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Grappling With Curriculum Decolonisation in South African Primary Schools: The School Managers' Perceptions

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the South African school managers (principals) perceptions of how they cope with the contested view of curriculum decolonization. Situated in the pragmatic and phenomenological paradigm, the study adopted a mixed approach and utilizes a descriptive phenomenological design to examine the school managers lived experiences of the curriculum decolonization agenda in their schools. A total of 20 participants was sampled for the data generation process, which followed the completion of unstructured questionnaires. The qualitative data were analysed thematically while quantitative data was analysed using inferential statistics. The key conclusion arrived at was that true freedom has not yet been obtained in South Africa given that genuine curriculum transformation towards decolonization has not happened at the required rate and the country is still reeling in a state in which the non-achievement of goals set out at the dawn of the democracy really need a critical re-examination.

Keywords: Curriculum decolonisation; discourses; school managers; transformation

Introduction

Even though the South African government has made several commitments towards free education, the issue of curriculum decolonization or a decolonised education system has remained a gray area (Sathorar & Geduld, 2018). The demand for curriculum decolonization has been directed specifically at the tertiary education level where students have been raising some red flags owing to the lack of curriculum transformation in higher and tertiary education particularly at university levels (Mutekwe, 2017). Part of the claims for a decolonised school curriculum include that some out-dated colonised content continues to be window-dressed as the decolonised curriculum (Sathorar & Geduld, 2018). Proponents of a decolonised curriculum, for example, Mbembe (2016), Le Grange (2018) and Mutekwe (2017) agree that school curricular pedagogies tend to resemble Western strategies most of which are foreign to the student population and this often hampers not only their progress but also makes them endure the effects of racism in their schools and lecture halls. As a result, they have called for real

curriculum decolonization in all educational institutions of higher learning including primary schools (Sathorar & Geduld, 2018).

The issue of decolonizing the primary school curriculum is particularly important given that the primary school forms the relevant grass roots level for the early preparation of young people for their active role in South Africa and the greater world-wide involvement in the social, economic and socio-political contexts and challenges for the 21st century (DoE, Republic of South Africa, 2008). The great question that arises thus concerns the extent to which primary schools have taken heed of the decolonisation agenda in their revised curricula and how do school managers ensure that such an agenda is converted into practice (Sathorar & Geduld, 2018). Scholars such as Mestry and Dzvimbo (2011) and Oloyede (2009) are of the view that to promote the smooth management of curriculum transformation towards decolonization, school managers need to ensure that the purity of disciplinary knowledge is not disrupted. However, others, for example, Le Grange (2018) argue to the contrary on the grounds that it is always important that South African educational institutions choose to radically question the extent to which the existing curriculum takes cognisance of the local content and context if they are to ensure genuine curriculum decolonization.

Theoretical framework

A theory of self-ownership is adopted for this study. The theory is relational, always entailing a bundle of innate rights, capabilities and claims made against others, taken back from others and to be protected against others, once again, by force if necessary (Fanon, 2015; Musitha & Tshibalo, 2016). As a theory, self-ownership explains a precondition or necessary step towards the creation of new forms of life that could genuinely be characterized as fully human (Mbembe, 2020). Becoming human does not only happen in time, but through, by means of, almost by virtue of time (Fanon, 2015). And time, properly speaking, is creation of new forms of life, which if there is something one could call a Fanonian theory of decolonization, that is where it is, in the dialectic of time, life and creation, which for him is the same as self-appropriation (Mbembe, 2020). Seen in this light, decolonization is thus not about design, tinkering with the margins but about reshaping, turning human beings once again into craftsmen and craftswomen who, in reshaping matters and forms, need not look at the pre-existing models and need not use them as paradigms.

