and natural resource management, among others: "approximately 98 000 new direct jobs, on average, in the short term, almost 255 000 in the medium term and around 462 000 employment opportunities in the formal economy in the long term" (p.12).

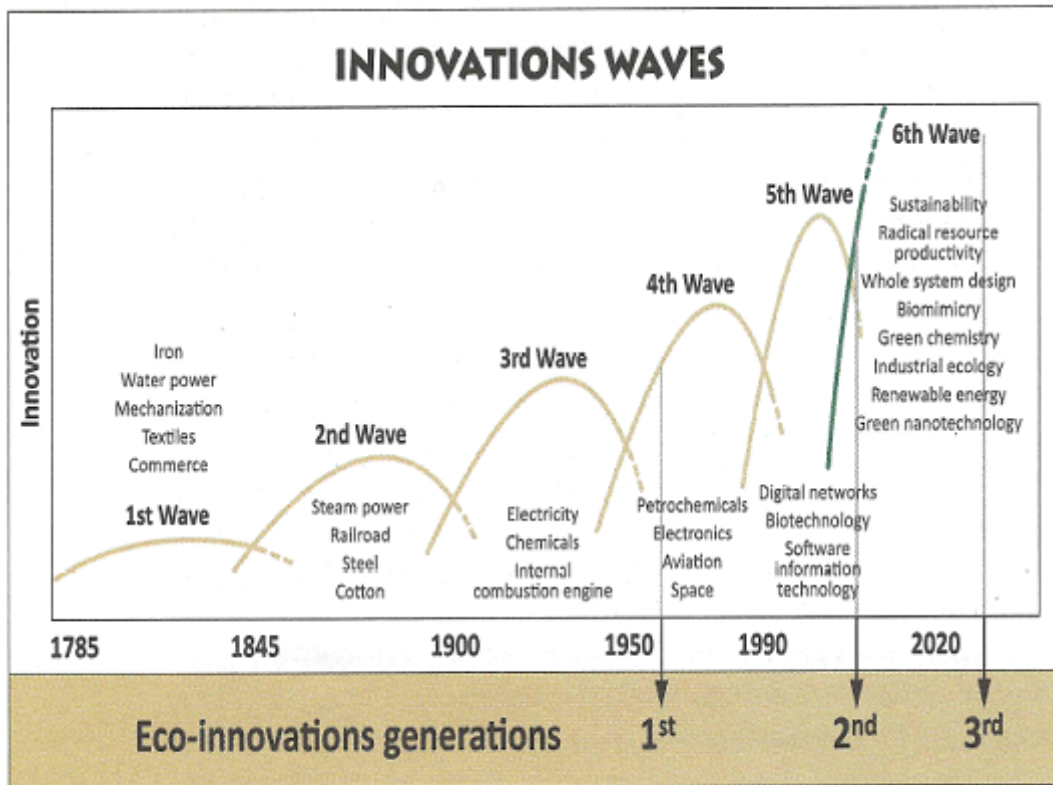


Figure 1: Over Time Innovations Respond to Environmental Opportunities and Lately, Risks (Montavaldo, 2009, in DEA, 2010)

To drive eco-innovations, and to actualise the associated possibilities, a society needs people with a variety of skills which we can describe, for the sake of brevity, as ‘green skills’. What are the implications for educators and for educational research?

The link to work, education and research

Around the world, new forms of work are emerging across sectors in response to climate change, renewable energy, biodiversity, waste and water demands, cleaner production and radical resource productivity (CEDEFOP, 2012). These include new ‘green’ occupations as well as new values, additional or different knowledge and competencies that would change traditional occupations either a little or a lot. For example, the *National Water Act of 1998* created Catchment Management Agencies to make democratic and integrated, system-wide water resource management decisions. Today the Department of Water and Sanitation reports a shortage of people with catchment management skills – an occupation that did not exist 15 years ago. How does the education community respond to these developments? South Africa has world-class environmental policies, but few policy guidelines on how to decide what our green skills needs are, where they are needed, and how to develop them in our education and training sites. A study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2011) showed that we compare poorly to other countries in this regard. The research for the Environmental Sector Skills Plan (DEA, 2010) found that South Africa’s skills development system was largely *re-active* to the skills demands in the environmental sector. This makes a new educational knowledge field of green skills research an imperative. One of the first explorations in the field should be: *How, in the absence of policy guidelines, should educational researchers approach such research?*

Answering this question requires a fuller response than we can give here, but part of our answer is that ‘green skills’ research requires a transformative methodology. That is, we need research methods, and underpinning theory guiding the choice and use of those methods, that help to bring about deep and radical cultural and institutional shifts, as opposed to surface reform (Popkewitz, 1991). This need for transformation is, we believe, shared by other educational research fields. Our argument may therefore be relevant to educational researchers generally. In the next sections we explore some

features of this emerging knowledge field, why its methodology needs to be transformative, and what a transformative approach might entail. (The implications for curriculum will be more implicit, and the subject for a follow-up paper to be presented at SAERA 2016.)

First we continue the analysis of environmental issues started in the introduction, and then draw insights from reviews of recent ‘green skills’ studies. This includes a pioneering review conducted by Rhodes University with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) in a research programme on change-oriented workplace learning and sustainable development practices, aimed at understanding learning pathways across the National Qualifications Framework landscape (Lotz-Sisitka, 2014). A second review of the new knowledge field was undertaken in a National Research Foundation (NRF) supported project. The SAQA and NRF supported work is in turn informing a programme funded by DEA’s Green Fund through the Development Bank of Southern Africa, aimed at strengthening the national system to plan for the green skills South Africa needs (see www.greenskills.co.za). As part of this programme, a number of participating researchers presented early insights at SAERA 2015, and invited comments from the broader educational community to help strengthen the emerging field. This paper builds on the interactions at SAERA 2015.

Why transformative?

We start by tracing the contours of the environmental crisis, to demonstrate that it requires a strong transformative agenda. Far from being a peripheral concern, the environment brings important additional perspective to bear on older research questions regarding development, capabilities, economic inclusivity and social justice.

The notion ‘green’ has become a symbol for the response to the environmental crisis, but facets of the crisis are not only green (literally or figuratively): they involve biodiversity on land, but also the protection of the oceans, freshwater and air quality (‘blue’ considerations), waste management and cleaner production (‘brown’ issues), the food value chain and more. While the risks of enhanced global warming (also termed climate change) are now widely known, the loss of species is, based on scale alone, an even bigger planetary issue, as is the build-up of nitrates in freshwater systems

(Rockström, Steffen and Noone *et al.*, 2009, see Figure 2). Other issues, such as the levels of chemical pollution on the planet, have not even been quantified. Based on what we do know, scientists argue that while humans are inventive and have achieved major feats, our home planet has physical and ecosystem boundaries beyond which we should not attempt to develop; that we have already raced past four of the known nine ‘planetary boundaries’, and that this calls society to find a radically new development path.

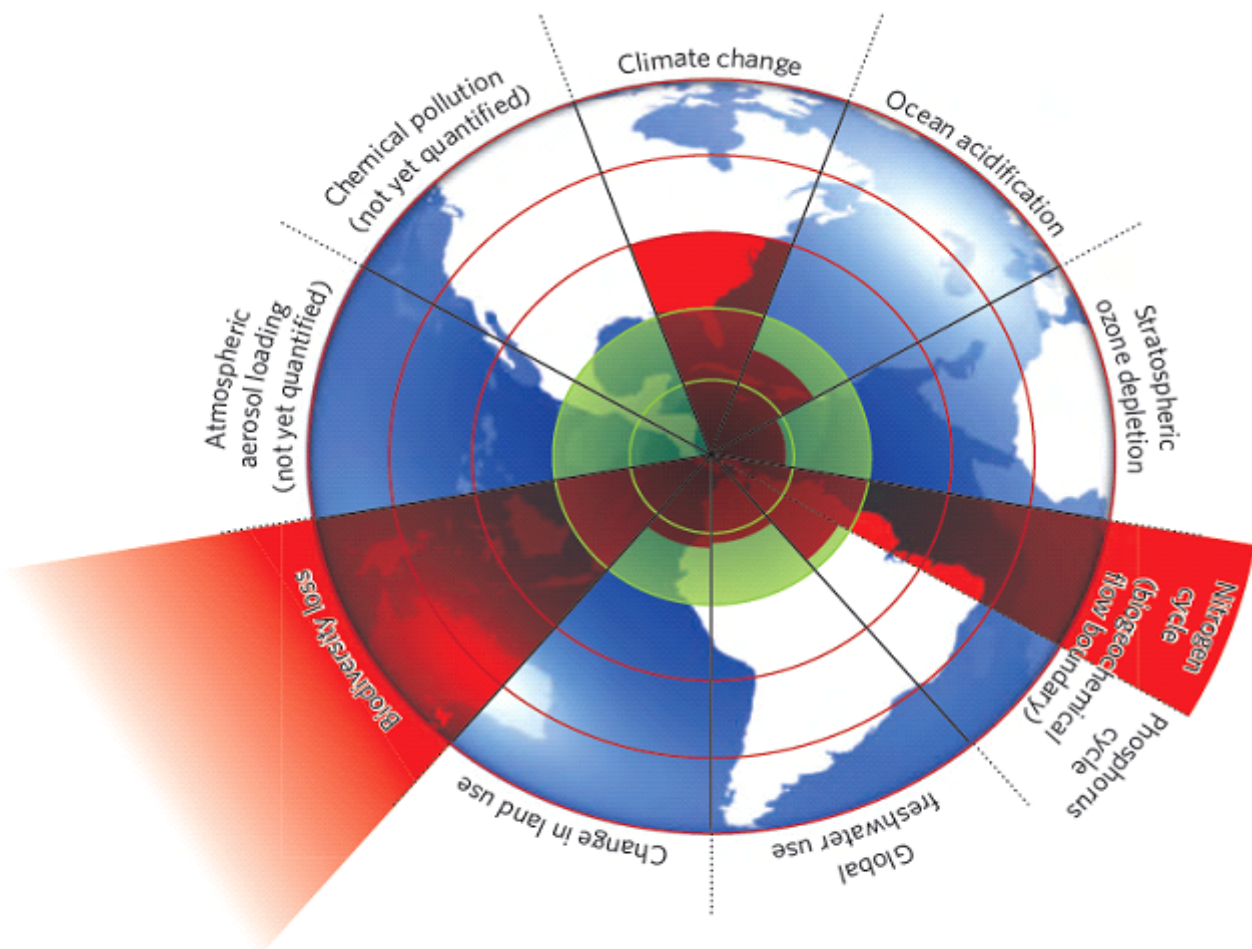


Figure 2: Planetary issues are boundaries for development and well-being (Rockström *et al.*, 2009)

