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## Policy recommendations for a multicultural curriculum for all elementary schools in the Republic of South Africa

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## Policy recommendations for a multicultural curriculum for all elementary schools in the Republic of South Africa

### Abstract

This literature review explored the system of education in South Africa. The exploration provided the background information about the unequal and segregated system of education which led to student uprisings in 1976. The curriculum became an area of contestation, and was thus attacked by leading educators, parents, teachers, and students. The people of South Africa called for a single, national, unitary system of education for all South African students. A multicultural education was proposed to unify a deeply divided nation and to support the new nation being born.

Multicultural literature was reviewed. The barriers to implementing a multicultural curriculum include fear, lack of exposure to and experience with people of other cultures, negative attitude, lack of training, and language barriers. Facilitators to implementing a multicultural curriculum include knowledge acquisition and the training of teachers, administrators, principals, and parents.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM FOR ALL  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

A Graduate Review

Submitted to the

Division of Elementary Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by

Motladi Angeline Setlhako

May 1997

This Research Paper by: Motladi Angeline Setlhako

Titled: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM FOR  
ALL REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICAN ELEMENTARY PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for  
the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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## Abstract

This literature review explored the system of education in South Africa was explored. The exploration provided the background information about the unequal and segregated system of education which led to student uprisings in 1976. The curriculum became an area of contestation was thus attacked by leading educators, parents, teachers, and students. The people of South Africa called for a single, national, unitary system of education for all South African students. It was hypothesized that a multicultural education designed to unify a deeply divided nation and support the new nation being born.

Multicultural literature was reviewed. The barriers to implementing a multicultural curriculum include fear, lack of exposure to and experience with people of other cultures, negative attitude, lack of training, and language barriers. Facilitators to implementing a multicultural curriculum include knowledge acquisition and the training of teachers, administrators, principals, and parents. Recommendations stress the establishment of teacher education in tertiary institutions; re-education of the entire teaching staff; continuous inservice training; teacher and student empowerment; teachers as decision makers; parent involvement; distribution of resources; support from the private sector, media, religious groups and community services; and finally, government funding and resources.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Background

This chapter provides basic background information about the education system in the Republic of South Africa. A brief description about the difference between education for Whites and education for Blacks is provided. Furthermore, information about the different departments of education, which were racially divided is also provided. All this information contributes to understanding why the majority of the people in South Africa called for a unitary system of education. The supporters of a single system of education believe that with a unitary system of education all citizens of South Africa could be provided with equal educational opportunities and the same kinds of knowledge.

A major concern of educators and parents in the South African education system has been the inequality of education for Blacks and Whites. The education provided for Blacks with its inferior school curriculum became the central issue in Black protest against apartheid. The curriculum reforms which were implemented over the years prior to 1994 did not bring significant improvement in Black education. Many believe it would benefit all South Africans to develop a curriculum in which all South African children learn together and succeed. This process can only be achieved when equal opportunities are provided, the curriculum is decentralized and teachers, parents and other



educators take part in the development of the relevant curriculum for the learning of their children (Sprocas, 1971).

Since the arrival of the colonists in South Africa, schooling has been designed to maintain and extend the power privilege of the colonizing group (King & Van den Berg, 1991). Schooling provided for Blacks was basically to serve the needs of the dominating group. Education for Whites was free and compulsory whereas education for Blacks was not. In addition there was little financial support from the government for Black education. Parents were made to pay for the education of their children.

Even before the National Party took over in 1948, the South African population was divided by race. But the system of apartheid, which was institutionalized when the National Party came to power in 1948, legalized the division and introduced a variety of plans to keep people apart. The plans included laws requiring passes to be carried by Blacks, restrictions on Blacks travelling in urban areas, job reservations and homeland restrictions (Christie & Collins, 1990). These restrictive developments in South Africa were used to control the movements of Black people. Education gave the National Party an easy way to control the majority of the population. Missionary and cultural schools were forced to close by the new government (Hartshorne, 1990).

The new apartheid government insisted that missionary and cultural institutions had to be registered in order to continue to function, knowing very well that such applications would be turned down (Christie, 1987). The government closed down all alternative avenues in which people might have access to acquire knowledge not controlled by the National Party.

The policy of dividing the people of South Africa on the basis of the color codes led to the provision of different education systems for different racial groups. The provision of different systems of education gave birth to the establishment and entrenchment of educational inequities under the apartheid system. Furthermore, with the different education systems, unequal funding was provided for different population groups (Christie & Collins, 1990). Education for Blacks, held at the lowest rank, received meager help from the government.

Apartheid education meant more than school segregation. Since different education systems were unequally funded, racial division of schooling reflected broader patterns of social stratification based on race (Wedekind, Lubisi, Harley & Gultig, 1996). As mentioned earlier, education for Whites was free and compulsory and it was highly funded by the government. Education for Coloreds and Indians was better funded than education for Blacks, although the discrepancy was still great compared to Whites.

This means, education offered to Coloreds and Indians was somehow better in quality than the quality of education offered to Blacks. Furthermore, the disparities of education between Blacks and Whites were so vast and visible, it clearly indicated to many that education for Blacks was not valued.

The segregation grew and by 1983 nineteen education departments were in place. These departments were racially and regionally structured with different curriculum responsibilities (National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), 1992). The Department of National Education (DNE) was regarded as a department for "general affairs'", "responsible for determining general policy applicable to all. In the Department of Education and Culture (DECs) there were also three department of own affairs, that is, House of Assembly for Whites, House of Representatives for Coloreds and House of Delegates for Indians. These three groups had the freedom to run their group's affairs and had representation in the Parliament. They also carried out the "general affairs" regarding education policy, determined and executed curriculum policy. Furthermore, in the Department of Education and Training (DET), education for Blacks was under the "general affairs" and ten separate "homelands" education departments were established to cater for Blacks outside the metropolitan areas. In addition to the national departments there were four provincial education departments

which fell under the DEC (Assembly). The actual development of the curriculum work was carried out by the House of Assembly (NEPI, 1992).

The entire education system was built around the philosophy of the Christian National Education (CNE) policy. The policy of the CNE had a strong emphasis on Christian teaching according to the Calvinistic doctrine (Chisholm, 1983). Calvinists believe a child is born into the world of sin and therefore needs to be molded by his elders to accept correct doctrine and avoid the pitfalls of temptation (Chisholm, 1983). This view promoted a very authoritarian type of education than liberal education that encourage children to ask questions and search for information.

Throughout South African history, education has been unequal and has been influenced by the legacy of racial segregation. Whites dominated the development and the content of the curriculum which was based on the CNE doctrines. The CNE dictated what the different groups should teach and was loaded with irrelevant information for groups other than Whites (Hartshorne, 1990). The Eurocentric curriculum was then disseminated to other education departments for implementation. The whole curriculum development was dominated by Whites and no other educators and stakeholders participated in the construction of the curriculum.