This implies a rejection of imitation and mimicry in the school curriculum but a clear replacement of Eurocentric perspectives with their Afrocentric counterparts (Mbembe, 2020). For Fanon, this also signifies a call to provincialize Europe, turning our backs on her and not consider Europe as an ideal model to emulate because of the following reasons; the European game has finally ended, and so Africans must find something different that they can do so long as they do not imitate

Europe (Fanon, 2015). The second reason is that it is a question of the Third World starting a new history of Man and therefore there is need to try and set foot on a new man (316). Finally, because the time of decolonization has had a double character and was the time of closure as well as the time of possibility. As such it required a politics of difference as opposed to a politics of imitation and repetition (Fanon, 2015). It is for these reasons that for Fanon, decolonization came to be so closely associated with these fundamental facts about being, time and self-creation, and ultimately different as opposed to repetition. Given that colonization itself was a fundamental negation of time in the sense that, from the colonial point of view, natives were not simply people without history but were radically located outside of time or their time was radically out of joint (Fanon, 2015). It was also a negation of time in the sense that that essential category of time called the future– that essential human quality called the disposition towards the future and the capacity for futurity were all the monopoly of Europe and had to be brought to the natives from outside, as a magnanimous gift of civilization. That is a gift that turned colonial violence and plunder into a benevolent act supposed to absolve those such as Rhodes who engaged in it (Fanon, 1978; Mbembe, 2020). Furthermore, colonization was a negation of time for the view that in the colonial mind, the native was ontologically incapable of change and therefore of creation. He would always and forever be a native. It was the belief that if he or she were to change, the ways in which this change would occur and the forms that the change would take or would bring about, would always end in a catastrophe (Mbembe, 2020). In other words, the native principle was about repetition without difference. Native time was sheer repetition not of events as such, but the instantiation of the very law of repetition as Musitha and Tshibalo (2016) observe. It was for the aforesaid reasons that Fanon (2015) understood decolonization as precisely a subversion of the law of repetition.

Literature Review

For this to occur, decolonization had to be an event that could radically redefine native being and open it up to the possibility of becoming a human form rather than a thing (Mbembe, 2020). It was an historical event in the sense that it could radically redefine native time as the permanent possibility of the emergence of the not yet. To the colonial framework of pre-determination, decolonization opposed the framework of possibility of a different type of being, a different type of time, a different type of creation, different forms of life, a different humanity or the possibility to reconstitute the human after humanism's complicity with colonial racism (Fanon 2015; Mbembe, 2020). It is for these reasons that Fanon (2015) considered decolonization as always, a violent phenomenon whose goal is the replacement of a certain species of men by another species of men (p.35). By a new species of men Fanon meant a new category of men with no limitations predetermined by appearance and whose essence coincides with

image not as something separate from them nor as something that does not belong to them, but insofar as there is no barrier or gap between this image and the recognition of oneself, the property of oneself. A new species of men also implies a category of men who can create new forms of life, free from the shock realization that the image through which they have emerged into visibility (race) is not their essence (Fanon, 2015). Decolonization in this sense is the elimination of this gap between image and essence (Fanon, 2015). It is about the restitution of the essence to the image so that, that which exists can exist in itself and not in something other than itself, something distorted, clumsy, debased and unworthy (Mbembe, 2020).

Further to the above, the theoretical views of Ngugi Wathiongo on the concept of decolonization are also brought to the fore in a bid to unpack the notion of curriculum decolonization. For Garuba (2017), Heleta (2016) and Wathiongo (1981), it is important to point out that decolonization implies a project of re-centering and rejecting the assumption that the modern West is the central root of Africa's consciousness and cultural heritage. Decolonizing the curriculum according to Wathiongo's view is not about closing the door to European or other learning traditions but it is about defining clearly what the centre is and for him, Africa has to be placed at the centre. Given that education is a means of knowledge about ourselves, it follows that after examining ourselves, we need to radiate outwards and discover peoples and worlds around us (Fataah, 2012; Wathiongo, 1981). With Africa at the centre of things, not existing as an appendix or a satellite of other countries and literatures, things must be seen from the African perspective (Wathiongo, 1981). All other things are to be considered in their relevance to our situation and their contribution towards understanding our African selves. In suggesting this South Africans are not rejecting other streams especially the western stream but they are only clearly mapping out the directions and perspectives their school curriculum, knowledge and pedagogies or culture and literature should inevitably take in an African educational context (Wathiongo, 1981).