The notion that humanity is facing a crisis of its own making is not new. A report on planetary ‘limits to growth’ (Meadows, Meadows, Randers and Behrens, 1972) was commissioned by the Club of Rome in 1972. A decade earlier, Carsons (1962) wrote *Silent Spring*, a small book on the impact of pesticides on song birds. *Silent Spring* was included in Castro’s list of classic revolutionary readings for Cuban students (Robin, Sorlin and Warde, 2013). This may seem surprising, as Western-based reports like *Limits to Growth* have been critiqued for being neo-Malthusian and blind to the fact that many have never tasted the fruits of modern development (ibid). Castro linked environmental destruction in Cuba to global inequalities, arguing that “unequal terms of trade, protectionism, and the foreign debt assault the ecology” and that “If we want to save mankind from this self-destruction, we have to better distribute the wealth and technologies available in the world” (Castro, 1992). Many scholars from the Global South and North have argued that the same political decisions, economic models and cultural frameworks that lead to environmental damage, also cause, perpetuate or fail to solve poverty, unemployment and inequality. (See e.g. *Development as planned poverty*, by Illich, 1971; *Science, nature and gender*, by Shiva, 1989; *The making and the unmaking of the third world by development*, by Escobar, 1995; *The idea of progress*, by Shanin, 1997; and *The Jo’Burg Memo: Fairness in a Fragile World*, by Sachs, 2002). These problems are also described at a local level in the Department of Science and Technology’s Global Change Grand Challenge National Research Plan (DST, 2010). Dussel (1998) explained the problematique as constituted by three major intersecting limits:

- 1) Ecological destruction of the planet based on a view of nature as an exploitable object
- 2) Poverty and inequality based on exploitation and accumulation of wealth
- 3) Narrow rationalities epitomized by colonial and imperialist thinking (Dussel, 1998).

Deepening this analysis, De Sousa Santos (2014) argued that modern Western forms of thinking and policy-making involve mainly a dualist Cartesian logic, and that, in an example of a drive for transformation that has epistemic dimensions, “social movements [have]. . . been organizing their struggles on

the basis of a non-Eurocentric conception of the relation between nature and society” (p.23).

Environmental sustainability has come to be seen as part of a ‘polycrisis’ (Morin, 1999), a situation in which there is not one single big problem, but rather a series of overlapping and interconnected problems, all with multiple dimensions. Addressing such intertwined problems, with their deep roots in pervasive cultural models and myths of economic growth and progress, presents huge educational challenges. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) pointed out that while human societies have succeeded in radically changing ecosystems, we have great difficulty in changing the social systems through which we use and affect these ecosystems. This could well be because the polycrisis is both physical and ontological in nature (in the breach of planetary boundaries) and *epistemic, in that it requires new forms of thinking and new ways of generating knowledge*. This points to implications for education and educational research.

Transformative methodology for green skills research

The kinds of knowledge, values and skills needed to address environmental sustainability in the context of the polycrisis requires transformative approaches to learning and education. Scholars like Orr (1992) Lotz-Sisitka, Wals, Kronlid and McGarry (2015) are among the many who call for new approaches to curriculum and pedagogy in order to respond adequately to social-ecological issues. Their call has been taken up in international movements like the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNESCO, 2014). Governments and education providers have responded, in the form of new environmental content being introduced into basic and higher education curricula, and new qualifications, but also through a *reorientation* of pedagogy, for example leadership courses that foster social learning (as opposed to teaching doctrines) by bringing leaders from different fields together to work on ‘change projects’ that address social-ecological issues (e.g. Scharmer, 2009). Universities around South Africa, too, have started to develop not only new environmental content and courses, but also new forms of pedagogy including inter-disciplinary programmes on social-ecological sustainability, at under-graduate and post-graduate levels, and social learning programmes involving groups of learners whose occupations require

them to work together, across disciplines and levels, towards achieving environmental sustainability.

The work of Beck (1986), Wals (2007) and Scharmer (2009), among others, lead us to suggest that in order to achieve the deep changes required, global and local communities, industries and individuals need to engage in conscious and collective reflexive processes, in *social learning* to search together for new answers. The intellectual project associated with this reflexive, learning-through-doing-and-reflection process is in some ways in its infancy. In 2015 the NRF invested in a South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI) at Rhodes University, to advance this educational field by exploring social learning in both formal institutional and informal community settings. This work includes an exploration of the conceptual and educational planning frameworks required to prepare South Africans for new forms of work that become necessary to both transform systems, and to work in transforming systems of production, governance and education.

Course, curriculum and qualification planning, and broader planning and development for new skills needs, must be guided by research that informs providers, funders and prospective learners what work and associated skills are needed by society and employers; and what skills South Africa is currently developing and utilising, or failing to develop and utilise, and why.

This paper is an early exploration of how to approach such research. (Elsewhere, we will further explore curriculum implications.) In reflecting on the studies reviewed for the NRF New Knowledge Field project, we noted that if we frame our research only in terms of traditional methodologies, we may be trapped in viewing a problem through the same lenses that created it; and the new knowledge produced may fall short of a transformative intent. At the SAERA 2015 panel discussion we therefore asked the following questions:

How do we perform transformative research that effectively responds to the need for ecological sustainability and social equity? and

When we research education and work, how do we avoid the trap of an economic framework for post-school research?

In the remainder of the paper, we elaborate our argument that transformative research methodology is required, and explore what this might mean for research processes, planning and design, and curriculum for educational research capacity development. To do so we draw on the comments received at SAERA 2015, our experience as educational researchers, the studies reviewed in the NRF and SAQA projects, the development critiques outlined above, and on critiques of the links between economy, development, employment and skills (Allais and Nathan, 2012; Hugo, 2015).

Green skills research requires diverse disciplines or knowledge fields

Given that sustainability issues manifest as a ‘polycrisis’ with social and ecological dimensions, sustainability research draws on multiple disciplines that span the social, natural and earth sciences as well as knowledge fields outside the disciplines. We work in boundary crossing spaces in which the knowledge bases of development, environment, agriculture and water management also overlap with the knowledge bases of adult and basic education, workplace-based learning and social justice theory, for example. Researchers in this space may need to draw on non-traditional fields, and to bring fields of practice and intellectual traditions together in unusual combinations.

Methodological considerations flowing from this include the following:

- To work across knowledge fields, researchers must take particular care to define concepts so that they can be used with clarity and consistency by participants from diverse backgrounds. Key concepts that require clarification for green skills research include: *skill* (a term used in diverse ways in the national system), *green economy*, and *green jobs*. Given that green skills research findings are required in diverse contexts (academia, workplaces, industry bodies and Sector Education and Training Authorities, among others), we may also need to clarify what we mean by *research*.
- In addition to drawing on different knowledge fields, we need conceptual frameworks that help research teams to integrate across these fields, and make the most of their diverse strengths, rather than subsume some disciplines into others. Conceptual frameworks are required to help us design studies that allow for coherence and are also

intellectually and practically generative. This suggests a transdisciplinary (as opposed to a multidisciplinary) approach with conceptual and design frameworks that are *new to all disciplines*. At a conference of the Programme on Ecosystem Change and Society, Lotz-Sisitka (2015) and Preizer (2015) interrogated the need for a ‘third space’ when researching in the transdisciplinary and social-ecological realm.

- It is not only necessary to be conceptually clear and define the concepts we work with, we may also need to be conceptually critical and creative, and on occasion re-define concepts from the established norms. This point is elaborated next.

Green skills research requires new conceptual frameworks

Linked to the need for a transdisciplinary approach, is the need to re-think some concepts rather than to uncritically adopt standard definitions from their respective fields of origin. We need new concepts to better understand emerging and old issues, particularly complex, intractable social-ecological problems that are so ‘wicked’ (Rittle and Weber, 1973) that we need new lenses on them. An example is the issue of graduate unemployment observed in the same field that skills shortages are experienced. Scholars like Hugo (2015) and Allais and Nathan (2012) argue that we need to re-think the conventional coupling of education and employment, and re-think the role of the economy in these.

This need to conceptually re-frame and re-define applies to educational concepts like ‘skill’ and to economic concepts like ‘growth’, ‘market’ and ‘demand’. In preparing the *Environmental Sector Skills Plan* (DEA, 2010) and the *Biodiversity Human Capital Development Strategy* (SANBI and the Lewis Foundation, 2010), green skills researchers found that employers would not necessarily register or report a ‘demand’ for a particular skill to Sector Education and Training Authorities, if they are not at that time advertising for new staff to fill such positions, even though their own staff, or environmental groups and civil society watchdogs may have identified a need for such skills. This was also noticeable in a study on green skills for mining (Rosenberg, Togo, Ramsarup and Maphinyane, 2015) The notion of ‘demand’ based on a ‘market’ for skills therefore requires a re-think. The fact that there

is not a (paying) market for a particular skill does not mean that there is no need or demand beyond the market. Environmental concerns are public concerns, related to the common good, and cannot always be quantified in privatised or economic terms. In this regard, participants in the NRF project as well as the SAERA panel discussion noted that it may be more useful to make the departure point for green skills studies ‘green work’, rather than ‘green jobs’.

The concept of ‘green economy’, central in many green skills studies, provides another example of the need to interrogate frequently used concepts. UNEP has defined the green economy as "one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It is low carbon, resource efficient, and socially inclusive" (UNEP, 2011).

The UNEP definition is useful in that it highlights the considerations of social justice and inclusivity, which are absent from some definitions of the green economy, but its approach to development can be questioned, in that it advances the idea of ‘resource scarcity’ as a key consideration. Other approaches to development (described e.g. by Norberg-Hodge, 1997) posit that humanity has abundant natural resources at its disposal, provided we make wise development decisions. For example, the sun is a practically limitless source of energy; and water and nutrients cycle endlessly within planetary boundaries. In such a framing, one would not wait for resources like water or coal to become scarce, before switching to alternatives. Green skills research should be cautious of taking conventional concepts like ‘scarcity’ at face value, and at least consider both resource scarcity, *and* the potential to switch to ecologically sustainable alternatives even in the absence of scarcity, as drivers for skills demand.