The system of unequal and separate education did not

help Black children and youth to learn at high levels of accomplishment. Rather, it created problems in people's lives, such as Blacks lacking the relevant skills that would fit the job market. Many Blacks felt this was an indication that apartheid education signified an education for subserviency and continued domination by Whites.

Another problem with the CNE educational program for Blacks was that all African children had to learn three languages: English, Afrikaans and Vernacular (mother tongue) from Sub Standard A through Standard 10 (Grade 1 through 12). Learning three languages beginning with the first year of schooling posed a very serious problem because Black children had no background of the two foreign languages which were new to them. This had detrimental effects on the mastery of their first language or home language. They learned and practiced the foreign languages only in the classroom. They had little opportunity to use the languages outside of the classroom. Many Blacks felt this was an attempt to disrupt the cultural unity of Blacks, by diluting the mother tongues.

Whites attended segregated schools and they were instructed in their own languages. For instance, Afrikaans-speaking children went to Afrikaner schools where the medium of instruction was in home language. The English-speaking youth also attended school where instruction was offered in their own language. Although the segregation reduced the

opportunity for either Afrikaner or English youth to develop an understanding of one another, they never had to deal with learning two different foreign or new languages at an early age. School was rather less difficult for them than for the Black child who was faced with the dilemma of trying to understand a foreign language every day of school. Thus, language became a serious issue when in 1976, the government instructed Black schools that half of the school subjects must be offered in Afrikaans from standard 5 through matriculation (Grade 5 through 12). To many Blacks this was a clear indication of the government's effort to exert control and power over Africans through the curriculum.

Education provided for Blacks in the government schools failed to sufficiently educate the majority of the South African population. The CNE did not convey to the majority of the Black students the interrelationship between school experiences and their chances for success as adults in obtaining employment and personal fulfillment. This was noted by Black students who in the 1980's had developed an acute sense of awareness of the need for the curriculum to reflect and validate their experiential and contextual realities (Jansen, 1987). Students articulated the problem as follows:

They decide what we are taught. Our history is written according to their ideas. Biology and Physics are taught in our schools but we cannot apply to our everyday lives. We are told that most of the workers diseases stem from the fact that they are undernourished

and overworked. We are taught Biology, not in terms of biology for liberation, where we can tackle the concept of "race" to prove that there is no such thing as "race". We are taught geography, but not the geography of liberation. We are taught that 80 percent of South Africans are dumped on 13 percent of the land.....We are taught accountancy merely to calculate the profits of the capitalists (Hunter, 1983, p. 329).

In the 1980s more people were speaking out about what was wrong with the traditional, Christian National Education. In a speech in 1993 F.W. de Klerk, the then Prime Minister of South Africa, admitted that a terrible wrong had been done to South Africa and her people through the imposition of the system of apartheid (Mandela, 1994). Nelson Mandela (1994), the current President of the Republic of South Africa, wrote that de Klerk had the foresight to understand and accept that all people of South Africa must, through negotiation and as equal participants in the process, determine what they want to make of their future.

The curriculum of traditional education for Blacks and White students has been a curriculum of exclusion and specifically for Black students, one of irrelevance. Students not of Afrikaner culture left school knowing very little about their culture or contributions made to the society by individuals of their culture.

In order to have students of diverse cultures work, socialize and recreate together (Bryant, 1996), the instructional plan should be inclusive. It should provide students with such experiences and activities undertaken in

the classroom. Thus the problem to be investigated in this study is to make policy recommendations for a multicultural curriculum for all the Republic of South African public elementary schools.



## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes how the research for policy recommendations for a multicultural curriculum for all elementary schools in the Republic of South Africa was conducted. First, the purpose of research is explained and then, the need for the study follows. Information was located, analyzed and discussed.

#### The purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to make policy recommendations regarding the implementation of a multicultural curriculum for all elementary schools in the Republic of South Africa. In order to achieve this purpose, the following questions will be addressed:

1. What is multicultural education?
2. What are the barriers and facilitators to the implementation of a multicultural curriculum in the Republic of South Africa?

#### Need for Study

The South African Government Gazette (March 1995, p. 17), states that:

When all South Africans won equal citizenship, their pasts were not erased. The complex legacies, good as well as bad, live on in the present. Difficult as it might be to do so, South Africa need to try to understand each other's history, culture, values and aspirations, not to turn away from them, if we are to make the best of our common future.

Through education, the nation may be able to be

brought together, unified and the members of the anti-apartheid movement's aspirations realized. It is from this perspective that it is hypothesized that multicultural education is a way of bringing people of diverse cultures together to help them realize common goals. A multicultural curriculum may provide South African educators with new information, new strategies, and possibly new insights for the development of an alternative curriculum.

#### Data Collection

To locate sources for this study, the researcher conducted searches via the Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse (ERIC), at the Donald O. Rod Library at the University of Northern Iowa. Descriptors such as apartheid, education in South Africa, unequal education, multicultural education, curriculum, recommendations, barriers, facilitators, elementary education and guidelines were utilized to narrow the search.

Other sources were obtained from text that focused entirely on multicultural education and bibliographies of articles found in current professional journals. The microfiche in the library helped in retrieving information from newspapers, popular magazines and encyclopedias.

The sources were then analyzed and sorted into general categories. These categories included knowledge, parent involvement, teachers, students, barriers. Much of the information for this research is supported by extensive

research in the field of education in South Africa and multicultural education in America.

### Limitation

Given the background of the education system in South Africa, multicultural education is a new concept in South African schooling. Research from South Africa was not available to the author regarding the implementation of multicultural education, therefore reliance on the United States research material was necessary.

### Definition of Terms

In order to clarify the terminology used in this research paper the following definitions have been provided for the reader:

African - term used interchangeably with Black

Afrikaans - South Africa had two official languages, Afrikaans and English. Afrikaans is the language of the Afrikaner people, derived primarily from Dutch. Presently, there are eleven official languages in South Africa.

Apartheid - An Afrikaans word meaning apartness. It was a policy of separate development of the races. It meant more than separateness. In practice it resulted in White South African supremacy over its nation's Blacks. It was a policy of legalized racial segregation and discrimination (Pascoe, 1987).

Black - the term used synonymously with the term

African as a collective term to describe all people who were discriminated against under apartheid system.

Colored - Mixed breed of Black and White, discriminated against but held a better status than Blacks. Had representation in the Parliament.

Culture - the ideations, symbols, behaviors, values and beliefs that are shared by a human group. Culture is dynamic, it changes as people grow and develop (Smith, 1992).

Indian - discriminated against but had representation in the Parliament. Held better than Blacks and Coloreds.

Multicultural society - a group of people with many races, ethnic and cultural groups.