It is about rejecting the notion that Africa is merely an extension of the West (Fanon, 2015). Indeed it is not because the West is but a recent moment of our long history. Long before our encounter with the West in the 15th century under the sign of capital, we were relational, worldly beings (Wathiongo, 1981). Added to this, Fanon (2015) also notes that in the aftermath of colonialism, the middle class manipulated the overall claim to self-determination as a way of preventing the formation of an authentic national consciousness (Heleta, 2016; Mbembe, 2020). To preserve its own interests, the middle class turned the national project into an empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty of what might have been (Fanon, 2015). In this context, the discourse of Africanization mostly performed an ideological work. It became the ideology masking what fundamentally was a predatory project, which can be called looting in contemporary discourse (Chisholm 2005; Fanon, 2015). In terms of decolonizing the

South African school curriculum from its Eurocentric orientation towards Afrocentrism, one can argue that decolonization is the same thing as Africanization and calls to decolonize are not new, neither have they gone uncontested whenever they have been made (Fanon, 2015). Examples such as the African post-colonial experiments in the 1960s and 1970s come to mind and epitomise that to decolonize is the same as to Africanize as part and parcel of a nation-building project (Mbembe, 2020). Although Fanon (2015) was extremely critical of the project of Africanization, with his critique being purely political, he did not believe that nation-building could be achieved by those he called the national middle class or the national bourgeoisie. Fanon did not trust the African post-colonial middle class at all for reasons that he thought the African post-colonial middle class was lazy, unscrupulous, parasitic and above all lacking spiritual depth precisely because it had totally assimilated colonialist thought in its most corrupt forms. Not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building, nor labour, its innermost vocation, the thought, was not to transform the nation. It was merely to keep in the running and be part of the racket (Fanon, 2015). For instance, Garuba (2017) notes that the national bourgeoisie constantly demands the nationalization of the economy and of the trading sectors. But for him, nationalization simply implies the transfer into native hands of those unfair advantages which are a legacy of the colonial past. More ominously, Fanon took a certain discourse of Africanization to be akin to something he called retrogression because for him this is what happens when a nation is passed over for the race, and the tribe is preferred to the state. It is retrogression too when, behind a so-called nationalist rhetoric, lurks the hideous face of chauvinism, the heart-breaking return of chauvinism in its most bitter and detestable form, Fanon (2015) notes.

In the aftermath of independence, Fanon witnessed events similar to what the foreigners in South Africa call xenophobia or Afrophobic attacks against fellow Africans. He witnessed similar events in the Ivory Coast, in Senegal, in the Congo where those called, in the South African lexicon foreigners controlled the greater part of the petty trade. These Africans of other nations were rounded up and commanded to leave. Their shops were burned and their street stalls were wrecked. Fanon was ill at ease with calls for Africanization because calls for Africanization are, in most instances, always haunted by the dark desire to get rid of the foreigner - a desire which, Fanon confesses, made him furious and sick at heart. It made him furious and sick at heart because the foreigner to be gotten rid of was almost always a fellow African from another nation (Fanon, 2015). Because of the fact that the objective of the Africanization agenda was by a fellow African from another nation, Fanon saw in it the name of an inverted racism, which was a form of self-racism. As one of the most trenchant critics of the decolonization-as-Africanization paradigm, Fanon's conviction was that very often, especially when the wrong social class is in charge, there is a shortcut from nationalism to chauvinism, and finally to racism implying that there is a tendency to

topple Cecil Rhodes' statue only to replace it with that of Adolf Hitler. Given Fanon's contention alluded to above, Africanization and decolonization are not the same thing and therefore there is a clear need to examine these concepts in relation to the school curriculum. Fanon (2015) notes that struggles for decolonization are first and foremost about self-ownership. In terms of the school curriculum, they are struggles to repossess our knowledge and pedagogy, to take back, if necessary, by force because is rightfully ours unconditionally and as such, belongs to us (Mbembe, 2020). Rodney (2012) defines curriculum decolonization as the process of dismantling European models of education to enable Africa to design its own models that will benefit it. Fanon (1978) views it as the destruction of the education system which created the environment of dependency of the colonised people of the world which the capitalist system of education sought to inculcate for its own purposes of retaining them as underdeveloped. In Corroborating with Fanon, Wathiongo (1981:15) describes decolonisation as the creation of a new society based on its values. UNESCO (2014) adds to the above views by saying that curriculum decolonization demands that the curriculum which does not prepare citizens for economic development should be redesigned in content and methods to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Because colonial education manifested itself in the type and methodology of its transmission to learners, the new decolonized curriculum should thus address not just the language transformation agenda but also the content and pedagogical aspects (Wathiongo, 1981:16).