Green skills research must consider non-formal and unconventional contexts

Social-ecological sustainability issues entail complex problems and solutions that lie at least partly, and often predominantly, in the socio-political arena. Learning to address these problems is seldom a mere transfer of expertise and technical knowledge; the knowledge required is often yet-to-be-developed, and most suitably constructed in the process of collectively working on

solutions (see Scharmer, 2009; Wals, 2007). Thus communities in all spheres (government, industry and civil society) need social learning (Wals, 2007) to respond to sustainability issues. This also pertains to formal education. Social learning should not be seen as parallel to, or separate from formal learning, but as an integral part of new approaches to formal learning, which in turn requires a re-orientation of formal education practices. This has implications for academic programme developers. For educational researchers interested in curriculum and skill ‘supply’, the implication is that they may need to explore beyond formal qualifications and training opportunities for green skills development. This was evident in a study by Ramsarup (see Ramsarup and Lotz-Sisitka, 2014) who found that environmental engineering learning pathways consisted of a complex mix of formal and social learning developed through an equally complex employment mix, in which specialization occurred through iterative movement between environmental and engineering organisations.

In determining the supply of and demand for green skills, researchers also need to consider green work that is not (yet) paid for by established markets. Examples are rural people who maintain communal wetlands through traditional practices; township food gardeners who keep children healthy with their produce; or the thousands of former miners who could potentially restore abandoned mine sites to ecological health. Narrow formal definitions of ‘skills’ as adopted in the National Qualifications Framework have ‘de-skilled’ some people (Terreblanche, pers. comm., 2015). This comes about because existing skills (such as wetland maintenance) are deemed value-less within a dominant economic framework that tends to disregard work for the social good (such as community health, environmental integrity) as having value – a practice linked to the exclusion of environmental and social resources in mainstream economic reckoning (*ibid*). Green skills researchers may need to consider social innovation outside the mainstream, as well as traditional and local knowledge. How indigenous and local knowledge and associated skills pertain to problems like extreme weather events, food and water insecurity, and pollution, could be related research questions. (For epistemological considerations from a critical realist perspective, see Price, 2016).

Green skills research needs to be generative

Most educational researchers want to see their work resulting in change. But

in general, many studies remain unused. Much has been written about the reasons for this, which include an over-reliance on scholastic reasoning (Bourdieu, 1984) which dis-embeds knowledge from practice, creating often abstract research products or outcomes which are difficult to re-embed in society. This problem is often expressed in terms of:

- Poor communication of research outcomes
- the research process excluding potential users
- the failure to address the questions potential users are actually asking, or
- findings not being powerful enough to guide potential users.

To address this, many researchers in the late 1980s and 1990s departed from what Popkewitz (1991) called an R-D-D-A approach to knowledge production (research-design-disseminate-adopt) and embraced participatory and action research methods (e.g. Carr and Kemmis, 1986, in the context of researching teacher professional development).

While participatory and action based studies may involve relevant stakeholders, they do not, in our experience, always result in useful knowledge. Daniels and Sannino (2009) speak of the generative power of research that is designed so that it allows for meaning making amongst those involved in the research process, and for the emergence of agency for change. They see *research as a process of expansive social learning*. The generative potential of research may lie not only *in the way* the research is conducted, but also in the chosen ontological and epistemological frameworks. Engeström and Sannino (2010) suggest that activity theory gives research generative power, because it provides both a strong theory for understanding human activity (in complex contexts) and a related, productive method for studying human activity. Activity theory is generative because it produces knowledge explaining socio-culturally and socio-materially shaped conditions and experiences, and from this, anticipatory and emergent possibilities and predictions, which can inform practical decision-making in complex situations. In many social sciences including educational fields, researchers have chosen interpretivist and small scale surveys or case studies as they abandoned the practice of forcing inappropriate empiricist natural science methods onto social situations. As argued by Pawson and Tilley (1997), small scale case studies can lack the power to adequately explain, generalise and predict social realities. The implicit critical realism which underlabours activity theory (Nunez, 2013) offers a powerful alternative. Below we propose

that critical realist perspectives on emergence and transformative praxis might well be useful in making green skills research generative and therefore, give it the power to be transformative.

Green skills research must explore multiple layers with mixed methods

Like other social contexts, green skills contexts have features that are empirical, constructed and actual – all of which are real (Sayer, 2000). Whether a particular skill is scarce or not, is a social *construct*, over which there may be various opinions, and which may or may not be *empirically reported*. But whether we have access to and utilise certain skills or not, does have a very *real* impact on our environment (e.g., when we increase water supplies by clearing invasive alien vegetation, or decrease water supplies by failing to maintain sewage works).

To capture all these real dimensions of green skill matters (empirical, perceived and actual), researchers could draw on laminated methodologies that explore various layers of reality through mixed methods such as small scale case studies and larger scale surveys, and analyse across them. A critical realist underpinning encourages the use of multiple methods (Sayer, 2000) and makes it possible to work generatively with them. For example, it allows for generalisation from the case (such as the individual career path or workplace) to the whole or wider system (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Sayer, 2000, drawing on the work of Bhaskar (usefully re-articulated in Bhaskar, 2010)).

Green skills research topics span access to study and work (e.g. Gumede, 2015); the learning and career pathway experiences in workplaces and educational institutions (e.g Madiba, 2016 and McKrill, 2015); the transitions individuals make between different levels and parts of the system (e.g. Dotwana, 2015, Ramsarup and Lotz-Sisitka, 2014), the features of the social, political and institutional contexts that shape the skills that learners acquire (see e.g. Olvitt, 2015), and the macro-economic and system wide drivers that determine skills demand (e.g. Rosenberg *et al.*, 2015).

These research areas require a consideration of the micro-level (of the individual transitioning through work and learning) as well as the macro level (society or economy wide) and meso levels (sector, community, organisation) in-between. Many of the listed studies therefore feature multi-levelled system analyses. An example is the framework in Figure 3, which was adapted from international guidelines (CEI, 2011) and comprises the multiple levels that were considered in order to determine the demand for green skills in mining in South Africa, and associated supply challenges (Rosenberg *et al.*, 2015).

There is also a need to understand the *interplay* between individual choices and options, and wider systems and structures, reflected in Figure 3 with an arrow indicating analysis applied iteratively between the levels. The review of the listed studies (Lotz-Sisitka, 2014) suggests that the articulation or mis-articulation or alignment and transitioning between systems can be particularly important (for example school subject choices that prevent transitioning into a favoured environmental career). Lotz-Sisitka, Mohanoe, Ramsarup and Olvitt (2012), drawing on the work of Fenwick, Edwards and Sawchuk (2011), called for attention to boundary making processes in the skills development system, and boundary crossing processes. Failure to activate these maintains 'lock-in' problems and *absences*. For transformative potential, it therefore seems critical that research explores both the connections and emerging connections between macro, meso and micro levels or different spheres of the skills ecosystem; and the absences that impede transitions and emergence.

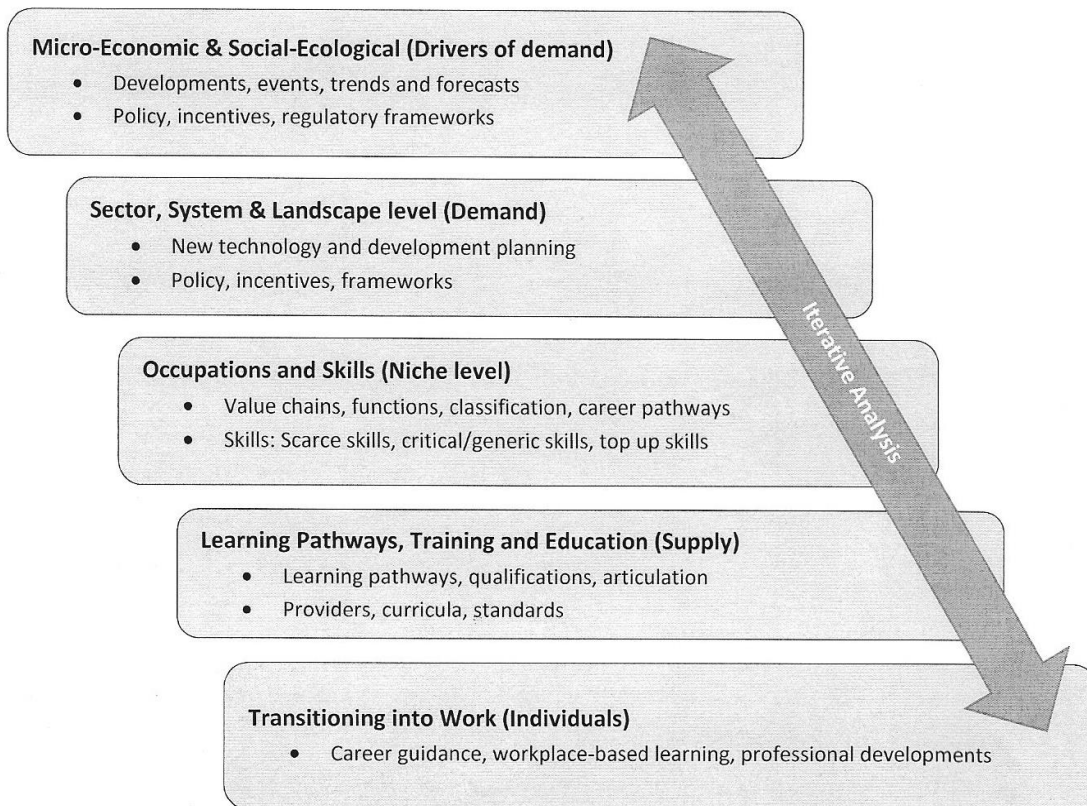


Figure 3: A multi-levelled framework for green skills research (Rosenberg *et al.*, 2016)

In search of a transformative methodology, the South African green skills studies listed here drew on a critical realistic laminated epistemological framework (Bhaskar, 2010; Sayer, 2000) and a critical realist dialectic (Bhaskar, 1993; Norrie, 2010). As methodological framings these allow for the explanation of emergence via generative mechanisms, showing an interconnected ‘constellation’ of activity and emergence in the skills development landscape (Lotz-Sisitka, 2014). They allow research to engage both macro and micro level features in an open systems perspective, that considers not only *what is*, but also *what is absent*; *what is possible* and *what can be done* (Bhaskar, 1993, 2010). For example, what can be done to pay for or produce the green work and associated skills needed by society? Norrie (2010) argued that *absence* is critical to a transformational intent: that change lies in the absenting of absences, and in absenting the structural constraints that keeps an absence in place. Examples of absences identified, for example by Ramsarup and Lotz-Sisitka (2013), are inadequately differentiated green occupations on the National Organising Framework of Occupations (OFO), and the lack of qualifications for environmental technicians, both of which present constraints: for individuals to access paid green work and for South Africa to achieve the promise of the green economy.

