

The title of this book cleverly conveys its central concern: the changing class composition in contemporary South African classrooms across the spectrum, whether funded by the state or privately. This focus on social class marks a timely return to a crucial concept, generally neglected in post-apartheid scholarship (Alexander 2002; Hendricks 2003). After a decade of democracy in South Africa, there is a need to review the extent to which the plethora of policy enacted by the democratic government has succeeded in changing the extremely unequal socio-economic conditions inherited from apartheid. South Africa's gini co-efficient of 0.64 in 2003 (Tempest 2004) suggests that we are still far from redressing the deep-seated problems of inequality. Moreover, the racialised inequalities of the education system are also regionally biased, with rural areas remaining the worst off (De Souza 2003). A growing black middle class is widely regarded as one of the successes of democracy in South Africa. However, though the black middle class may have doubled in size (Southall 2004), it remains small numerically and its existence has had little impact on a national unemployment rate of 41, per cent (Tempest 2004). Central to an analysis of educational change is the issue of whether the presence of an enlarged black middle class has affected the quality of education across the system, especially for the majority of children with working class or unemployed parents. The education system plays a central role in producing and reproducing the status quo and my own interest is whether this book provides an analysis of difference as well as an explanation for the persistence of profound social inequality in education.

The book consists of 16 chapters, each written by well-known specialists. It surveys essential education sectors like schooling and tertiary education, as well as the more marginalised sectors of adult basic education and early childhood education. In the introduction, the editor, Linda Chisholm, explains the intention of the volume: "[B]y analysing change, the areas of continuity become visible; by analysing continuities, the areas that have changed are highlighted" (p. 2). I found an emphasis on **change** in the education system in the first ten years of South Africa's democracy, rather than **continuity**. Most contributors review policy and synthesise existing research in order to point to trends. Only four chapters (10, 12, 14 and 16) provide new empirical information. The 16 chapters are fairly evenly spread across three sections: the first section (chapters 1-5), called "Changing Contours", deals with the shape, outline and character of the education system as a whole; the second (chapters 6-11), called "Changing Landscapes", deals with the shifts in curriculum, school classrooms, teacher unions and the tertiary sector; and the third (chapters 12-16), called "Changing Margins", reviews the state of education sectors like early childhood development, adult basic education and education non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In chapter 1, Haroon Borat analyses Statistics SA (South Africa) survey data on employment, unemployment and economic growth to argue that what we have is a problem of unemployable people, who need to be disaggregated from the unemployed. This chapter also demonstrates the dilemmas around interpreting official statistics. Borat claims that the economy has grown, but that too few jobs have been generated to stave off rising unemployment and that "the majority of the unemployed with university degrees are in the Education, Training and Development field" (p. 45 and also Table 1.10 on p. 46). However, this interpretation is suspect because there is no con-

Education and Social Differentiation in South Africa

Monica Hendricks

Changing class: education and social change in post-apartheid South Africa

edited by Linda Chisholm

HSRC Press and Zed Books, 2004, 448 pages, R190,
ISBN 0 7969 2052 4 PB (in South Africa) and ISBN 1 84277 590 1 HC
(in the rest of the world)

sensus about statistics on teacher supply and demand. The accuracy of Statistics SA figures is disputed by various interest groups. For instance, provincial education departments, higher education institutions and teacher unions claim a shortage of teachers and education officials.¹ Yet the National Treasury, like Statistics SA, points to survey data showing unemployed graduates with educational qualifications. It is difficult to know whether unemployed graduates have teaching qualifications in the 'wrong' subjects or whether they are job-hunting in the wrong geographical areas. A study commissioned by the Education Labour Relations Council due to be released in July 2005 should provide a more accurate answer to the seemingly simple question of whether there is an over-supply or shortage of teachers in South African education in the mid-2000s.

Edward Fiske and Helen Ladd in chapter 2 examine the effects of the democratic government's policy of encouraging public schools to charge school fees at primary and secondary levels. They find that fees have significantly affected the formerly racialised enrolment patterns among schools, though they do not appear to have reduced the overall enrolment rate. Their finding, that the policy of charging fees has "induced middle-class families to keep their children in the public school system ... [but has done] little, if anything, to help the historically disadvantaged schools" (pp. 80-81), contributes to the overall argument of the book that education has become class-rather than race-based, as was the case in the past.