Twenty-six years after political independence, South Africa has not fully abandoned an epoch most African postcolonial societies have experienced in the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s (Mbembe, 2020). The curricular systems of schools remain grey and almost murky due to lack of clarity in terms of the way forward as far as curriculum transformation issues are concerned. Seen in this light, several curriculum reforms have been in place since the year 1994 and these include Curriculum 2005 and outcomes-based education, National Curriculum Statements 2002 (NCs 2002), and the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Chisholm, 2005; Musitha & Mafukata, 2018). Due to the lack of clarity about curriculum decolonization, many of South Africans think that bringing white supremacy in South Africa's education institutions to its knees is a form of curriculum decolonization (Mbembe, 2020). Fanon (2015) further notes that in their quest for curriculum decolonization in South African schools, some South Africans see no contradiction between wanting to topple white supremacy and being anti-racist while succumbing to the sirens of isolationism and national chauvinism. Consequently, many still consider whites as settlers who, occasionally attempt to masquerade as natives and yet, with the advent of democracy and the new constitutional state, there should be no settlers or natives but equals (Fanon, 2015).

Schools and classrooms as sites of decolonization certainly need transformation because learners cannot continue to be taught the way their parents were pedagogically

taught (Fataah, 2012). Further to this, apart from teaching basic literacy and numeracy many the primary school curricular aspects continue the teaching of obsolete forms of knowledge with obsolete pedagogies (Mbembe, 2020). Just as nations decommission statues, they also should decommission a lot of what passes as knowledge in the teaching and learning processes in schools (Fataah, 2012). In addition, in an age that more than ever valorizes different forms of intelligence, the learner-educator relationship certainly has to change. It is in this sense that Mbembe (2020) notes that in order to set educational institutions firmly on the path of a clear curriculum decolonization for future knowledges, there is an imperative need to reinvent a classroom without walls in which all co-learners or a classroom become points of convergence of and platforms for the redistribution of equal and different kinds of knowledge.

Aim of the Study

The study aimed to explore the perceptions of South African primary school managers (principals) about curriculum decolonization.

Methods

Research design

The paradigm within which the research is located is pragmatism and phenomenogy on account of the researchers' quest to focus on the subjective interpretations of the participants lived experiences of curriculum decolonisation within their schools (Merriam, 2012) and the objectivity of the data analysis of the quantitative tradition (Clark & Creswell, 2024). The research approach adopted was mixed method, while the specific design genre or strategy of inquiry was a descriptive phenomenology famed for its suitability in exploring the participants lived experiences (Mertens, 2010). It is hoped that through this descriptive phenomenological design it would be necessary for the researcher to fully understand the school principals lived experiences of curriculum decolonisation within their regular work practices with their educators. Further to this view, Hammarberg and Kirkman (2016) adds that phenomenology conceptualises the internal awareness of individuals and explores the participants' everyday life experiences. Figure 1 below illustrates the research onion principle, which has been adapted from Sounders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016:28) diagrammatically illustrates some of the above concepts particularly the concepts paradigm, approach and design as used in this study.