Finally, skills strategy research conducted by Rhodes (DEA, 2010) and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, 2009) highlighted the need for meta-analyses and national data, to allow for wider analysis across studies in order to give green skills research adequate generative and transformative power. This will only be possible if the systems, platforms and frameworks for collating research across institutions and contexts exist. This means, *inter alia*, that environmental occupations are included and adequately differentiated in the OFO and in Statistics SA and labour market surveys. The Department of Higher Education and Training’s Research Repository managed by the Labour Market Intelligence Partnership has potential for analysis across studies, provided adequate conceptual frameworks are used to strengthen the intellectual project of coordination. Multiple-field platforms like SAERA are also highly significant in this regard, as they allow for both rigour and cross-pollination through diversity.

Conclusion

In this paper we proposed that green skills research requires a transformative

approach to research methodology. Based on the studies we reviewed we considered how a transformative methodology might be considered in green skills research framings, processes and design. We conclude that:

- Green skills research involves diverse disciplines and knowledge fields, and the methodology should consider a transformative transdisciplinary or meta-approach, rather than merely drawing on fields or specialists in an additive multi-disciplinary approach. This has implications for the curricula of programmes to develop educational research capacity.
- Green skills research requires strong attention to defining concepts and a critical interrogation of mainstream definitions which may perpetuate framings that are part of the problem we are trying to re-search.
- In studying green work and skills, researchers should also consider unconventional contexts where environmental work may be needed, not only the conventional workplace as site of employment and skills deployment, and transformative approaches to learning in both formal and non-formal settings.
- Green skills research needs to be generative and to this end, both narrow positivist methodology and small-scale interpretive studies have limitations; critical realist approaches point the way to research that has enough veracity to guide real world policy and decision making.
- Green skills research needs to study multiple layers of reality with mixed methods and integrative frameworks to bring findings from across the layers together in meaningful and transformative syntheses, that allow for a grasp of emergence and for transformative praxis.
- A national platform and robust intellectual leadership are needed to build new knowledge from a growing number of green skills studies. Coordination lies not just in bringing these researchers together, but in stimulating engagement with ideas such as those posed in this paper.

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Different rules for different teachers: teachers' views of professionalism and accountability in a bifurcated education system¹

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Abstract

This paper reports the initial results from a representative survey of teachers in the Western Cape regarding their views of professionalism and accountability. This is the first survey of its kind in South Africa. Preliminary analysis of the data from 115 public schools suggests that teachers at no-fee schools, who are predominantly black women, report facing the greatest institutional burdens and the greatest need for institutional support, particularly from the state. Related to this, they tend to stress pastoral care-work as central to being a professional, while those at fee-paying schools stress their claims to pedagogical knowledge and job prestige. This indicates that teachers at different schools are subject to different and unequal institutions (or rules), where the kind of school that teachers work at often reflects their race and gender positioning. It also implies that the concept of a bifurcated education system, characterised by different production functions and outcomes for learners, should be expanded to include teachers and deepened to include institutions.²

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Introduction

This paper reports the initial results from a representative survey of teachers' understandings of their work in the Western Cape, the first of its kind in South Africa. The survey is ongoing; however, a descriptive analysis of the current data from 115 schools is instructive. In this paper, we consider teachers' understandings of professionalism and accountability. We ask: how do race, gender and class shape teachers' understandings of their work, and what does this reveal about how their schools function?

The paper proceeds as follows. We first sketch debates on professionalism and accountability, and link these debates to literature on the bifurcated education system and the role of institutions in reproducing inequality. We then set out the research problem and design. In the descriptive analysis, we consider the types of educational inequalities surveyed teachers face. We then consider the interplay between teachers' institutional positioning and their perceptions of what professionalism consists of, whom they feel they should be accountable to, and the obstacles they face in being professionals.

We find that teachers at no-fee schools, who are predominantly black women, report facing the greatest institutional burdens and the greatest need for institutional support, from both state and non-state actors. Related to this, they tend to stress pastoral care-work as being central to their conceptualisation of what it is to be a professional teacher, while those at fee-paying schools stress their claims to pedagogical knowledge and job prestige.

Literature overview

The professional status of teachers is a contested one. Do teachers occupy the position of the classical professions, such as doctors and lawyers, or are they closer to other kinds of groups, such as nurses or social workers? At the heart of this scholarly debate lie differing views of teachers' claims to autonomy, knowledge and service (Locke, 2004; Sexton, 2007; Gamble, 2010). The strength of teachers' claims to autonomy and knowledge is arguably related to how they are perceived and governed by the state and the public in general. The weaker the claim, the less their perceived status and esteem. The stronger the claim, the more they are seen as members of a legitimate profession.

The debate over teachers' professional status is not only scholarly but also political. A number of scholars interpret the debate as an ideological contest over different forms of educational governance (Sachs, 2001; Stevenson, Carter and Passy, 2007; Hilferty, 2008). This debate is sometimes interpreted in terms of a contest between 'democratic' and 'managerialist' views of educational governance (Sachs, 2001; Whitty, 2006; Gamble, 2010; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2013; Silova and Brehm, 2013). More 'democratic' views of educational governance are viewed as according greater value to teachers' agency and autonomy; they are understood to conceptualise educational excellence as a form of horizontal collaboration between teachers and various constituencies, including learners, parents, unions and the state, where such collaboration enables teachers' creative autonomy. In contrast, more 'managerialist' views of educational governance are viewed as placing less emphasis on the value of teachers' autonomy; instead they are understood to conceptualise educational excellence through vertical accountability to state and/or corporate actors, so that education is standardised and efficient.

Insofar as teachers' claims to professionalism are shaped by situational and institutional factors, their professional standing is fluid and may change over time (Day, Kington, Stobart and Sammons, 2006). In this regard, Hargreaves (2000) argues that there have been discrete historical phases of professionalism: the pre-professional age, the age of the autonomous professional, the age of the collegial professional, and the post-professional age. For Hargreaves (2000), teachers' claims to professionalism were at its height in the age of the autonomous professional, but have since been eroded. He argues that in the post-professional period particularly, the state has subjected schools to market principles such that they are governed under

precepts of economic efficiency and competition for students and resources. Teachers and their professional organisations are seen as obstacles to the marketisation of education. They are therefore restricted in the scope of their decision-making, coaxed into more temporary contracts and subject to “discourses of derision” that hold them responsible for the alleged ills of public or state education. The effect of all this is to return teaching to a low-status, amateur, almost pre-modern craft, where teachers have to deal with centralised curricula and testing regimes and cope with ever-increasing bureaucratic demands that erode their classroom autonomy and judgement (Hargreaves, 2000, 167–169). However, such analyses are based predominantly in Anglo-American experiences. As de Clercq (2013) argues, post-colonial societies that are riven by inequalities in teacher education and working conditions may experience all four periods simultaneously.

In post-colonial contexts, teachers’ claims to professionalism do not only rest on issues of knowledge, autonomy and service, but also centrally involve issues of unequal access to resources and conflicts over the exercise of political rights. In a number of African countries, teachers’ claims to professionalism and their relationship with the state have been characterised by prolonged struggle and contestation. In the wake of the legacy of European colonialism, African teachers have had little say in determining their conditions of service and status as professionals or workers. Thus, although teacher unions in countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia were key actors in struggles for independence in the 1960s (Govender, 2009), they have had limited success in determining conditions of service and impacting broader policy matters in subsequent decades (Kalusopa, Otoo and Shindondola-Mote, 2013). Some have argued that this lack of influence was due to constraints resulting from the emergence of autocratic governments linked to the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programmes by the IMF and the World Bank following balance of payment crises during the 1980s (Carnoy, 1995; Chisholm, 1999 and Kalusopa *et al.*, 2013). Recently, a number of states have experimented with several market-based interventions. These include introducing low-cost private schools that use untrained community members to teach scripted curricula via tablets, casualising teacher employment and linking their pay to performance, as well as outsourcing the administration of public schools to for-profit companies (Hoffmann, 2016). A number of these experiments have gained significant traction by virtue of their financial and political backing by powerful actors, such as Mark Zuckerberg (the founder of Facebook), the Gates Foundation, the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development, and the

United States Agency for International Development. However, they have also been intensely contested by teacher unions and parents' associations (Bold Kimenyi, Mwabu, Ng'ang'a and Sandefur, 2013), as well as by the United Nations' Special Rapporteur for the right to education (Singh, 2016).

In South Africa, these struggles with the state over educational inequalities are brought into profound relief. Teachers' professional status and levels of accountability remain strongly shaped by race and class, reflecting colonial and apartheid histories of education (Vilardo, 1996; Kallaway, 2002; Ndlovu, 2002). For example, the apartheid education system was designed to produce compliant subjects across the entire population, using race as the primary mediator in the reproduction of social and economic inequalities (Turner, 1972; Cross, 1986; Adhikari, 1993; Vilardo, 1996; Ndlovu, 2002). In this, the state vested black teachers with substantially poorer quality training, less autonomy, lower wages, and less educational resources, relative to white teachers. These differences found expression in political contestations over teachers' proximity to the state, and by extension, debates about whom teachers should be accountable to and whether teachers should identify as professionals or as members of an oppressed black working class (Vilardo, 1996; Kihn, 2002; Govender, 2004).

In the post-1994 dispensation, the schooling system continues to reproduce inequalities along racial and class lines, despite a raft of policies introduced by the state to equalise schooling, including the rationalisation of government funding (Sayed and Kanjee, 2013).³ This is most evident in schools not being fundamentally desegregated; with previous white schools becoming home to a deracialised economic elite, and black schools continuing to mainly educate poor black learners (Chisholm, 2004; Motala, 2009; Spaul, 2013; Taylor and Taylor, 2013). This segregation is accompanied by substantial inequality: learners at black schools have literacy and numeracy scores far below the scores of learners at historically white schools in South Africa, or even at schools in other (poorer) African countries (Hungu. Makuwa, Ross, Saito, Dolata and Van Capelle, 2011). This context has given rise to strong scholarly and political debates about how teachers can be held accountable and whether unions subvert or enable professionalism and accountability in education (Kanjee and Sayed, 2013; Govender, 2015; Spaul, 2015).