Multilingual society - a group of people in which a variety of languages are spoken and understood

Non-racial - an integrated education, that includes all races, sharing the wealth of the country equally.

Rainbow Nation - the term currently used in South Africa that embraces all races and cultural groups; the multitude of cultural groups in South Africa.

R S A - Abbreviation for the Republic of South Africa

## CHAPTER III

### Review of Literature

South Africa has a long history of providing unequal and segregated education to the majority of the population. The mission of the ruling party, prior to the democratic election of Nelson Mandela in 1994, succeeded because the minority group had the power and controlled the economy of the country. The purpose of this chapter is to provide literature pertaining to the background of the education system in South Africa, which will contribute to the understanding of why so many people called for a single, national, unitary, democratic, nonracial system of education.

Secondly, a review of multicultural education will be provided to help educators understand the philosophy of multicultural education, which may be an appropriate program for the young South Africans. Barriers and facilitators to multicultural education will be discussed with the aim of providing insight pertaining to the implementation of a multicultural curriculum in elementary schools in South Africa.

#### A historical perspective

For over a century South Africa has been ruled and controlled by Europeans who dictated the destinies of the majority of the people. In the Republic of South Africa the Europeans ensured their control by instituting the apartheid

laws which denied the indigenous people the right to decide and do things for themselves. This kind of control was further practiced in educating the majority of the population. The minority population, Europeans went to the extent of stipulating what and how the majority of the population would be taught. Thus, the syllabi, which in South African terms are regarded as the curriculum, were written and designed by those in power. Then they were disseminated to the various departments to be distributed and implemented in schools. Thus the majority of the population had no contribution to offer and were educated in ways which were designed to continue the imbalance of power and control.

#### Education spreads in South Africa

The missionaries, who migrated to South Africa in the early nineteenth century, came up with the initiative of providing formal education to all the people of South Africa (Kallaway, 1989). Mission schools were set up all over the country and various educational activities such as reading, writing and arithmetic evolved (Christie, 1987). Even though the distribution and access to education was haphazard (Hartshorne, 1990), it did provide some opportunities for Blacks. Not all missionary schools had the same agenda. Christie (1987) noted that some missionaries believed in no discrimination and gave Blacks exactly the same academic education as Whites, whereas

others adapted the curriculum for Blacks. It was clear that some mission schools discriminated against Blacks and sought to train them to become laborers. Mission education was important (Hartshorne, 1990), but it was based on European curriculum and included mostly industrial training and manual work (Christie, 1987; Hartshorne, 1990).

### The new curriculum

According to King and Van den Berg (1991), schooling policies were formalized and institutionalized when the National Party (NP) came to power in 1948; segregation was cemented into the educational system as well as into the society as a whole. The advocates of apartheid had a specific agenda, and therefore curriculum was revised in 1949 (Kallaway, 1989).

In revising the curriculum, subjects like social studies and elementary science (known as agriculture) were included (Hartshorne, 1990). The inclusion of agriculture as a required subject in all Black school grades was perceived to be preparing Blacks to become what Verwoerd, the architect of segregated education, then the Minister of Education in 1953, termed "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (Christie & Collins, 1990). Also English as a medium of instruction was eliminated in Black schools because it was thought that Blacks would perceive themselves to be superior when they could understand "the language of the master" (Kallaway, 1989).

The introduction of mother tongue instruction was a strategy used to keep Blacks partially literate. For example, they only needed to be able to write their names and do basic reading. Mother tongue instruction was used as a way of keeping Blacks away from academic world so that they accept the status quo. Mother tongue instruction would eventually keep Blacks within their groups.

The revision of the curriculum led to drastic changes in the education of the African population. The Bantu Education Act was passed in 1953. This was an education system specifically designed for Blacks. Then, three years later, syllabi were drawn and published by White officers of the education department (Bot, 1986). In these new syllabi, mother tongue as a medium of instruction was endorsed in all grades. The inclusion of mother tongue instruction was to fragment the Black population as different linguistic groups although they were housed together but away from each other (Christopher, 1994) as a way of having control over the education system. Blacks lived in the same townships, their children schooled in the same areas but divided into ethnic groups within their areas.

Kallaway (1989) stated that the switch to mother tongue was an option used to reduce Africans to a lesser status. It was perceived that using the English language, which was mostly used in mission schools, elevated the standards of Blacks. The ruling party did not want that



option. Although the new curriculum was seen as an improvement by the advocates of apartheid, it was nonetheless presented as rural, static and not as something dynamic and ever changing (Hartshorne, 1990). Bot (1989) concluded that the curriculum was designed to ensure that Black children keep their social place as efficient workers. Nkomo (1990) notes that the curriculum is a powerful indicator of who rules in a given society. The ruling party shaped the curriculum to suit their agenda and to avoid threats from the oppressed population.

### Control

The racial categories used to classify the population of South Africa led to the establishment of centrally controlled departments of education for each of the groups (Jansen, 1987). This educational fragmentation was reflected in state funding discrimination between departments and disparities became clearly visible (Wedekind et al, 1996).

Different departments offered different slightly modified versions of the syllabi (NEPI, 1992). To complicate matters, different education departments offered different combinations of subjects. Whites had a broader range of choice whereas the choice for Africans was narrow (Mawasha, 1992). Blacks were not offered as many choices which was a way of making university entrance difficult and reduced the number of Blacks going onto higher education (Christopher, 1994). Schools were not only segregated by

race but by subject matter too. Blacks were purposely given inferior education to minimize their opportunities to be hired, and equipped them only for low paying manual labor (Scholastic Update, February, 1988).

#### Attack on curriculum

Black education has long been a contested terrain in South Africa (Lemon, 1995). School curriculum was an issue even long before the institutionalization of apartheid, but Nkomo (1990) asserted that it became a central issue in Black protest against apartheid.

South Africa never had a core curriculum for schools (NEPI, 1992). Instead the system was governed by core syllabi and strict subject requirements for different standards or grades and phases of schooling (Hartshorne, 1992). Another point is that the curriculum in South Africa had been content driven. The content to be taught was well detailed and specified (NEPI, 1992). King and Van den Berg (1991) emphasized that the syllabi were overloaded with no opportunity for teacher initiative or autonomy.

Another attack to the apartheid based on the curriculum was that it was excessively academic and Eurocentric with too little attention paid to African history or practical skills that might help the school graduate to get a suitable job (Murphy, 1992). Hartshorne (1992), further stated that prior to 1975, education for Blacks was based on eight years elementary structure,

Substandard A through Standard 6 (Grade 1 through 8) and five years of secondary schooling, Form 1 through 5, (Grade 8 through 12), which differed from any other education system in South Africa. This led to small, but interesting reforms.