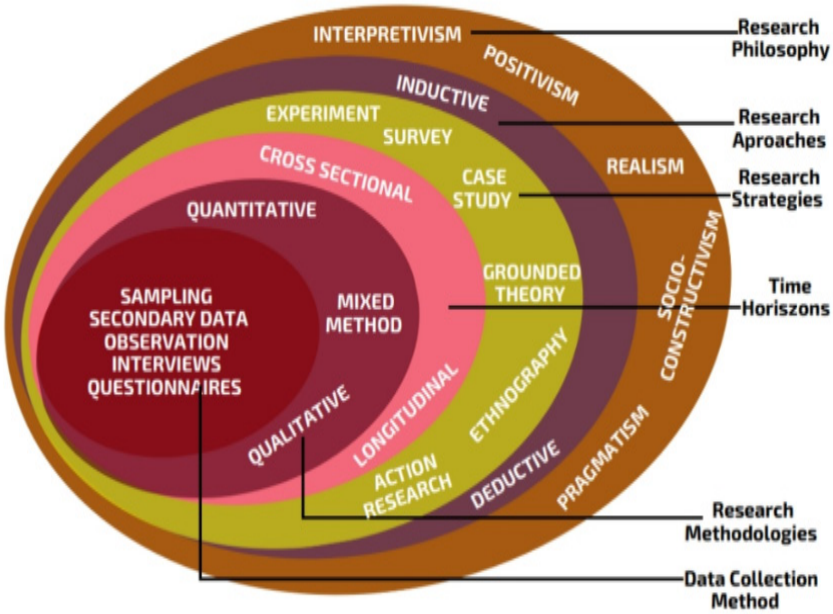

Figure 1: The research onion principle (Adapted from Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016:128)

The research assumptions implicit in the above figure indicate that while the outer layer of the onion comprises the many research paradigms or philosophical worldviews such as the interpretivist, positivist, realism, social constructivist, transformative and pragmatism, the second layer comprises the research approaches, which according to Saunders et al., (2016) are either qualitative (inductive) or quantitative (deductive) research approaches.

Study Participants

The researchers' epistemological orientation to the paradigms led them to adopt a non-random sampling strategy to purposefully draw the sample for the empirical study from 20 primary school principals or school managers in the Gauteng province. The participants were purposefully and conveniently sampled. With the type of non-probability sampling technique adopted the resultant sample did not necessarily represent the full population but was based on a judgement that is useful in qualitative studies to deal with specific research objectives (Martinez-Mesa et al., 2016). By using such a non-probability sampling procedure, the researchers focused on a smaller sample of individuals to ensure the examination of curriculum decolonization as a real-life phenomenon (Taherdoost, 2016).

Data collection methods

The data generation method used for the qualitative research was an unstructured questionnaire containing open-ended questions on the school principals' perceptions of curriculum decolonization for primary schools. Owing to the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the unstructured questionnaires had to be emailed to the 20 participants and the researchers had to await the participants' responses which took an average of two weeks' duration for all the participants to complete and return the questionnaires. Data collection for the quantitative part was completed with an online structured questionnaire.

Data analysis

According to Oka and Shaw (2010), data analysis is one of the primary aspects of research when all the fieldwork has been accomplished. As a mixed methods study, the data analysis process for this study involved a twofold process, namely, the descriptive statistical analysis of the data with the aid of the quantitative data analysis software, SPSS version 24 and the identification of means, modes, medians and standard deviations of the analysed data and the second phase involved the analysis of the qualitative data using thematic analysis.

Results

The study explored the perceptions of South African primary school managers (principals) about curriculum decolonization. The t test results in table 1 are on decolonising understanding from school managers perspectives.

	Mean	Std.Dv.	N	Std.Err.	Reference	t-value	df	p
1. Correcting the presentation of knowledge and the exclusion of knowledge and information	2,933	0,766	89	0,081	2,50	5,33	88	0,000
2. Decolonising involves moving away from focusing on European history and move towards Asia	2,281	0,941	89	0,100	2,50	-2,20	88	0,0307
3. Correcting the exclusion of knowledge and information	3,178	0,696	90	0,073	2,50	9,23	89	0,0000
4. Introduction of indigenous knowledge systems and practice	3,090	0,717	89	0,076	2,50	7,76	88	0,0000
5. Introducing teaching in mother tongue	2,667	0,793	90	0,084	2,50	1,99	89	0,0493
6. Revise history subject to include encompass all information of white colonial state and include Black lived experience	3,090	0,748	89	0,079	2,50	7,44	88	0,0000
7. Rethinking and reframing the curriculum	3,187	0,829	91	0,087	2,50	7,90	90	0,0000
8. Systems that are designed to degrade, exploit and subjugate people in Africa and other part of the formerly colonized world	2,034	0,882	87	0,095	2,50	-4,92	86	0,0000
9. When Africa appear in the curriculum is no more than a version of the continent offered by apartheid reviled Bantu Education	2,624	1,091	85	0,118	2,50	1,04	84	0,2995
10. Addressing identity and representation	3,011	0,619	87	0,066	2,50	7,70	86	0,0000

