

https://dspace.org/

Race, identity & private schools: the racialised rules and consequences of language use in Welkom

Maphalala, Khanyisile

2022

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/34166

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Race, Identity & Private Schools:
The Racialised Rules and Consequences of Language Use in Welkom

By

Khanyisile Maphalala

Supervised by: Professor Eric Worby

ABSTRACT:

The experience of black students in private schools is not homogenous. While their day to day lives are concerned with school and the people inside them, their realities also include interactions and encounters happening outside the school.

Socioeconomic status expectations, the way in which students use language and modes of transportation have a potential to complicate the progression of student's days, their experience of spaces and their perceptions of selves. This research report asks how, if at all, does the racialised and racially tense backdrop of Welkom influence the social experience of being a black student in a private school.

Through language, I explore the relationship between language use and place, and how this influences the performance of identity. I also look at how racialised socioeconomic expectations, structured by race, find their expression in the experience of students.

From this report's findings, I argue that the discordant experience of being a black private school student, even beyond the gates, has a substantially stressful impact on students. It permeates their exploration of identities, shapes their perception of self, and profoundly influences their experience of places.

An intimate look at participants' experiences of school and town, and an exploration of how sociocultural factors structured and reinforced by race, support the argument that the tensions of an inharmonious environment make the development and performance of identity taxing and uncomfortable for students.

This report also shows the fragility of historic racial categorisations through language use, while highlighting racialisation's bruising results through participants' experiences.