### Educational reforms

Slight reforms in the curriculum were introduced over the years since 1949. A major curriculum change took place in 1975 and increases in funding for the education of Blacks were noted. Lemon (1995) stated that the massive increases in the Black education budget since the 1970s did not satisfy Blacks because the government still resisted demands for a single education department administering a common school system for all South Africans.

The budget increases were followed by the introduction of a twelve-year structure of schooling. Hartshorne (1990) reported that the primary standard 6 (Grade 8) was eliminated and the standard 5s (Grade 7) were promoted to secondary schools. This step was taken to improve and equate the schooling system with those of other racial groups, but it created more problems (Hyslop, 1990). The better qualified primary teachers were promoted to secondary schools because there was then a shortage of teachers. In addition, standard 3 through 5 (Grade 5 through 7) curriculum was overloaded with new information in order to prepare students for secondary education (Hartshorne, 1992).

The transition to secondary schools occurred without preparation of teachers and administration. Secondary schools became overcrowded and teachers could not cope with very large classes. It became apparent that manpower is needed in secondary schools. Senior teachers were then moved from primary schools to secondary schools without preparation for higher classes.

#### Medium of instruction

Adding to the dilemma, the government passed a new law in 1976 that made Afrikaans the sole language of instruction for math and social studies in all Black schools (Mawasha, 1992). It should be noted that Afrikaans was a language many Blacks despised and regarded as the language of the oppressor. The new law expected teachers and students to switch and use a dual medium approach, English and Afrikaans, from standard 5 on equal basis. The new policy made it difficult for both teachers and students to cope. Teachers needed to be prepared and trained for the change of policy. Students were also not psychologically prepared to cope with the new policy. Many believed this policy was used as a way of reducing the number of Blacks students able to enter secondary schools (Chisholm, 1983). Requiring Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in Black schools triggered student uprisings that began in Soweto and spread throughout the nation in 1976 (Scholastic Update, February, 1988).

### Alternative curriculum

Protesters of these policy changes, such as teachers, parents, other educators, and even students called for a decentralized, single education system and a curriculum that would meet the needs of all the people of South Africa (Buckland, 1982). Non-governmental organizations such as The National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC), emerged in the middle 1980s to promote "Peoples' Education" as a way of establishing a system of democratic, nonracial schooling through materials addressing the needs of students and reflecting the wishes of parents and community members (Murphy, 1992).

Another organization, The Science Education Project (SEP), tried to address the problem by producing high quality curricular materials, but they were expensive for some schools to afford. These alternative programs were unsuccessful.

### Open schools

The battle to open government schools continued over the years, until 1990, when White government schools introduced a desegregation strategy to admit Blacks into their schools. Although some church schools (Catholics, for instance) admitted small numbers of African children as far back as 1976, strict rules were applied in order to gain admission (Christie, 1987). Another obstacle to Catholic education was that the fees were high, so most Africans

could not afford to send their children to such schools (Cross, 1987).

The White government schools used a strategy of categorizing their schools into models A, B, and C as a way of integrating Blacks into their classrooms. Lemon (1995) stated that model A involved the renting of buildings at the expense of parents and meeting the school halfway in order to meet the cost of teachers' salaries. However, this model was unattractive to most people. Model B did not have any financial implications for parents but gave the admission rights and powers for the admission policy to the parents. Model C, on the other hand, transferred the school assets to the managing body of the school while the state continued to pay the salaries of the teachers and administrative staff. The school's management body would be responsible for the admission of African students and the entire governance of the school.

Most middle class Blacks were able to fit into Model C. Although strict quotas were applied, the majority of Africans who could afford the levies imposed flocked in great numbers to the Model C White schools. Racial classification was being replaced by class distinctions.

In May 1991, the "Population Registration Act" was repealed, but the education system, dependent on race classification, continued to operate (Lemon, 1995). The process of desegregation was delayed because bureaucrats

argued that a single education system must await the negotiations between the National Party and the Liberation Movements (Bot, 1989). Nonetheless, the government announced in March 1993 that all existing education departments, including the self governing homelands were to merge into a unitary system by April 1994 (Lemon, 1994).

### Desegregation

Schools in South Africa were officially announced as desegregated in 1994, when Mandela came to power. Educators such as Hartshorne (1990) suggested a single, national unitary, nonracial education system for all South African pupils, in the "New South Africa." He further suggested that there would also have to be a redistribution of resources within the education system itself.

In 1994, the interim constitution adopted a policy that prohibited racial discrimination in any form (New York Times, February, 1995) but integration was not that simple. The majority of Afrikaner schools continued to use different quotas to admit Black children to their schools (New York Times, January 14, 1996).

### The post apartheid curriculum

Nkomo (1990) contended that the curriculum in the post apartheid society must contain emancipatory content which would empower students to uncover the myths of apartheid society. No matter how hard it may be, students must learn to explain their experiential reality and challenge the

socio-political determinants of their relative position in the community. Nkomo (1990) and Jansen (1995) concurred, stating that the post apartheid curriculum needed to contain relevant content that reflected the needs, aspirations and interests of the people and also allowed the democratic control over the curriculum decision making process. It was suggested that the new curriculum bring events such as the protest against apartheid and people who shaped South Africa into the classroom (Lorch, 1995). Recommendations for the curriculum to be less Eurocentric and include the elimination of racial stereotypes were noted (Christie, 1993).

The Teacher (August 12, 1996) reported that most classes in South Africa were multicultural by summer 1996. Classes consisted of students who had differences in gender, language, class, race, religious and political affiliation. It was suggested that these differences among students be explored and utilized to provide multiple perspectives.

#### Closing remarks

It is evident that South Africa is moving from monocultural ideology to multicultural perspective. Also, the education system is being transformed to suit the diversity in the classrooms. Understanding and implementing the philosophical perspectives of multicultural education seem to be appropriate and realistic expectations for educators in the Republic of South Africa.



## CHAPTER IV

## Review of Multicultural Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature of multicultural education. In addition, five approaches to multicultural education will be discussed. Furthermore, barriers and facilitators to implementing a multicultural curriculum will be discussed.

What is multicultural education?

Multicultural education is an educational approach that is intended to bring about change that will benefit all of the people in a given society. The inclusive strategy helps the participants to tackle a variety of issues as never before. The approach aims at benefitting all the people irrespective of age, race, class, gender and beliefs.

Many studies indicate that multicultural education is nonsexist, nonracial, multiage and promotes diversity (Banks & Banks, 1993; Grant & Sleeter, 1989; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1986; Ogbu, 1995). It is accommodative and aims at transforming schools and other educational institutions so that all students have equal opportunity to learn and succeed.

Furthermore, some studies on multicultural education indicate that students are provided the forum to address social, political, economic justice and cultural issues (Jolly, 1995; Melendez, 1995; Montecinos & Tidwell, 1994; NCATE, 1986; Nieto, 1996). In this case, students are

encouraged to challenge the inequalities they are experiencing. Multicultural education offers students a forum to develop thinking skills by affording them opportunities to exchange their views and make sure their voices are heard.