Table 1: t test results on school managers understanding about curriculum decolonization

a) Correcting the presentation of knowledge and the exclusion of knowledge and information:

Results in Table 1 indicated that the mean score of 2,9 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.0001) implying that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

b) Decolonising involves moving away from focusing on European history and move towards Asia:

Results in Table 1 shows that the mean score of 2,28 is significantly less than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.031) which implies that majority of participants significantly disagreed compared to participants that agreed.

c) Correcting the exclusion of knowledge and information:

Results in Table 1 indicated that the mean score of 3,17 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.0001) which implies that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

d) Introduction of indigenous knowledge systems and practice:

Results in Table 1 indicated that the mean score of 3,09 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.0001) which implies that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

e) Introducing teaching in mother tongue:

Results in Table 1 indicated that the mean score of 2,66 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.041) which implies that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

f) Revise history subject to include encompass all information of white colonial state and include Black lived experience:

Results in Table 1 indicated that the mean score of 3,09 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.0001) which implies that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

g) Rethinking and reframing the curriculum:

Results in Table 1 shows that the mean score of 3,18 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.0001) which implies that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

h) Systems that are designed to degrade, exploit and subjugate people in Africa and other part of the formerly colonized world:

Results in Table 1 shows that the mean score of 2,04 is significantly less than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.00001) which implies that majority of participants significantly disagreed compared to participants that agreed.

i) When Africa appear in the curriculum is no more than a version of the continent offered by apartheid reviled Bantu Education:

Results in Table 1 shows that the mean score of 2,6 insignificantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of greater than 0.05 (P value = 0.29) which implies that participant's responses did not differ significantly between those who agreed compared to participants that did not agree. Thus, results regarding to when Africa appear in the curriculum is no more than a version of the continent offered by apartheid reviled Bantu Education are undecided since participants are unsure.

j) Addressing identity and representation:

Results in Table 1 show that the mean score of 3,01 is significantly greater than the reference point of 2,5 and p value of less than 0.05 (P value = 0.0001) which means that majority of participants significantly agreed compared to participants that did not agree.

The qualitative findings also pointed out that dealing with dismantling white racial supremacy is an effective way of decolonizing the primary school curriculum. Asked to elaborate on their responses they included the view that white racial supremacy disadvantages many learners leading them to have a self-negative feeling and viewing their black complexion as a curse while viewing being white is a blessing. One participant reported that:

> ***Participant 1****: Regarding a Eurocentric curriculum, I think it is bad because it denigrates Afrocentric models and when many learners realize that most of their schoolwork is still done in English, with over 90 percent of it in English, they tend to abandon everything Afrocentric thereby defying the need for a decolonized school curriculum.*

Responding to the question of dealing with the English linguistic barriers in schools, a total of 3 respondents out of the twenty expressed this view arguing that the English language becomes a barrier because it makes all learning in the school curriculum westernized and therefore Eurocentric. As Africans, we tend to feel and believe that the better one speaks English the cleverer they are and this in my view is part and parcel of the influence of colonial overdose, which made Africans to think that everything African is inferior to everything European. This essentially implies that even as African educators in Africa our thinking have been captured by Eurocentric standards.