³ However, this does not take into account school fees. When these are added to the funding mix, then historically white schools receive the highest per capita expenditure (Motala, 2006; 2009)

Moreover, the history of teacher professionalism in South Africa is not only raced and classed, but is also gendered. The interplay between these categories in a South African context complicates historical narratives of the rise of professions in western Europe, where a number of authors argue that professionalisation was essentially a patriarchal process in two senses: first, occupations dominated by men tend to have a more 'fully professional' social standing; and second, the process of professionalisation plays a role in the maintenance and development of patriarchal social relations (Hearn, 1982; Witz, 2013; Suddaby and Muzio, 2015). Since the majority of teachers are women, the status of teaching as a profession is inherently open to question and doubt. In a pioneering study, however, Clark (1998) argues that in South Africa narratives of gender are deeply interwoven with race and the establishment of a settler regime. Clark (1998) argues that only white women were at first allowed to become teachers, with their entry into teaching guided by notions of what counted as appropriate spheres for women to work and move in, ideas of sexual hygiene and comportment, and beliefs about what constituted suitable knowledge for a female teacher (knowledge of cooking, for instance, rather than mathematics or physics). Later on, however, black women were allowed to enter the teaching profession, with their entry into the profession regarded as an explicit attempt to reconstitute normative ideas of African femininity, by domesticating and racing black women in particular ways. Moreover, in line with their institutional positioning as legal minors, black women were subject to much stricter vertical accountability regimes than white women, their access to knowledge was far more tightly circumscribed and their remuneration was substantially lower. In this context, the relationship between gender, race and class plays a strong analytical role in understanding both normative ideals about teachers and how teachers conceptualise and experience their work.

The relationship between teachers' positionality and their beliefs is arguably central to an institutional analysis of the causal mechanisms underlying persistent education inequalities. The point of departure here is the concept of a "*bifurcated*" education system (Sayed and Soudien, 2005; Sayed 2016), in which poor black schools are systematically unable to convert resource inputs into learner outcomes relative to historically white schools in South Africa, or schools in other (poorer) African countries.

One way of understanding the different processes underlying two education sub-systems is to highlight the role of institutions, which provide the formal and informal rules that are understood and used by different communities and

that establish the ‘working do’s and dont’s’ for community members (Hess and Ostrom, 2007).⁴ In this, institutions can have formal policies such as the Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding that have different financing mechanisms for poor and rich schools (DBE, 2006). Institutions can also have informal, tacit rules that guide the behaviour of education actors. For instance, the rules governing acceptable teacher absenteeism might differ across schools resulting in different absentee rates. These formal and informal aspects of institutions can combine to enable and constrain teachers’ behaviour in ways that create and embed social hierarchies.

Teachers’ beliefs are very likely a key mechanism by which institutions reproduce inequality. While this paper is interested in inequality between teachers, rather than inequality between individual learners, there are a number of experimental studies which demonstrate the general principle that teachers’ beliefs can help reproduce inequality, in the sense that their beliefs about unequal social status can lead to substantial achievement gaps amongst their learners (Steele and Aronson, 1995; Steele, 1997; Hoff and Pandey, 2004; Einav and Yariv, 2006). These studies trace the way in which such beliefs reflect institutions, or rules, that establish unequal treatment for different groups, and are invested with particular social meanings through narratives that attempt to legitimise them (Hoff and Stiglitz, 2010). In light of this, the relationship between teachers’ views and institutions matters in two ways. First, teachers’ views can indicate the ways in which institutions (particularly informal aspects) reflect social hierarchies; this is the first step in telling a causal story about how the bifurcated education system reproduces itself. Second, understanding how institutions create and reproduce inequality can be useful for identifying counter-measures for a more equitable education system.

Research problem

There is limited empirical evidence in South Africa, or internationally, of how teachers understand their role as professionals in the classroom and how they

⁴ The focus on institutions is broadly located within new institutionalism, where the importance of culture and symbolism is given much greater emphasis in institutional analysis than that found in ‘old institutional’ analyses of organisations and behaviours, which focus only on political and economic factors (Ostrom, 2010).

perceive this professional role in relation to their accountability to different educational actors, including the state, school management, other teachers and learners (De Clercq, 2013; Govender, Sayed and Hoffman, 2016). Quantitative studies of schools in South Africa focus largely on learners' performance and socio-economic status, where data on teachers is collected and the focus is on their content knowledge and beliefs about their competencies (Khosa, 2010; Hungi *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, there is a need to gather systematic research on how teachers understand their role as professionals, and how race, class and gender shape their understandings and experiences of what it is to be a professional teacher.

The data analysed in this paper comes from a survey of teachers at public schools in the Western Cape. The survey was designed to elicit teachers' views on their role as professionals and how they perceive this role in relation to their accountability to different social actors, including the state, school management and learners. A guiding hypothesis was that race, class and gender are important mediators of teachers' experiences and perceptions. A second hypothesis was that institutions matter to the views and experiences of teachers, and that these institutions reflect race, class and gender inequalities.

Research design

Before undertaking the survey, we conducted a literature review, encompassing theoretical and empirical research in Anglo-American and African scholarship (including South African scholarship), with a special emphasis on debates concerning colonisation, apartheid and the role of unions in education (Govender *et al.*, 2016). Based on the literature review, we developed a questionnaire that an external panel of experts then examined. We piloted the questionnaire at three public schools and then revised it, primarily shortening the questionnaire and modifying ambiguous or confusing questions.

The survey was designed to be representative of public schools with regard to two important categories: their location in rural and urban districts, and their status as fee-paying or no-fee schools (as captured by their quintile status). The logistical constraints of the study meant that schools were not selected for representivity in other categories, such as school size and phase. 180 schools were randomly selected with 4540 teachers as potential respondents (see Figure 1). Schools were sampled to allow for a minimum response rate of 51% for

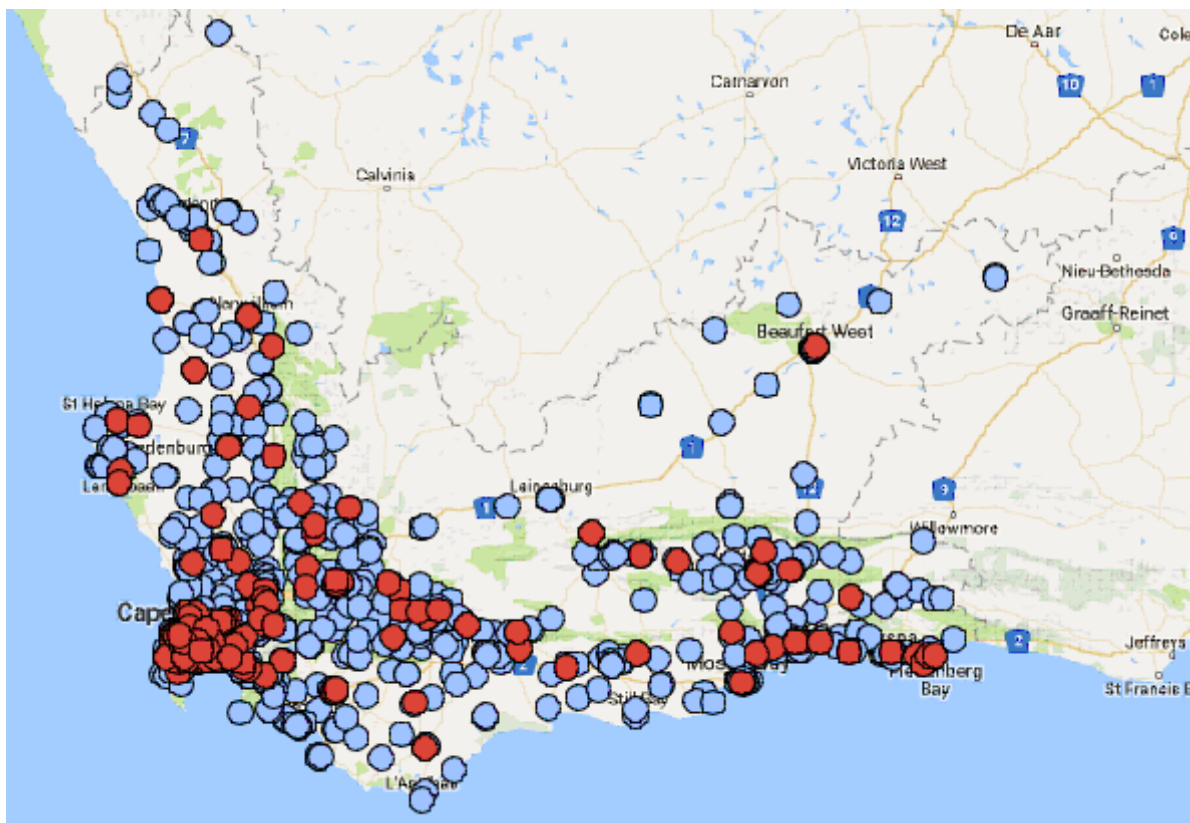


Figure 1: Distribution of surveyed schools (sampled schools in red, unsampled schools in blue)

teachers. Currently, 52% of teachers and 71% of schools have responded positively, although the survey is still ongoing.

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Western Cape Education District and Cape Peninsula University of Technology. All respondents gave their informed consent to participate in the study. Respondents completed a self-administered questionnaire in English or Afrikaans, according to their preference (principals at isiXhosa medium schools rejected questionnaires in isiXhosa, citing relatively higher English literacy). Fieldworkers administered the questionnaire after school. Teachers typically took thirty minutes to complete the questionnaire, but they were allowed as much time as they wished.

The anonymous questionnaire consisted of 180 questions in 8 categories: (1) demographics, (2) professionalism, (3) autonomy, (4) continuous professional development, (5) policies that affect teachers, (6) accountability, (7) teacher organisations, and (8) violence in schools. The questions were in likert scale and dichotomous (yes/no) formats. In addition, fieldworkers completed their own questionnaire concerning their observations of the school infrastructure, their interaction with the principal, and any questions teachers had regarding the questionnaire.