Multicultural education touches on other aspects of life such as increasing student's self respect and self confidence and enhancing appreciation of one's culture. It means not only focusing on issues of the outside world but also building the character of the student. Bryant (1996) feels that multicultural curriculum is an educational prescription for all students. It is in the classroom where they learn about other cultures and learn that other cultures are as valuable and worthy of respect as theirs.

School environments that are multicultural are beneficial to students and teachers because both students and teachers from different cultures learn to be tolerant of each other and develop respect for other people and cultures. Such environments offers a diversity of languages, and students and teachers are encouraged to learn more than one language. Since language and culture are inseparable (Baker, 1996), multicultural education offers both students and teachers the opportunity to learn the majority and minority language and culture.

Meanwhile Keenan, Willett and Solsken (1993) argue that the purpose of multicultural curricula is to broaden

the world view of children, to enable them to appreciate different cultures and different cultural perspectives. The purpose of multicultural education is to not denigrate other people or their cultures. Instead learning about other cultures in the classroom helps students to appreciate people from different racial groups (Conrad, 1994). Each culture becomes visible and the classroom is able to build a common community sharing common values (Darder, 1991).

Studies have shown that multicultural education encourages all stakeholders such as educators, students, parents, non governmental organizations and the church leaders to participate in reforming and shaping programs on the basis of equality and inclusion (Banks & McGee Banks, 1989; English & Hill, 1993; Gay, 1995; Keenan et al, 1993; Nieto, 1996). The inclusiveness in the curriculum ensures that students have access to a wide variety of viewpoints (Carter & Howell, 1995). This approach helps to restructure the educational climate so that all students from diverse groups benefit in the learning process (Bryant, 1996).

Having reviewed the purpose and benefits of multicultural education, it is essential to discuss the different approaches to multicultural education. There are five approaches to multicultural education that educators, administrators, community members may choose for their schools to follow.

### Five approaches to multicultural education

The first approach, "Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different," conceptualizes that multicultural education helps minority students develop competence in the dominant culture and positive group identity which builds on their home culture (Sleeter, 1991). The approach is exclusive for a particular group and segregates students. It sends a subtle message that a particular group of students have some learning problems.

The second approach is "Human Relations" which helps students of different backgrounds to communicate, get along better with each other, and feel good about themselves (Ramsey, Vold & Williams, 1989). Students need to interact and feel good about themselves and their learning but that is not enough to develop thinking skills and exchange of ideas. It is part of their learning but does not encourage students to challenge such harsh realities as racism, prejudice, discrimination and other social ills.

Single Studies, the third approach, suggests that ethnic education should develop an acceptance, appreciation and empathy for rich cultural and linguistic diversity (Banks & McGee Banks, 1989). It focuses on ethnic education which excludes other cultural groups. This approach does not build but divides the nation. Since the nation has been divided for a long time, it is necessary instead to unify the nation.

The fourth approach is "Multicultural Education." It aims at promoting strength and value of cultural diversity, human rights, respect, alternative life choices for people, social justice and legal opportunity for all people and equity in the distribution of power among members of all ethnic groups (Sleeter, 1991). The approach encompasses all vital issues that build the nation and the character of individuals. It provides opportunities to all and does not discriminate against any.

The last approach is "Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist." This approach aims at helping students to gain better understanding of the causes of oppression and inequity and ways in which these social problems can be eliminated.

#### Five dimensions of multicultural education

The following section will now discuss five dimensions of multicultural education to help educators, administrators and other interested groups implement and assess programs that respond to student diversity.

Content integration is the first dimension. Teachers need to highlight key points of instruction and make sure the content reflects diversity by organizing concepts around contributions and perspectives reflecting students backgrounds and experiences. The subject matter should be viewed from the perspectives and experiences of diverse learners.

The second dimension is "Knowledge Construction." Teachers need to enrich the classrooms with a variety of print that reflects students' first language, books and other source that help students understand different perspectives of their own people. Students read authentic literature that enriches their knowledge, and helps them to learn the language and construct new and meaningful knowledge.

The prejudice reduction is the third dimension. It helps students develop positive attitude about other groups. Teachers need to choose instructional material with positive images of diverse groups. Students should be encouraged to share stories about their culture in class. Parents should also be invited to come and share some of their cultural rituals such as dances, food, holidays with students. Such activities should be consistent and sustained so that students see their value.

The fourth dimension is "Equitable Pedagogy." Teaching need to be modified in order to facilitate academic achievement among students from diverse cultures. Students are unique and learn differently. Some learn best when they work in groups, some prefer individual assignment, whereas others enjoy competition. Therefore, teaching activities and strategies need to be modified to cater for all students and enhance each student's success.

Finally is empowering school culture and social

structure dimension. This dimension ensures equality in education and empowers students from diverse cultural groups. Students, parents and teachers are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities and to build positive social climate within the school.

### Facilitating Factors to the Implementation of a Multicultural Curriculum

This section describes what facilitating factors are needed for the successful implementation of a multicultural curriculum using the Republic of South Africa as an example. Because transformation and conflict go together, the issues discussed below may be of help to those implementing a multicultural curriculum. Banks (1993) suggests that to ensure equitable pedagogy, teachers must restructure or even modify instruction to facilitate academic achievement among students from diverse groups. But there is more to restructuring education in a post-apartheid society than just changing the curriculum content for students.

#### Knowledge

Implementors of any new program must be knowledgeable about the program being introduced. Reading books on culture, language diversity and professional literature will enhance educators' knowledge of diversity (Manning, 1996). This will reduce the misconceptions that teachers' hold about people of different cultures. Teachers as classroom

multicultural curriculum implementors celebrate diversity by welcoming the richness of cultural diversity in their classrooms (Johnson, 1991). Time spent in the classroom exchanging knowledge is a golden opportunity to learn about different cultures in South Africa and acknowledge the contributions of different cultural groups.

### Language

Giroux (1994) advocates that making use of languages and understandings that children bring to the school to bridge the gap between students knowledge and what they need to learn, can be effective. Teachers need to be prepared to face the challenges posed by language diverse learners, otherwise they may fail to recognize students' challenges and fail to address their educational needs (Bowman, 1989). Teachers have a massive task to create a welcoming and safe environment for speakers of other languages (Giroux, 1994). A feeling of trust and acceptance occurs when the use of other languages becomes accepted in class. Teachers need to be sufficiently fluent in the accepted language of instruction and minimally allow other language use or even speak other languages.