The following chapter, by Crain Soudien, explores the nature of the shift in enrolment patterns among schools. Though he refers to constituting class, Soudien does not offer a definition of class but works with common-sense categories, like middle class and working class, without justifying the boundaries distinguishing these classes or considering how the use of a term like "elite" fits into a class analysis. To get around the problems of analysing the shifts in learner demographics, Soudien takes school fees as a proxy for social class and employs the notion of "scapes" to understand "how domination is being *rearticulated* in an extra-race way around integration" (page 105, emphasis in the original). In a spot-on analysis of the effect of the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the primary organ that it established for parents' participation in schools, the School Governing Body, Soudien argues (page 108) that "The Act projected parental identity around a restrictive middle class notion of who parents were and how they functioned ... The upshot of the practice was that in black schools, SGBs continued to be dominated by their principals or their teachers. In formerly white schools, middle class parents dominated". While the race scape showed that black children are assimilated rather than integrated in schools with culturally diverse learners, the class scape enables Soudien to demonstrate the middle-class position naturalised by the South African Schools Act of 1996.

The bias of the first section of the book is on the decisive impact of middle-class interests on education policy and schooling. Working class and especially rural schools, which cater for the bulk of children, are neglected. Thus, there is one chapter dedicated to the issue of educational equity (chapter 4) and another to private, or independent, schooling (chapter 5), even though the independent school sector caters for "only 2.1% of learners overall" (p. 143). On the issue of educational equity, Suzanne Grant Lewis and Shireen Motala (page 116) find that "the goals of decentralisation for improved equity, expanded democracy and improved quality have not been met, except in resource-rich contexts". There is no chapter dedicated to resource-poor black urban and rural schools, to demonstrate how the ongoing inequality of resources structures the poor quality of schooling for the majority of South African children. It is telling that two US researchers who also contributed to the present volume, Fiske and Ladd, published a book in the same year, 2004, specifically on education and equity. They argue that, "although formerly white schools are now racially integrated, most African and coloured students continue to attend schools that are essentially all black. ... racial integration will never play more than a minor role in determining the quality of the educational opportunities available to black students. ... the main determinant of educational opportunities and outcomes for black students will be the quality of the schools formerly designed to serve African and coloured students" (2004:99).

The second section deals with shifts in curriculum, teacher unions and the tertiary sector. Unlike the chapters in the first section which can be read sequentially, I found most chapters in the second and third sections to be unconnected. The benefit of these stand-alone chapters is that they provide a comprehensive review of their respective topics. In chapter 6, Thobeka Mda provides a summary of the evolution of language-in-education policy in the post-apartheid period which has sought, with little success, to promote indigenous African languages – both as media of instruction and as additional languages. Mda refers to and endorses PRAESA's² advocacy of African languages and the realisation of the aims of language policy. However, she does not acknowledge the distinct lack of government will, demonstrated in the dominance of English in Parliament. Yet the importance of the government's political will to promote the use of African languages for official purposes, and thereby to challenge the currency of English in the educational arena, cannot be ignored.

Ken Harley and Volker Wedekind in chapter 7 review research on the extent to which the new curriculum, Curriculum 2005, has been realised in classrooms or represents a "symbolic" break with the past that has yet to be actualised. Their conclusion (p. 211) is that "C2005 as a pedagogical project is working counter to its transformatory social aims. It is widening, not narrowing, the gap between the former historically advan-

tagged and disadvantaged schools. Social class reproduction (with some reconstitution in terms of its composition) is clearly taking place".

Johan Muller, in chapter 8, argues that tension between centralising and decentralising tendencies shapes assessment policy as it does curriculum policy. Muller proposes three distinct shifts in his analysis of the policy struggles around assessment and qualifications: a period of relative stasis (1980-1994), followed by a period of increased tension because of reform initiatives (1994-2000) and a third period (2000-2002) of systemic reform and quality assurance. As a drive for quality assurance continues to define assessment and qualifications reform, I am unclear why Muller does not extend this period to the present. One of his central conclusions (p. 240), that "without the data provided by systemic assessment, the learning gaps in the system can't be known", echoes the call by Grant Lewis and Motala (in chapter 4) for more and new empirical research into the quality of learning achieved through educational reform.

There is quite a degree of overlap between chapters 9 (by Yusuf Sayed) and 11 (by Jonathan Jansen) as teacher education, the topic of chapter 9, has become part of higher education, the topic of chapter 11. Interestingly, while Sayed reads the shifting of teacher education to higher education as extending the possibility for curricular autonomy, Jansen makes the point that higher education institutions' traditional notions of autonomy have been challenged by government policy during this time. For Jansen, the new government's intervention to reduce the number of higher education institutions through mergers, and the Minister of Education's new power to remove an academic leader and appoint an administrator, can be understood as "the concept of autonomy ... [being] fiercely juxtaposed with the requirement for accountability" (p. 297).