Drawing from the literature review, the questionnaire focused on five main characteristics of professionalism: knowledge, autonomy, service, qualifications, and political identity. We also asked questions about the main obstacles to being a professional teacher, and here we focused on the social standing of teachers (including their remuneration and community standing), constraints on autonomy, the availability of resources (including both physical infrastructure and knowledge resources), workloads and institutional support for teachers. With regard to accountability, we considered which groups teachers felt most accountable to. We included items on both vertical accountability (such as accountability to the state) and horizontal accountability (such as accountability to other teachers).

There are two important limitations to the study's design. First, since the survey was voluntary, non-response of schools or teachers is plausibly a source of sampling bias. Their reasons for declining to participate in the survey may be correlated with their views and experiences of professionalism and accountability (Heckman, 1979). Second, on the basis of the pilot data, informal interviews with teachers in the pilot study, and secondary empirical

research (Hungu *et al.*, 2011), we have reason to believe that many teachers have poor literacy skills relative to their oral skills. This implies a greater cognitive effort to complete the questionnaire, resulting in respondent fatigue and less accurate results. Ideally, the survey would have been conducted in interview form, but time and budgetary constraints did not permit this option, so the questionnaire was simplified and shortened as much as possible.

Preliminary analysis

Sample characteristics

Since the survey is not yet complete (71% of target schools had been surveyed at the time of writing), this preliminary analysis treats the data as a population, rather than as a representative sample. However, it is useful to check whether the sample proportions match those of the population. Here we report the proportions of teachers at no-fee and fee-paying public schools, as well as the racial composition of teachers.

By government policy, schools in Quintiles 1 to 3 do not charge fees, while Quintiles 4 to 5 charge fees (Department of Education, 2006). In the sample, the proportion of no-fee schools to fee-paying schools corresponds with that of the population (Table 1.1). Although the survey was not designed for the racial representivity of teachers, the composition of teachers in the sample corresponds with that of different groups in the population (Table 1.2).

Table 1.1: Fee and no-fee paying schools in the Western Cape and from survey data

School type	Western Cape data		Survey data	
	Frequency	% of cases	Frequency	% of cases
No-fee school (Quintile 1–3)	671	46%	51	44%
Fee-paying school (Quintile 4–5)	786	54%	64	56%
Total public schools	1457	100%	115	100%

Notes: WCED data is missing information for 8 schools, which are not included in this table.

Table 1.2: Race composition of teachers in the Western Cape and from survey data

Race	Western Cape data		Survey data	
	Frequency	% of cases	Frequency	% of cases
African/Black	6 888	19%	393	17%
Coloured	18 370	50%	1 164	51%
Indian/Asian	306	1%	35	2%
Other	327	1%	37	2%
White	10 568	29%	569	25%
No response	-	-	89	4%
Total	36 459	100%	2 287	100%

What kinds of educational inequalities do teachers face in terms of race, gender and class?

A breakdown of teacher characteristics by race and gender suggests that, on average, African and coloured women bear the brunt of educational inequalities, while white and Indian women indicate greater advantage relative to other women (Table 2).⁵ This provides grounds for grouping African and coloured women together under the term ‘black women’ in order to investigate the intersection of race and class in a clear and simple way. An analysis of the difference in means for black women compared to other groups provides the following statistically significant and substantive results (Table 3):

- 58% of black women work at no-fee schools compared to 33% of other teachers
- Black women teach classes that are 14% larger on average than classes of other groups

⁵

Coloured women are the least qualified and are least likely to send their children to their own school relative to all other groups. African women have the largest class sizes, work overwhelmingly at no-fee schools, and tend not to live in their school community. White women indicate greater advantages relative to all black women, save for their disproportionate status as temporary teachers. Indian women indicate similar characteristics to white women, but have a much greater presence on the school management team than all other women and a lower incidence of temporary employment than white women. Women across racial categories tend to indicate greater disadvantages relative to men, but in some instances white and Indian women indicate greater advantage than black men, as noted in Table 2 above.

- 48% of black women have a university qualification in contrast with 65% of other teachers
- 14% of black women have a school leadership role compared with 22% of other teachers
- 47% of black women send their children to their school or would do so if they had children, compared to 51% of other teachers
- 38% of black women live in their school communities while 43% of other teachers do so

Table 2: Teacher characteristics by race and gender

	Female				Total
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	
No-fee school	0.83 (0.09)	0.48 (0.07)	0 (0)	0.18 (0.06)	0.46 (0.05)
Has a university qualification	0.53 (0.04)	0.46 (0.03)	0.68 (0.13)	0.72 (0.04)	0.55 (0.02)
Lives in school community	0.36 (0.05)	0.39 (0.03)	0.41 (0.14)	0.53 (0.06)	0.42 (0.03)
Sends children to own school	0.55 (0.03)	0.43 (0.03)	0.50 (0.12)	0.59 (0.06)	0.50 (0.03)
Temporarily employed	0.24 (0.04)	0.27 (0.02)	0.24 (0.08)	0.41 (0.03)	0.29 (0.02)
On school management team	0.14 (0.02)	0.13 (0.01)	0.32 (0.09)	0.10 (0.01)	0.13 (0.01)
Class size	40.8 (0.95)	36.6 (0.61)	33.4 (1.29)	28.2 (0.93)	35.3 (0.76)

Notes: Robust standard errors corrected for clustering at school level in brackets.

	Male				Total
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	
No-fee school	0.75 (0.09)	0.47 (0.07)	0.13 (0.12)	0.10 (0.06)	0.45 (0.06)
Has a university qualification	0.60 (0.08)	0.59 (0.03)	0.88 (0.12)	0.71 (0.05)	0.61 (0.02)
Lives in school community	0.40 (0.06)	0.35 (0.03)	0.38 (0.17)	0.53 (0.07)	0.39 (0.03)
Sends children to own school	0.54 (0.06)	0.42 (0.03)	0.57 (0.19)	0.68 (0.06)	0.48 (0.03)
Temporarily employed	0.23 (0.06)	0.17 (0.02)	0.25 (0.15)	0.32 (0.06)	0.21 (0.02)
On school management team	0.30 (0.04)	0.29 (0.02)	0.38 (0.17)	0.26 (0.04)	0.29 (0.02)
Class size	41.3 (1.12)	36.8 (0.62)	40.1 (4.05)	27.5 (0.90)	35.9 (0.72)

Notes: Robust standard errors corrected for clustering at school level in brackets.

This provides grounds for grouping African and coloured women together under the term ‘black women’ in order to investigate the intersection of race and class in a clear and simple way. An analysis of the difference in *means* for black women compared to other groups provides the following statistically significant and substantive results (Table 3):

Table 3: Difference in mean characteristics for black women and other groups

	Black female	Not a black female	Difference	% Difference
No-fee school	0.58 (0.02)	0.33 (0.01)	0.24 *** (0.01)	76%
Has a university qualification	0.48 (0.02)	0.65 (0.01)	0.17 *** (0.02)	-26%
Lives in school community	0.38 (0.02)	0.43 (0.02)	0.05 ** (0.02)	-12%
Sends children to own school	0.47 (0.02)	0.51 (0.02)	0.04 ** (0.02)	-8%
Temporarily employed	0.26 (0.01)	0.28 (0.01)	0.02 (0.02)	-7%
On school management team	0.14 (0.01)	0.22 (0.01)	0.08 *** (0.02)	-36%
Class size	37.8 (0.28)	33.2 (0.29)	4.5 *** (0.41)	14%

Notes: Robust standard errors corrected for clustering at school level in brackets.
Significance: *** p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1

These results indicate that black women tend to carry greater educational burdens (working at poorer schools and teaching larger classes) with less institutional power to affect change (less formal education and fewer leadership positions). Sending one’s children to one’s school plausibly indicates a basic endorsement of the school. On this interpretation substantially fewer black women endorse the school they work at.

Many of these disadvantages are institutional in nature and concern the kind of schools in which black women teach. 63% of teachers at no-fee schools are black women (Table 5.1), and being a black woman is strongly correlated with teaching at a no-fee school, where this correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (Table 5.2). But working at a no-fee school is positively correlated with substantially larger classes, and is negatively correlated with sending one’s children to one’s school and living in the school community, where these associations are statistically significant and substantive (Table 4).

One way of interpreting these patterns is that the rules of the ‘education game’ are skewed in such a way that black women teachers tend to come out losing,

so that part of the *institutional meaning* of being a black woman teacher is multiple disadvantage. This disadvantage finds expression particularly in the close relationship between being black, female and teaching at a no-fee school.

Table 4: Correlates of working at a no-fee school

	Sends children to own school¹	Lives in school community²	Class size³
No-fee school	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.03*** (0.02)	3.35*** (0.43)

Notes: Robust standard errors corrected for clustering at school level in brackets. Significance: *** p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1. 1. Probit regression 2. Probit regression. 3. OLS regression

Table 5.1: Race and gender composition of teachers at no-fee and fee schools

	No-fee school	Fee-paying school
Black female	63%	38%
Black male	25%	19%
White female	7%	26%
White male	1%	8%
Other	4%	9%
Total	100%	100%

Table 5.2: Association between working at a no-fee school and being a black woman (probit estimation)

	No-fee school
Black female	0.24*** (0.02)

Notes: Robust standard errors corrected for clustering at school level in brackets. Significance: *** p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1

Given the substantive differences between no-fee schools and fee-paying schools, and the ways in which these differences are raced and gendered, the

next section considers teachers' views of professionalism and accountability in terms of whether they work at no-fee or fee-paying schools. This distinction is largely consistent with previous work on the bimodal distribution of schools, in which the wealthiest quartile of schools (25%) performs very differently from the remaining three quartiles (75%), where the wealthiest schools are typically fee-paying historically white schools, and the remainder are typically no-fee historically black schools (Van der Berg, 2008; Spaul, 2013; Fleisch, 2013).⁶

What are the most important characteristics of a professional teacher?

Respondents were asked to indicate what they believed to be the characteristics of a professional teacher by rating thirteen statements on a likert scale: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree.' Table 6 presents all the 'strongly agree' responses.⁷ The majority of teachers emphasise their identity as classical professionals, stressing excellent content knowledge, intrinsic motivation, collegiality, and an ideal social positioning similar to that of doctors and lawyers. Teaching skills and lesson preparation are emphasised by fewer teachers, while a minority stress autonomy in the classroom and in the political realm as being central to their understanding of professionalism.