Teachers need to acknowledge and elevate the status of students' home languages and cultures (Keenan et al., 1993). The teacher should risk reading books of other languages and ask students to help with the translation. This will encourage the teacher to risk speaking other languages and



the children will therefore feel free to take the same risk. It is the responsibility of the teacher to promote multiculturalism and make students feel accepted in class. However, to be successful in school, students and teachers must cross language, values and culture barriers (McGee Banks, 1993).

### Past attitudes

For multicultural education to succeed educators need to accept that racism and discrimination exists and they must be prepared to deal with it (Nieto, 1996). They need to be open about such issues and be given opportunities to challenge them without turning a blind eye.

McGee Banks (1993) argues that the basic change in schools requires confrontation of the harsh realities. All people bear the obligation to change those things they have the power to change. Confronting the effects of racism and discrimination should occur in the classroom. This will help prepare children to understand that even though the nation is striving for equality and equal opportunity, they do not necessarily mean the same. It is not enough to acquire knowledge about cultural diversity because that alone does not lead to acceptance or make a difference in students' or teachers' lives. It is therefore imperative that educators scrutinize their attitudes toward accepting people of different race and culture (Carter, 1996) as they engage in multicultural education.

### Institutional support

The government and other institutions may play a significant role in creating educational opportunities that will ultimately affect social change. The Republic of South Africa government's support of multicultural educational programs is necessary to alleviate the imbalances incurred by apartheid. Lemon (1995) suggested that private sector institutions should also be encouraged to make major contributions to the education of the underprivileged.

Television and radio public service announcements may be one way to provide educational messages so as to educate the masses. Since television and radio have a great influence on attitudes and opinions of the people, the prominent use of the slogan "Simunye - We are One" may help spread the ideology of multiculturalism.

Religious institutions can provide enrichment classes (Baker, 1996) in multicultural understanding. Multicultural education can be supported through local community efforts and welfare services. These groups can work to educate people about multiculturalism so as to enable the people to make effective contributions to the new education and government systems in South Africa.

### Related skills

Skills and abilities are needed by educators to help them relate to diverse learners. Such skills may be acquired by learning how diversity affects the learning

process and working firsthand with diverse learners (Manning, 1995). Acquisition of these skills will help educators understand and respond appropriately to learners of diverse cultures. Lum (1986) advocates that such effective skills will reflect educators knowledge of diversity as well as commitment to provide experiences that reflect diversity. In order for all children to learn and succeed in schools, regardless of their cultural heritages, teachers will need the skills and attitudes to accommodate their students' cultural characteristics (Banks, 1993).

#### Parent Involvement

Having parents as part of the school in developing a multicultural curriculum is crucial to the success of the program and their children. Parents bring special quality to the program because they are part of the learning process. It is therefore the responsibility of teachers to invite parents to the school and welcome them.

Parents need to know what the new curriculum has to offer. Their involvement will help them understand what the school is teaching and increase their interest in school activities. When parents are invited to share with the class information about their families, cultural background and their lives in the community, all students in class learn and will urge their own parents to share similar experiences. These activities open up communication lines between teachers and parents. Parents will no longer feel

threatened by school authorities as barriers will be bridged.

### Barriers to Multicultural Curriculum

Racial division of schooling in South Africa reflected broader patterns of social stratification, with state funding discriminating between departments of education on the basis of race (Wedekind et al., 1996). This situation suggests that meaningful curriculum change in a democratic South Africa will not be easily achieved. There are several barriers that may delay the process of change to a multicultural curriculum in schools if all the stakeholders in the education of South African youth are not mentally prepared for the changes and what may be expected in the classrooms throughout the country.

Lack of understanding or even lack of interest in learning about other cultures that are different may delay school integration in the Republic of South Africa. This section will focus on some barriers that may cause a delay to the development and implementation of a multicultural curriculum.

#### Teacher preparation

In a study done in South Africa, Skuy and Vice (1996) reported that White teachers believed that their training and qualifications did not prepare them to cope with integrated classrooms, whereas Black teachers reported more

confident to teach in a multicultural classroom because they are used to accommodating the White dominant culture in their everyday lives. The majority of teachers, Black and White, have no experience teaching children from backgrounds other than their own race. Their lack of experience teaching in an integrated situation may pose a serious problem to the successful implementation of multicultural curriculum. They may lack the skills and the confidence to handle racial incidents which may arise in the classroom (McCall, 1996). LeCompte (1985) has suggested that inadequate multicultural training can lead to stereotyping and possibly increase hostility toward students. Teachers need to understand that students may deliberately create such racially-oriented situations to test the strength of the teacher and her/his position as far as racism is concerned. Therefore, fear of teaching diverse children may delay the implementation of a multicultural curriculum as well as complete desegregation in South African schools.

#### Negative attitudes

Outright racism and prejudice can cause teachers to hold negative beliefs about other racial groups. Ladson-Billing (1990) and Lipman (1993) assert that negative attitudes toward students of races other than the teacher's race lower expectations for student achievement. Attention is often given to White students while neglecting students of other races who may need the teacher's assistance.

Manning (1996) asserted that unwillingness to accept diversity may result in educators avoiding people altogether. This may be done to harbor racist or ill feelings which resulted from misconceptions of diversity and/or a superiority complex. Teacher's unwillingness to overcome their own racism and classism (Aaronsohn, Carter, & Howell, 1996), may delay the process of complete change in the classroom situation.

#### Desegregation of schools

Not only educators need to be educated or prepared for integration. Parents and communities may need multicultural education to accept diversity and equity as part of their school system. Daley (1996) reported that Afrikaner parents blocked Black students from enrolling in their school and boycotted the school on the first day of schooling. Small towns dominated by Afrikaners have made it difficult for Black children to register into their schools. Afrikaners have argued that as a small minority, they need schools that will allow them to maintain their cultural values.

Some White schools have used other tactics to keep the enrollment low. One school demanded an AIDS report test (Daley, 1996) before Black children could be admitted. The New York Times (February 23, 1996) also reported that most White schools have become semiprivate with the state paying teachers' salaries, but parents paying for the material and upkeep.

### Fear

Fear of being forced to address the evils of apartheid, racism, prejudice and discrimination may result in the unwillingness of educators to learn more about diversity. An article in the New York Times (Lorch, 1995) stated that "Sweeping these things under the carpet will not heal South Africa as a country." Educators may find it difficult to plan effective teaching-learning experiences if these fears are not addressed (Manning, 1995). No matter how hard it may be to deal with the frightening reality of these practices (Aarohanson et al., 1996), if educators have not been prepared to deal directly with diverse cultures in the classroom, it will be difficult to implement a multicultural curriculum.