Curricular injustices warranting decolonization in schools

Asked to elaborate on the curricular injustices warranting decolonization in schools, results shows that 11 of the 20 participants felt that although many injustices in the country's economic affairs such as Black economic empowerment and other affirmative action programmes have been addressed there is an urgent need for the

curriculum or education system to be transformed towards being truly decolonized and democratic, eradicate such issues as racism, sexism, unfair discrimination and intolerance in the schools. If teachers are to play a role in decolonizing the primary school curriculum, they must first understand the political situation involved in the curriculum decolonization process so that they approach the subject with an open mind. The illustration below shows the key aspects which the curriculum decolonization agenda should focus on: people, curriculum and equal access. It is important to note that according to the respondents of the unstructured questionnaires each of the key curriculum decolonization agenda has a host of aspects to be dealt with as can be discerned from figure 1 below

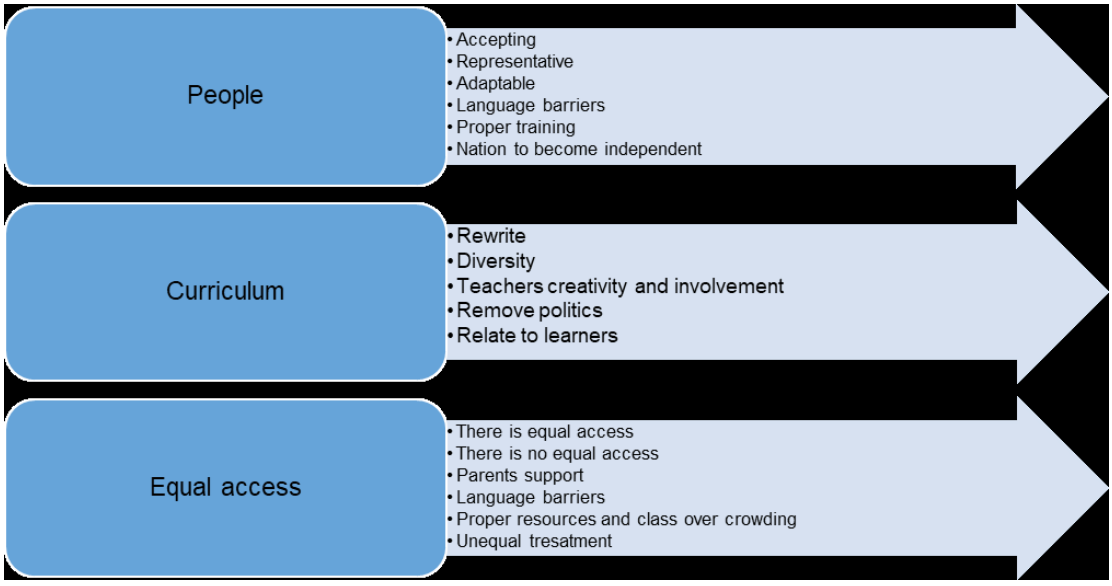

Figure 1: Key aspects in the curriculum decolonization agenda

Figure 1 clearly illustrates that for most respondents the process of decolonizing the primary schools should start with people to identify the problems and then tackle the problem. More than 50% of respondents (13 out of 20) indicated that curriculum decolonization needs people to adapt to changes in their pedagogic content knowledge. Furthermore, in terms of the curriculum, it is also important to note people should be involved in developing a fair and equitable curriculum in which diversity should be respected. Yet another point to be addressed as part of curriculum decolonization is equal access and the promotion of fair achievement for all learners regardless of their racial, ethnic, class or gender attributes. Contributing to the above views one of the participants had the following to say;

> ***Participant 3***: *I would stir a nation's schools to become independent with regards to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values attitudes and to create spaces and resources for*

> *dialogue among all educational stakeholders, to envision all cultures and knowledge system taught. That is why I think we need a decolonized curriculum system which links to the acquisition of all forms of knowledge*, whether Eurocentric or Afrocentric.

Discussing the issue of curriculum decolonization focusing on the teaching and learning agenda, 12 out of 20 respondents representing 60 percent of the total sample for the study, another respondent had the following to say;

> ***Participant 4****: The curriculum should be rewritten so that it takes into account knowledge diversity, racial and gender equity. The teachers' creativity and involvement should take precedence over politics and therefore political meddling should be removed from the curriculum review process.*

Elaborating on this, it pointed out that they have top achievers and for them, colour does not matter and every educator or learner is helped to the best of their schools' abilities. Five of the respondents representing 25 percent argued that they are concerned about children with disabilities who are often discriminated against making unequal access a reality for them in their schools.