However, there are substantial and statistically significant differences between teachers at no-fee schools and those at fee-paying schools. Considerably fewer teachers at no-fee schools emphasise content knowledge and teaching skills, and fewer claim an identity similar to that of doctors and lawyers. Instead, many more teachers emphasise placing learners' interests first, arriving early before school starts, and knowing all the parents of learners. In contrast, more teachers at fee-paying schools report that 'going on strike' is incompatible with being a professional.

⁶ The precise division of this bimodal or bifurcated system is under debate. Some scholars argue for a division by wealth quartiles (Spaul, 2013), while others use quintiles (Van der Berg, 2008). In this paper, we use the division into no-fee and fee-paying schools, which tracks wealth quintiles.

⁷ Given the nature of likert scales, respondents tend to gravitate towards the centre. We therefore focus on the tail-end of the distribution (those who strongly agree) as this is more illustrative of differences between groups.

Table 6: Proportion of respondents who strongly agree that professional teachers have the following characteristics

	Fees	No fees	Difference	p-value
Must have excellent subject/content knowledge	75.53	67.06	-8.47	***
Teachers are professionals, like doctors & lawyers	59.07	48.31	-10.76	***
Must be passionate about teaching	56.16	51.17	-4.99	**
Must always try and support other teachers	51.85	52.75	0.90	
Must always place learners' interests first	43.84	49.68	5.84	***
Must fight against policies that are bad for learners	42.96	39.83	-3.13	
Must always arrive early before school starts	43.4	50.53	7.13	***
Must constantly update knowledge and study further	40.05	44.49	4.44	**
Must have excellent teaching skills	40.14	35.17	-4.97	**
Teachers are professional workers, like social workers & nurses	36.62	39.41	2.79	
Must prepare lessons in advance	34.51	34.75	0.24	
Can be 'political' & professional	19.98	20.23	0.25	
Must know all parents of learners	15.76	22.14	6.38	***
Teachers are workers, like textile workers & miners	14.61	15.15	0.54	
Cannot go on strike	11.09	6.57	-4.52	***
Must have curriculum freedom	9.6	11.76	2.16	*
Does not need teaching qualifications	3.43	3.39	-0.04	

Notes: Significance: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

These differences suggest that teachers at no-fee schools may see pastoral, care-work as more central to how they understand being professional teachers, which is an area that is under-explored in the academic literature of being professional teachers. Which is an area that is relatively less explored in the academic literature. In contrast, those at fee-paying schools tend to focus more on their claims to pedagogical knowledge and job prestige. This is more in line with the normative ideals prevalent in academic literature. One explanation for these differences may lay in the different obstacles that teachers face, which we explore in the next section.

What are the most important obstacles to being a professional teacher?

Respondents were asked to indicate what they believed to be obstacles to being a professional teacher by rating twenty statements on a likert scale: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree.' Table 7 presents all the 'strongly agree' responses. While there is some level of disagreement

between teachers at different schools regarding their conceptions of professionalism, the disagreement between teachers regarding their views on important obstacles to professionalism is both more intense and comprehensive.

The majority of teachers at fee-paying schools identify low salaries as the most important obstacle to being a professional; in contrast, the majority of teachers at no-fee schools emphasise socio-economic problems in the surrounding community as their chief concern. This is a statistically significant and substantive difference: 62% of teachers at no-fee schools stress socio-economic problems in the community, while only 43% of teachers at fee-paying schools do, where this difference is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

These large and statistically significant differences persist for each item in the survey. Many more teachers at no-fee schools stress learner behaviour and home background as obstacles, and indicate less support from their community. Resource allocation, in the form of class size, lack of libraries and textbooks and poor infrastructure, features far more prominently for teachers at low-fee schools. Many more of these teachers also indicate a lack of effective institutional support from education departments, school management teams, unions and colleagues as being significant obstacles, where greater emphasis is placed on education departments and the school management team. Finally, more teachers at no-fee schools identify a lack of autonomy in the classroom as obstacles to professionalism, in the form of administrative burdens and a lack of curriculum freedom.

Table 7: Proportion of respondents who strongly agree that the following are obstacles to being a professional teacher

	Fees	No fees	Difference	p-value
There are too many socio-economic problems in the community	42.67	61.88	19.21	***
Teachers' salaries are too low	60.34	59.74	-0.6	
My classes are too large	44.88	56.96	12.08	***
I have too many administrative tasks	45.23	52.78	7.55	***
Learners' home backgrounds make it difficult to be effective	38.96	52.03	13.07	***
Learners at my school are not well-behaved	39.05	45.5	6.45	***
My school does not have a library	26.59	39.61	13.02	***
My school does not have a good library	26.68	37.79	11.11	***
Education departments do not treat teachers well	30.92	37.58	6.66	***
The school management team does not communicate well with teachers	22.88	30.41	7.53	***
The school management has a top-down leadership style	20.67	29.34	8.67	***
The buildings are broken and not well-maintained	25	28.37	3.37	***
There are not enough textbooks for my learners	21.29	28.27	6.98	***
The community does not value me as a teacher	22.26	27.73	5.47	***
The Education Department doesn't provide adequate in-service training	20.23	27.3	7.07	***
Unions do not support teachers adequately	20.23	25.91	5.68	***
Teachers do not support each other at my school	18.82	25.05	6.23	***
The school management team does not support teachers adequately	17.58	23.66	6.08	***
The school management team does not treat teachers fairly	18.99	22.7	3.71	**
I do not have freedom to teach what I think is best	13.07	22.59	9.52	***

Notes: Significance: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

These differences suggest that teachers at no-fee schools continue to bear historical burdens arising from long-term under-investment in black schools (Motala, 2006) and state violence against black people (Kallaway, 2002). However, they also suggest that teachers at no-fee schools get less support from education departments and structures within their schools. In the language of institutional analysis, there are likely two kinds of differences related to the informal aspects of institutions. The first difference lies in the informal rules guiding the behaviour of learners and the broader community, related to a history of state violence against black people. The second difference lies in the informal rules guiding the behaviour of support

structures from the state and within the school. Consequently, while a policy analysis may reveal that schools are subject to roughly equitable formal institutions, the survey data suggests that there are substantial differences in the informal dimensions of institutions.

These differences in institutional environments matter, since they may play a role in shaping how teachers conceptualise their roles as professionals. It is not implausible that teachers who work with learners who are traumatised by historical violence against black communities come to conceive of professionalism as comprising a strong pastoral, care-work component. An indication of this is a simple linear regression of teachers' views of their profession on their views of obstacles related to social trauma, which indicates that this line of thought is a promising one (Table 8). Controlling for the race and gender of teachers, as well as the no-fee status of schools, there is a positive, statistically significant relationship at the 0.01 level between teachers' emphasis on obstacles related to social trauma and their predilection for emphasising a pastoral view of professionalism. Here, social trauma factors were roughly represented by teachers' views on the following obstacles to professionalism: the poor behaviour of learners, learners' home backgrounds, socio-economic problems in the community, and community disregard for teachers. A pastoral view of professionalism was roughly captured by teachers' views on how important it was to know all parents of learners, place learners' interests first, and fight against policies that are bad for learners. This does not show that the correlation is not spurious or confounded by unobserved variables, but it does suggest that further research may bear interesting results. In particular, further research could investigate the survey data on teachers' views of the frequency and intensity of different forms of violence at school.

Table 8: The correlates (linear regression estimates) of emphasising pastoral characteristics of professionalism

	(I)	(II)
Trauma	0.04** (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)
No fee school	-0.17** (0.07)	-0.13 (0.07)
Black		0.14* (0.07)
Female		0.21** (0.10)
Black female		0.15* (0.08)

Notes: Robust standard errors corrected for clustering at school level in brackets. Significance: ***
p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1. 1.

Which group should teachers be held most accountable to?

Respondents were asked to indicate which group teachers should be held most accountable to by selecting one out of the ten options. Table 9.1 presents the responses for all ten options. Overall, the disagreement between teachers at different schools is more muted than their differences regarding professionalism.

The majority of respondents across schools indicate that teachers should be accountable to a state actor – the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) or the South African Council of Educators (SACE). This greater emphasis on vertical accountability nevertheless admits of variation between groups. A much larger proportion of teachers at no-fee schools indicate that SACE and the DBE are paramount, where these differences were statistically significant at the 0.01 level. In contrast, more teachers at fee-paying schools identify the school as a whole and the school management team as being the most important for accountability, where these differences are statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Very few teachers across schools rate the school governing body as the most important body to oversee accountability.

Table 9.1: Proportion of respondents who identified the following groups as the most important for accountability

	Fees	No fees	Difference	p-value
Western Cape Education Department	26.18	25.89	-0.29	
South African Council of Educators	13.88	20.5	6.62	***
Learners	19.98	17.07	-2.91	
Department of Basic Education	9.07	14.55	5.48	***
Parents and guardians	6.01	7.9	1.89	*
School as a whole	12.3	7.22	-5.08	***
School management team	5.92	3.32	-2.6	***
Community	2.68	1.6	-1.08	
School governing body	2.78	1.49	-1.29	**
Teacher organisations	1.2	0.46	-0.74	*

Notes: Significance: *** p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1. 1.

These results are largely consistent with teachers’ responses when asked to rate the importance of all ten groups for teacher accountability on a four-level likert scale: ‘no importance’, ‘low importance’, ‘some importance’ and ‘very important.’ Table 9.2 presents all the ‘no importance’ and ‘low importance’ responses,⁸ and Table 9.3. presents all the ‘high importance’ responses. Almost a quarter of all respondents across schools indicate that the school governing body has no or low importance for accountability, and large proportions indicate that non-state actors, such as unions, communities and parents, have little or no relevance (Table 9.2). However, this contains substantive variation between schools. More teachers at no-fee schools stress the importance of various groups for accountability in general, whether to state actors or non-state actors (Table 9.3).

8

A very small number of respondents selected “no importance” and it was therefore more useful to group “no importance” and “low importance” responses together.