One of the few chapters to include fresh data is Logan Govender's analysis of the different, sometimes competitive, roles that the three main teacher unions have played in policy processes in the post-apartheid period. A useful insight (p. 274) is that "approximately 97 per cent" of teachers were union members in 2001, making education a highly unionised sector. The biggest union (SADTU – South African Democratic Teachers' Union) is tied, through the tripartite alliance of the union federation and the Communist Party, to the new African National Congress government. Govender shows that SADTU's close ties to the present government have not prevented it from embarking on a joint strike with other teacher organisations for the first time in 1999.

In the last section, Sean Morrow (chapter 12) and John Pampallis (the final chapter 16) examine education NGOs and how their roles and functions have changed after 1994, providing a frame for the middle chapters. Both point to concurrent trends: the ANC government's lack of capacity to deliver educational services and the demise of many education NGOs as foreign donor funding shifted to the new democratic government. Morrow traces the changing role of education NGOs from one of opposition to the apartheid government to one of advocacy in relation to the new government or an ancillary role of service delivery, while Pampallis shows that the Education Department relies on outsourcing aspects of service delivery to local NGOs and increasingly to consortia of local and global research organisations. I agree with their view that in the process, the "ethos of NGOs ... [has become] more entrepreneurial" (p. 431).

Margaret Perrow's case study in chapter 14 of a youth development NGO, Joint

Enrichment Project (JEP), exemplifies the trends identified by Morrow and Pampallis. Perrow uses discourse analysis to show how JEP repositioned itself in a changing social and political context. From a stance of resistance to the apartheid government initially, in the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, it re-oriented itself as a “capacity-building” and skills development youth organisation running its own programmes in the 1990s. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, JEP had re-invented itself once more and was mainly tendering for government contracts to provide services in youth employment programmes. This trajectory is common of NGOs and raises the question, unfortunately not considered in this volume, of the independence of NGOs from the government or whether most NGOs in fact function as another arm of government service delivery.

Chapters 13 and 15 review early childhood development (ECD) and adult basic education (ABE), education sectors that historically and currently still are dominated by NGOs. Kim Porteus problematises commonsense notions of what ECD means, arguing that as a policy question it has to be informed by a human rights approach. She concurs with others (e.g. Weber 2002) that a crucial reason for post-1994 ECD policy not measuring up to the pre-democratic vision is that “the parameters of possibility for education policy ... lay not with educationists but rather with economists in the Department of Finance and the Treasury” (p. 360). She also suggests four additional reasons (pp. 361-2): the ECD sector is

largely feminised and thereby “weak in the policy process”; ECD is less organized than schooling, with neither practitioners nor learners having “a socially-organised voice”; a Reception Year attached to formal schooling was regarded as best practice in the mid-1990s by the World Bank and in industrialized countries; more innovative approaches based on community-level care and children’s rights were “beyond the bureaucratic transformations realized in this period”. She cautions that changing ECD policy will depend on “civil society [mobilizing] around pro-child social developments” (p. 363).

In a similar vein to Porteus, Ivor Baatjies and Khulekani Mathe conclude that promises from the Education Minister with regard to adult literacy have not materialised because of the shift to the right in developmental and financial policies. Baatjies and Mathe, however, do not consider the issue of whether poor financial management of some NGOs involved in ABE also contributed to the present sorry state of ABE in South Africa.

I noticed only a few typographical and factual errors, which do not, however, detract from the quality of the book. In Table 3.4 on page 99, the 40 per cent of learners indicated as white (W) at Ruby Primêr should in fact read coloured (C) and there are percentages missing for Marula Primary and Basildon Primary. Soudien’s claim, in the same chapter, that “the new government has officially abolished racial categories” (p. 96), is inaccurate. Not only does the government

continue to use apartheid racial categories to monitor employment equity, for instance, but the national Department of Education itself does indeed systematically collect statistics about learners’ race in Grade 9, for the school-leaving certificate.

Sayed’s statement (p. 256) that “This [the incorporation of teacher colleges into universities] reflects a direct reversal of about 90 years of apartheid teacher education policy” is misleading. Apartheid was not in existence for 90 years; previous teacher education policy that was also racist and divisive simply demonstrates that institutional racism in South African society pre-dates apartheid. Apartheid racialised state institutions and social relations more extensively, but it did not introduce racism.