Reforming the primary school curriculum

Some participants raised the view that the primary school curriculum needs to be revamped to take cognizance of the African renaissance or Afrocentric curriculum models as part of the decolonization agenda. In their elaboration of the above view these participants argued that learning ought not to be different or irrelevant to some learners while being very relevant to others. One of the respondents had the following to say in relation to this view;

> ***Participant 6:*** *I think in my opinion the issue of an alien curriculum estranges some learners and for example, the issue of the Outcome Based Education curriculum (OBE) followed in South African schools for the decade up to 2010 was a colonized curriculum concept having been adopted from Australia. The worst part of such a colonized curriculum is that it does not prioritize the local content knowledge nor does it foreground the local pedagogies that can be used to transmit it to the learners. For example, the context of some of the South African learner contexts were not taken into consideration in the OBE curriculum and this partly led to its repeal in the year 2011 when the new Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was introduced. I think that is where the challenge is and with regards to the CAPS curriculum, one aspect was that it was overly teacher-orientated as opposed to being learner orientated, which meant educators had to superimpose some of the pedagogies so as to ensure there was enough time to do administration, teach and assess* learning activities.

From the interview excerpt above, the respondent noted that these are examples of the learning concepts that need to be reviewed as part of curriculum decolonization and possibly be replaced with more relevant or Afrocentric curricular models.

Discussion

The study findings indicated that correcting the presentation of knowledge and the exclusion of knowledge and information, correcting the exclusion of knowledge and information, introduction of indigenous knowledge systems and practice is needed. To have a decolonized school curriculum, it is imperative to understand what the word curriculum entails. La Grange (2017) draws from Aoki's (1999) understanding of curriculum as one that doesn't focus on the planned but also on how it is lived by learners and teachers. Using this as a basis, Le Grange (2015) argues that a decolonized curriculum must include a combination from Descartes Cognito, 'I think therefore I am' and incorporates the world-view principles of "Ubuntu", which embodies and capture the essence of what it means to be human. In addition, La Grange (2015) argues that decolonization in the curriculum can, therefore, be seen as the expansion of empirical beyond mere observation and listening, to include knowing through the tastes, pain, and hunger of our bodies and expressions of anger, passion, and desire. Similarly, La Grange (2017) reiterates that Western epistemologies and unequal power relations need to be eradicated as being the dominant factor in curriculum development. The author exemplifies that learners need to learn about their origins and the epistemologies use from the Cradle of Humankind can build on the achievements of African people and the rest of humanity to free themselves from the dehumanization imposed on them by Western civilization (Nabudere, 2011). Similarly, Heleta (2016) argues that the non-inclusion of decolonised curriculum does not address the epistemic violence of colonial education and that schools and higher education in South Africa need to produce students who can address issues of violent epistemologies. The curriculum leadership of schools and universities needs to be familiarized with knowledge of African Indigenous culture so that they (school leaders and academics) can transfer that knowledge to new learners and students at schools and universities. The challenges related to the latter indicated that the intention to build or implement has good intention but the moment that starts, corruption finds its way in. This point is also argued by Musitha and Mafukata (2017) in that colonial apartheid is blamed for the economic, social, and political problems that beset Africa to date. Everywhere there is the demand to reverse it so that Africa can be put on the path to economic development.

Conclusion & Recommendations

This study concludes that the realisation of curriculum decolonization implies the emancipation of the colonized education system in South Africa free from the subservient psychological mind-set subjugated by the colonial ideologies is necessary. This study has concluded that school principals in South Africa are obliged to champion the review the colonial content knowledge and implement pedagogical reforms in their

schools. The recommendations for this study include that South African educators certainly need not only to be learned and well conversant with pedagogy but also to be acquainted with the learners' background and the local Afrocentric curriculum models, national customs, indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices if they are to effectively operate within the context of a decolonized school curriculum. They need to capitalize on the available native resources and use them innovatively in creating native teaching-learning situations that can reap better results through decolonizing and Africanizing the school curriculum.

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