Table 9.2: Proportion of respondents who attach no/low importance to the following groups regarding accountability

	Fees	No fees	Difference	P-value
Teacher organisations	36.43	27.46	-8.97	***
Department of Basic Education	15.24	9.3	-5.94	***
South African Council of Educators	21.28	15.75	-5.53	***
Community	32.55	27.9	-4.65	**
Parents	23.17	19.69	-3.48	*
Western Cape Education Department	6.94	5.36	-1.58	
Learners	18.21	16.96	-1.25	
School as a whole	15.6	15.86	0.26	
School management team	11.81	11.71	-0.1	
School governing body	24.71	24.84	0.13	

Notes: Significance: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 9.3: Proportion of respondents who attach high importance to the following groups regarding accountability

	Fees	No fees	Difference	p-value
School management team	40.13	40.26	0.13	
School governing body	29.31	29.65	0.34	
School as a whole	39.31	39.72	0.41	
Learners	43.28	47.16	3.88	
Parents	32.91	37.86	4.95	**
Western Cape Education Department	56.27	58.21	1.94	
Community	22.27	28.88	6.61	***
South African Council of Educators	40.58	48.58	8	***
Department of Basic Education	41.3	49.45	8.15	***
Teacher organisations	17.31	26.81	9.5	***

Notes: Significance: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Conclusion

This study makes two main contributions to the literature on basic education in South Africa. First, the results suggest that theoretical accounts of professionalism and accountability should take into account the different positionalities of teachers within the schooling system in terms of categories of exclusion and exploitation – in this case, race, class and gender.

Teachers at no-fee schools, who are predominantly black women, tend to emphasise different characteristics of professionalism relative to their colleagues at fee-paying schools. They stress the pastoral and care-work dimensions of their profession, while their colleagues at fee-paying schools stress their claims to pedagogical knowledge and job prestige as central to being a professional.

Related to this, many more teachers at no-fee schools report facing burdens related to historical under-investment in black schools, social trauma arising from state violence against black people, and a lack of institutional support from the state and the public. We suggest that it is not implausible to see a relationship between the obstacles that teachers face and how they conceptualise their roles as professionals – in this case, dealing with high levels of social trauma and conceiving of their jobs as pastoral care-work – something which future analyses of the complete survey data could investigate more carefully.

While several authors argue that the difference in accountability across schools is a key factor in explaining differences in learner performance (van der Bergh, 2007; Taylor, 2009; Spaul, 2015), the survey results indicate that teachers' different conceptions of professionalism do not necessarily suggest different views of accountability, which appear to be roughly similar across school types. Instead, the reports of teachers at no-fee schools facing the greatest burdens related to social trauma and historical under-investment in schools, suggesting they need greater institutional support, present an additional layer of potential explanations related to the ways in which teachers at different schools may be subject to different and unequal institutions. This warrants further exploration.

Second, the results suggest that inequity operates not only at the level of learners, but also at the level of teachers. The concept of a bifurcated education system should therefore be expanded to consider teachers and deepened to consider the ways in which institutions are raced, classed and gendered to create multiple disadvantages for teachers at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

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What is SAERA?

The South African Education Research Association (SAERA) was established at a launch conference at Bela Bela in the Limpopo Province at the end of January 2013. SAERA's launch represents a historic attempt to bring together education academics and researchers from all over South Africa into a unified educational research organisation. SAERA's main aim is to professionalise, cohere and improve educational research and academic work in South Africa. SAERA's establishment follows three years of extensive consultation between a broad range of educational academic organisations with the intent of bringing together academics from different organisations, with their roots in the racialised academic traditions of the pre-democracy period.

The establishment of SAERA provides an opportunity for an umbrella body to bring together different research traditions in the country.

SAERA has the following aims:

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Journal of Education will appear at least twice per year.

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Unsolicited papers are welcome for consideration and should be addressed to the Editor of the *Journal of Education*. Submitting authors should note that a fee of R3 000.00 per article will be levied on published submissions.

Institutional Research Offices of higher education institutions usually pay this type of fee. Authors whose affiliated organisation may not have instituted this practice are asked to contact the Editor, as the levy is a means of sustaining the journal, and is not intended as a deterrent to aspiring authors!

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Articles and essay reviews (maximum 6 000 words); debate, discussion and research notes (2 500 words); book reviews (2 000 words); and book notes (200 words) will be considered.

The Editorial Committee will make a first decision regarding all articles that are submitted. Articles that are selected for review will be sent to two or three peer reviewers for blind review. Appropriate papers will be refereed for significance and soundness. Papers are accepted on the understanding that they have not been published or accepted for publication elsewhere.

Reviewers are requested to review the article with regard to the following criteria:

- adequate, fair and accurate presentation of the relevant literature in the area of focus
- the validity and power of evidence marshalled to support the author's argument
- the extent to which interpretations and conclusions are warranted by the nature and scope of fieldwork
- the contribution to our collective understanding of the particular issue/s
- the originality and the power of the argument
- overall clarity and coherence.

Contributors should submit an electronic version of the article by e-mail to the Editor at JoE@ukzn.ac.za. This should not be formatted, and preferably not use a variety of fonts and font sizes or use paragraph styles. Where necessary, however, authors may wish to indicate levels of subheadings (i.e. first level, second level). Each paper should be accompanied by a 100–150 word abstract. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum, and authors are asked to keep tables and diagrams to the most feasible level of size and simplicity. Tables and diagrams should also be sent in separate files. The name(s) and full address(es) of the author/s should appear on a separate sheet.

Each author will receive a copy of the journal in which the paper appears.

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The journal is committed to being an open source, peer reviewed journal. All articles are posted on the journal website <http://joe.ukzn.ac.za>.

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Referencing style

The *Journal of Education* makes use of the APA 6th style of referencing. <http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>

Citations in the text should appear as follows:

No country in the world can afford the schooling its people want
(Reimer, 1971).

Direct quotations are indicated by “quotation marks”.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 175) argue that “the concept of identity is a complex one”.

Long quotations **of more than 40 words** should start on a new line and be indented with no quote marks. All direct quotations need a page number as well as author and date.

Citations of two authors

Smith and Jones (2012) or (Smith & Jones, 2012)

Three to five authors

At first mention: Smith, Jones, Khan, Patel, and Chen (2012) or (Smith, Jones, Khan, Patel, & Chen, 2012)

At subsequent mentions: Smith et al. (2012) or (Smith et al., 2012)

The **references** should be listed alphabetically in full at the end of the paper using APA 6th style.

Basic Format for Books

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Place: Publisher.

Books with more than one edition

Author, A. A. (2012). *Book title: And subtitle* (4th ed.). Place: Publisher.

Format for Edited Books

Editor, A. A. (Ed.). (Year). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Place: Publisher.

Format for Chapter in an Edited Book

Author, A.A. (Year). Title of chapter. In A. A. Editor & B.B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pages). Place: Publisher.

Journal articles

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Journal, volume number* (issue number), pages.

Forthcoming article

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (in press). Title of article. *Title of Journal*. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxx

Article published online ahead of hard copy

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Article title. *Title of Journal*. Advance online publication. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxx

Articles in magazines and newspapers

Author, A. A. (Year of publication, date of publication). Title of article. *Name of Newspaper or magazine*, pp. x-x.

Theses and dissertations

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Unpublished PhD/MEd thesis/dissertation, Name of University, City.

Policy documents

Department/ Ministry name. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Place: Publisher.

For e.g. Department of Higher Education and Training (DoHET). (2010). *Draft policy on minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications selected from the HEQF*. Pretoria: Government Press.

Working papers

Author, A. A. (2012). *Title of work* (Working Paper No. 123). Location: Publisher.

Conference papers (unpublished)

Presenter, A. A. (2012, February). *Title of paper*. Paper presented at the meeting of Organization Name, Location.

Internet resources

Website

When citing an entire website, it is sufficient just to give the address of the site in the text. The BBC (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>).

Web page

If the format is out of the ordinary (e.g. lecture notes), add a description in brackets.

Author, A. (2011). Title of document [Format description]. Retrieved from <http://URL>

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Frequently asked questions

Is the Journal of Education SAPSE accredited?

Yes

How many issues per year?

In terms of a recent policy decision, we aim to produce at least two ‘normal’ editions of the journal each year in addition to at least two special issues (one of which will be the SAERA Special Edition).

Most journals now have a per article fee which contributors are required to meet should their articles be accepted. Does the Journal of Education levy such charges?

Yes. This step was necessary to cover the costs of the increased number of issues each year. A levy of R3 000 per article will be applied to successful articles submitted to our office. The central research offices in most institutions of higher education routinely arrange for such payments to be made. We encourage individual authors who do not have such cover to contact us.

Are articles peer reviewed?

Yes. Our goal is for articles to be refereed by three experts in the field.

What is the waiting period after submission?

Referees provide their crucially important service for no reward, and are sometimes unable to oblige on time but we endeavour to respond within three months.

Can I send my submission by e-mail?

Yes. The electronic version of the article should be sent as an email attachment.

To what extent should an article being submitted be presented in ‘the style’ of the journal?

Citation and referencing should be in the style of the journal (see the previous section ‘Notes for Contributors’). Authors are not expected to reproduce the particular fonts and font sizes used in the journal, but the levels of headings and subheadings should be clear. With regard to the electronic version of the article, we prefer as little formatting as possible.

Does the journal have a policy to encourage and support budding novice researchers?

Unfortunately not – this is simply beyond our capacity. While we welcome extended comment that referees may be able to offer, we cannot impose on their good services beyond the expectation of an overall judgement on the article, together with brief justification of that judgement.

What is the rate of acceptance/rejection?

The following statistics for 2013 and 2014 provide an indication of the pattern of acceptance/non acceptance:

Year	Accepted with no or minor revisions	Accepted after revisions	Not accepted
2013	0	8	34
2014	0	14	38

Even an increase in the number of issues each year will not keep pace with the ever-increasing number of submissions. We can do little to mitigate the competition engendered by state funding policy and the kinds of incentive schemes that have become a feature of the higher education landscape.

Is there an appeal mechanism should my article not be accepted?

Beyond summarizing reasons for rejection – where applicable – we regret that we are unable to enter into detailed discussion on decisions reached by the Editorial Committee on the basis of referee reports.

The journal describes itself as providing “a forum for scholarly understanding of the field of education”. What does this really mean?

We understand this as implying that articles should represent a rigorous enquiry (conducted through argumentation or empirically) into the understanding of educational issues. Such inquiry originates in a problem rather than a solution, and it is rare for such enquiry to have no reference to, or engagement with, a broader literature and theory. Advocacy in the form of prescriptions or ‘how to do it’ recipe knowledge for practitioners seldom finds favour with referees. The question of audience is key. The assumed audience is the collective body of researchers rather than those more narrowly concerned with the effective implementation of specific policies.

Recent non-acceptances include a high proportion of undeveloped research reports, summaries of dissertations, and even sound but small-scale case studies that are purely context specific and unconnected with broader issues, literature or theory. Similarly, even a successful conference paper is usually in need of further development before it merits publication.