### Demographic changes

It is unlikely that schools in Black Townships will be fully representative of other cultural groups and experience racial integration because classes in Black schools are overcrowded and equipment is poor (New York Times, January 14, 1995). Black teachers also received poorer training than their White counterparts. Thus African schools may remain monoracial for some years to come. However, all White schools are likely to be the first schools in the RSA fully integrated since residential segregation has been abandoned and living areas are beginning to reflect a variety of races. It is unlikely that Whites will relocate to Black

Townships and enroll their children in Black schools, therefore most Black schools will remain so unless there are incentives given for Whites to attend these schools. Since Whites constitute a small part of the South African population, it would be unlikely that an equal distribution of Whites throughout the country will ever occur.

### Language Diversity

Most teachers have been trained from monolingual schools. They are not conversant in more than two languages except for African teachers who were forced to learn more than two languages. Fear of learning other languages and even communication (Skuy & Vice, 1996) may delay the process.

Since White education has been regarded as the best, most Africans who were able to do so sent their children to White schools where they were taught by Whites. This is a challenge to White teachers who must learn to communicate with Black students in the student's native languages. Otherwise, if the African languages are not used in White schools the subtle message sent to students is that their languages carry a lower status and that teachers are not prepared to compromise and learn languages other than their own.

Manning (1995) asserted that educators who fear the diversity of languages will allow their educational decisions as well as their interactions with learners to be



affected. Unfavorable attitudes towards language diversity held by some teachers may cause unfair discrimination between students (Manning, 1995). The need to learn one or more languages to teach in a linguistically and culturally diverse classroom may pose a problem to the teacher.

Phuntsong (1996) asserted that defining learning problems in terms of linguistic inadequacy is an oversimplification and has long perpetuated a self-fulfilling prophecy of non-achievement. Diversity in language can be considered as strength to build upon (Nieto, 1996).

#### Educational and socio-economic backgrounds

Divergent backgrounds of students and teachers may also lead to misunderstandings. The less rich educational background the Black students bring to class may be difficult for White teachers to adjust to. Meanwhile, Black teachers may also be experiencing some difficulties in handling the knowledge the White children bring with them to class (Skuy & Vice, 1996).

Teachers believe that students from certain socio-economic classes, such as affluent and middle class, are more capable than those from working or lower class. Teachers, therefore, expect more from these other groups, and pay more attention to them than children from lower rungs. Teachers tend to perceive students from working class and lower class backgrounds as incapable of high quality academic work and tend to reduce the work by

lowering the quality of content.

### Teacher Qualifications

The qualifications of teachers play a significant role in education. Teachers become more confident and motivated to venture into various areas of life when they are comfortable with the knowledge they possess. Teachers with meager qualifications and poor training may lack the confidence to venture into multicultural situations (Murphy, 1992). Those better qualified may be adventurous, show confidence, demonstrate a greater ability to think broadly, and may feel free to venture into multicultural settings.

### Teaching Practice

In 1992, Murphy reported that both Black and White teachers in South Africa tend to be highly authoritarian. Students learned textbook material through rote memorization and practice in preparation for their exams and at times physical punishment was applied (New York Times, 1995, January 14). Learning in South Africa has been teacher oriented where drill, memorization, and correct responses have been the norm. Students have been taught to think the same, give the right answer, and speak only when called upon.

Teaching strategies such as cooperative learning and peer teaching have not been encouraged. Teachers in a democratic and multicultural classroom may need to relinquish their superiority complex and their authoritarian style and accept that learning is

reciprocal. This might be difficult for teachers to give up their seats and become learners who facilitate knowledge (English & Hill, 1993).

### Parent Involvement

According to McGee Banks (1993), involving parents and community in education is a dynamic process that encourages, supports and provides opportunities for parents and educators to cooperate in the education of their children. Thus exclusion of the parents in the process of change and the education of their children may create a serious problem as parents need to know what their children are learning and have the right to decide if that knowledge is appropriate for their children to acquire.

Lack of communication is a barrier to parents attending school meetings, conferences and school functions. Teachers tend to converse with parents in the language they do not understand and having a translator intimidates most parents. Teachers need to use language the parent understand so they can be part of the conversation.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Summary

The purpose of this study was to provide a review of literature on the pre- and post-apartheid systems of education in South Africa. Education was legally segregated when the National Party came into power in 1948. Curriculum for Blacks was revised in 1949 and introduced in 1953. English as a medium of instruction was scrapped and mother tongue instruction was put in place. Apartheid Government control was visible as different departments of education were established and education for Blacks was underfinanced.

The curriculum for Black education has been under attack ever since the establishment of Bantu (Black) Education. The government introduced some undesirable reforms over the years but a giant step was when Afrikaans was to become the medium of instruction in 1976. Students took it upon themselves to correct the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction and demanded a single system of education and an alternative curriculum.

White schools were later opened for Black children to be admitted, though a variety of strategies and quotas were utilized prior to admission. Schools were officially desegregated in 1994 when South Africa gained its freedom. The democratic New South Africa marked the visibility of the

multicultural and multilingual country it is. South Africa is therefore changing from all angles of hierarchical structures, administration, schools, residential areas.

Multicultural literature was reviewed so as to provide an explicit clarification of the philosophy of multicultural education. Educators need to understand that multicultural education is a philosophy and not a specific set of practices. Five approaches to multicultural education and five dimensions of multicultural curriculum were discussed. Multicultural education aims at promoting the strength and values of diversity, social justice, human rights, respect and distribution of equal power to all members of all ethnic groups (Banks & McGee-Banks, 1989; Banks, 1993; Bryant, 1996; Jolly, 1995; Melendez, 1995; Montecinos & Tidwell, 1994; NCATE, 1986; Nieto, 1996).

Facilitating factors for the implementation of multicultural curriculum include the following: teachers need to acquiring knowledge about the program and diversity (Manning, 1996); teachers and students need to cross the language barrier; educators need be prepared to face the challenges posed by language diverse learners; facilitators need to accept that racism and discrimination existed and be prepared to challenge it. Lemon (1995) indicated that the government and other institutions should play a significant role to bring about change in the educational arena. Skills that will help educators teach diverse learners should be

acquired.

Barriers that need to be addressed as the implementation of multicultural curriculum is attempted are: lack of understanding, interest and training of teachers and staff; negative attitudes which emanate from racism, prejudice and unwillingness to accept diversity and desegregation; fear of challenging the evils of apartheid; dealing with fears and lack of access to multicultural education due to geographical location and demographics of the country.

#### Conclusion

Faced with the past experiences of segregation and inequities in the education system, South Africa needs to develop a system of education, and in particular a new curriculum that will provide equal opportunities that will benefit all. The new curriculum needs to teach students to value diversity, to respect one another so that they are able to work together and bring about change in their classrooms and their country. A multicultural curriculum can help the young people of South Africa identify the injustices of apartheid and discrimination and acquire knowledge and skills to challenge these issues.

Williams (1992) stated that change is gradual, mechanical, evolutionary and cumulative. For change in education to be effective and durable, all those involved need to perceive the process as desirable and necessary.