The short answer to whether this volume produces an analysis of difference as well as of the persistence of profound educational inequality is that, in focusing on the role and interests of the burgeoning black middle class, the book prioritises change in the education system rather than the inequitable continuities. While *Changing class* does not adequately highlight the negative impact of the ongoing educational inequities, its broad scope makes it a valuable reference. Readers who want an overview of educational change in the first decade of democracy in South Africa will find it a comprehensive and accessible resource.

Notes

- 1 For instance, according to the Superintendent-General of the Eastern Cape Education Department “The province needs 600 education development officers – also known as subject advisers – to roll out outcomes-based education. There are only 34” (Mkokeli 2005:2).
- 2 PRAESA, the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa, is based at the University of Cape Town and for many years it has researched and advocated the use of indigenous African languages in education and in society.

References

- Alexander, N. 2002. *An Ordinary Country*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.
- De Souza, C. 2003. A statistical overview of education in South Africa. In *Education Africa Forum*. Pinegowrie: Education Africa. 134-147.
- Fiske E. B. and Ladd H. F. 2004. *Elusive Equity*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Hendricks, F. 2003. Class and citizenship in contemporary South Africa. *Society in Transition*. 34 (1) 1-12.
- Mkokeli, S. 2005. Eastern Cape education in a mess, bosses admit. *The Herald*. 27 April 2005 p. 2.
- Southall, R. 2004. South Africa’s emerging black middle class. *HSRC Review* 2 (3) 12-13.
- Tempest, J. 2004. *South Africa Survey 2003/4*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations.
- Weber, E. 2002. Shifting to the right: the evaluation of equity in the South African government’s developmental and education policies, 1990-1999. *Comparative Education Review*. 46 (3) 261-290.



Human Rights, Regionalism and Democracy in Africa

Edited by Lennart Wohlgemuth & Ebrima Sall

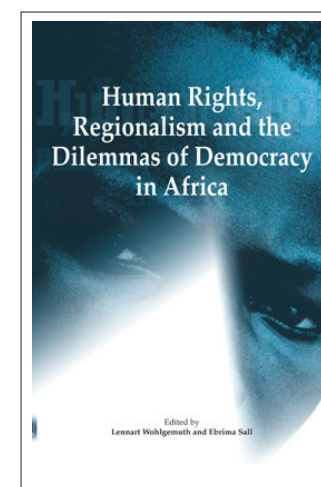
‘This is a major contribution to ongoing efforts to raise awareness on the functioning of the African human rights machinery. With the recent election of 11 Judges to the African Court on Human and Peoples Rights, accessibility to the African human rights system is even more essential to ensuring respect and recognition of human rights for Africa and its people.’

Evelyn Ankumah, Executive Director of African Legal Aid, Ghana.

‘Wohlgemuth and Sall have put together a timely publication that presents admirably critical assessments of the role and relevance of the twenty-year old African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, its structure, mechanisms, resources and institutional autonomy, while locating the general discourse on human rights and democracy in Africa in its wider political and socio-economic contexts. These discussions will provide scholars, policymakers and practitioners with useful insights into the continuing challenges and opportunities for human rights promotion and protection in Africa.’

Tijanjana Maluwa, Pennsylvania State University Dickinson School of Law, USA

The issue of human right in Africa is as much about the dignity of Africans as it is about the responsibilities and commitments of others towards Africa. In this light the fight for human rights in Africa and the creation of the African Commission for Human and People’s Rights are of utmost importance for making true this double aspiration. It discusses the achievements of the African Commission and suggests ways of strengthening and making the commission more efficient in advancing its goals and objectives. The volume points at the new institutional changes on the African scene with the African Union and its many new organs and the importance for the Commission to come to grips with this in the interest of relevance and hope for human dignity in African.



CODESRIA & NAI
212 pages; Index;
ISBN 2-86978-192-X
Africa: CFA 10000;
non-CFA zone 20.00 USD;
Elsewhere £12.95 /\$25.95

For orders /Pour les commandes :

Africa:

Publications and Dissemination
CODESRIA
Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop x Canal IV
BP 3304, Dakar 18524 Senegal
Email: codesria@codesria.sn / publications@codesria.sn
Web: www.codesria.org

Rest of the world:

African Books Collective
Unit 13 Kings Meadow
Ferry Hinksey Road
Oxford, OX2, ODP, UK
Email: abc@africanbookscollective.com
Web: www.africanbookscollective.com