Establishing a vision of multicultural education is a prerequisite for implementing change in education.

#### Recommendations

There are issues that will continue to surface with multicultural curriculum in this process of change. This process needs to be visible. Multicultural education is a new concept in South Africa and before the curriculum can be implemented, there needs to be a paradigm shift, a new way of thinking needs to be established.

#### Training leaders to facilitate multicultural curriculum

A multicultural curriculum will need trained leaders who will facilitate the new curriculum. These leaders will educate trainers of teachers, instructors and administrators and act as liaisons between educational institutions. They need to help trainers of teachers establish a vision of multicultural education as well as providing skills required for an inclusive approach to implement change in education. These leaders must commit themselves and be ready to act upon the challenges that will be presented in schools.

Leaders will be trained to address the process of change, to develop an awareness of the value of ethnic and cultural diversity. It is imperative to help leaders gain insight into multicultural curriculum. Therefore, professional literature should be provided to help them understand how multicultural education fits with the entire school program.

To ensure that trainers understand the different approaches to multicultural education they need to be taught about the different forms. They will also have to teach these approaches to teachers and allow them to make their choice. Teachers should be free to choose the approach they would like to follow.

### Training of teachers

Teachers have the power to bring about change when they see the need and understand why they are doing it. Erickson (1995) stated that many experienced teachers are important agents of change. They need to be provided with the right tools and allowed to participate in decision making. Teachers should be empowered by giving them proper training and knowledge for the implementation of multicultural education. Teacher empowerment affords them the opportunity to listen to their own voices and that of their colleagues (Erickson, 1995). This places them in their rightful position as powerful and professional change agents and encourages them to take responsibility on the decisions they make.

Training of teachers will be an ongoing issue that will provide support and a forum for teachers to listen to contributions brought by fellow teachers. Teachers' centers will need to be used as in-service training centers, where teacher can attend workshops, seminars and conferences. College and university teacher education programs need to



implement multicultural programs to equip teachers to become adept at designing a multicultural learning environment that fosters academic growth and achievement (Skuy & Vice, 1996). There is a need for systematic training programs for prospective and in-service teachers which would provide a critical orientation to educational theory and praxis (Nkomo, 1990) which incorporates a multicultural perspective.

The current changes in South Africa challenge teachers to become more sensitive to the needs and backgrounds of students from diverse cultures, and to change the curricula to prepare students adequately for life in a culturally diverse society. This means that teachers need to acquire skills that will enable them to work with children from a race different than their own. There is also a need for joint involvement of teachers of all races and language groups in counselling and training sessions to help dispel the anxieties of possible problems.

#### Parental participation

Parents also must be educated about multicultural education. If they do not understand the process, there will be conflicts with teachers and the school community. Language differences are perhaps the most visible barriers to the construction of multicultural curriculum. It might be difficult to convince parents if educators do not speak the language of the parents. Strategies for communicating

across language differences (Keenan, et al, 1993) must be developed.

Since serious change comes from within (Davis, 1996), people in the community need to engage in serious conversations with one another. The school employees, principals, parents and students need to form a true partnership for meaningful change.

#### Planning for implementation

It is important to begin the process of implementing multicultural education gradually, and take a few steps at a time. This is a very involved process because the entire population needs to be educated in order to successfully adapt to the new situation. Any type of education program will have emerging needs and will have continuous changes. Multicultural curriculum is no exception.

A successful multicultural curriculum requires a long range planning. Teachers should be allowed to establish teams that will develop strategies for the implementation of the new curriculum. The teams will also help provide support and set priorities for change to be implemented. Given the voice and the power to participate in developing strategies, they need to choose the dimensions for change. This will help them to deal with issues of change systematically in order to see their own growth toward implementation. Team work increases confidence and gives them courage that they are doing the right thing.

### Multicultural curriculum

In the South African context, multicultural education would mean transforming the schools and school practices to reach every child in the country. It would mean providing equal opportunities, resources and support to all students on an equal basis. In addition the learning environment, the structure of the school, and instructional strategies would need to be changed so that all students benefit, learn and succeed. Christie (1987) emphasized the need for changes in the schooling practices, subject content, relationship between teachers and students and the examination system toward a more democratic practice in the schools.

Kozol (1991) argued that the first priority of school restructuring must be to eliminate separate and unequal systems that exist. In order for students to learn and succeed, the playing field needs to be levelled and opportunities equalized so that all students start at the same level. When educational settings are equitable, then students will benefit from multicultural educational approach (McGee Banks, 1993).

In a supportive multicultural setting, all people would play a significant role in the governance of education as well as in the formulation of the curriculum. Teachers and parents need to be empowered to work with students in sharing knowledge. All stakeholders will have the

opportunity to work together and design a motivating and multiculturally appropriate curricula (Nieto, 1996). This community of people will become more visible as they will be offering the school unique and helpful perspectives that the school needs. Every member of the community would be provided the freedom to make useful contributions to the society. Thus multicultural education places accountability, responsibility and commitment on all (Thomas, 1995/1996).

Designers of the new curriculum must ensure and honor everyone's culture and weave it into the culture of the school (Wedekind et al, 1996). It is also imperative to ensure that the new curriculum empower students to uncover the realities of a post-apartheid society, explain their experiential reality, and challenge the social, political determinants of their relative position in the community (Nkomo, 1990).

As teachers play a much more active role in curriculum and development and since they are in daily contact with students, they should be given the freedom to make decisions (Trimble, 1996) about the curriculum that builds on strength of the young people in their care and determine that which connects best to their lives.

Teachers should also provide students with opportunities to make their own decisions about the topics they wish to study. This kind of student involvement will

encourage students to be independent and direct their own learning. Control of the curriculum must therefore be vested in teachers and students if we expect them to accept responsibility for their own learning and achievement.

#### Funding and resources

The educational and social imbalances will not be easy to overcome and may create a very serious problem in South Africa. The New York Times (January 14, 1995) reported that Black schools have been underfinaced and under resourced and closing the gap between Black and White education is a challenge. African teachers are also underqualified and most Black schools are in shambles. Because there are so many problems to be solved at once, which might not be possible, priorities will need to be set.

The funding and resources may always be an issue for a new curriculum. This is why the government must provide some guidance and resources as well as support on matters of desegregation and integration. An auxiliary budget will have to be created to level the playing fields to eliminate the backlogs. There has to be a distribution of resources within the education system itself so that all schools and children participate on equal terms.

Finally, if we agree that all students need to be educated, then we must address them as active learners. To address them as learners, we must identify what is needed to help them become effective learners. Providing various

types of awareness activities about multiculturalism will hopefully result in positive attitudes to education and the people of South Africa. As we are building a new nation, we need to treat young children with respect and give them opportunities to learn and succeed. Schools, communities and society as a whole should play a significant role to build the young generation and prepare them for future realities of life.

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