

Art. #1782, 11 pages, <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v40ns2a1782>

The role of the school in inculcating citizenship values in South Africa: Theoretical and international comparative perspectives

Charl Wolhuter 

Comparative and International Education, Faculty of Education, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa
charl.wolhuter@nwu.ac.za

Jan Germen Janmaat 

UCL Institute of Education, University of London, London, United Kingdom

Johannes (Hannes) L van der Walt  and **Ferdinand J Potgieter** 

Research Unit Education and Human Rights in Diversity (Edu-HRight), Faculty of Education, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

In view of the serious moral decay in South African society, this article reports on our research regarding the role of the school in the inculcation of citizenship values (as part of the brief of South African education). We regard a set of citizenship values consonant with a democratic dispensation to be a core component of a moral order essential for South Africa. Using a combination of interpretive-constructivist and comparative approaches, we examine and evaluate the experiences of other post-conflict societies in using education to inculcate citizenship values. We conclude that schools can be successful with respect to the inculcation of citizenship values, provided that the curriculum itself does not discriminate against any group or category of people. Desegregation can only be beneficial in the absence of negative depiction (including criminalisation) or the unequal treatment of any particular societal grouping. Our research suggests that active citizenship education is needed in schools. For this reason, we contend that teacher education has to form an integral part of a moral revival project. Lastly, we highlight the importance of finding democratically agreed-upon ways to continually engage with parents, legal caregivers and other stakeholders and role-players before and during the execution of any such project.

Keywords: citizenship; citizenship education; citizenship values; democracy; globalisation; political reform; post-conflict societies; school as social institution; social justice; value systems

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Since the inception of the current political dispensation in 1994 in South Africa, schools are being looked upon for the inculcation of the country's new citizenship values (Department of Education, Republic of South Africa, 2001; Solomons & Fataar, 2011). Scholars have, however, expressed doubts as to whether schools in South Africa can fulfil this mission (Solomons & Fataar, 2011). Their pessimism underscores the need to take another look at the achievements in this regard of schools in other comparable parts of the world. This mission of schools is especially important in countries such as South Africa where political reforms have entailed a redistribution of power. In the case of South Africa, the demise of the apartheid dispensation has resulted in the extension of full citizenship rights to previously excluded groups, thereby rendering these groups equal in status to the erstwhile dominant minority. Political transformations are often accompanied by strong sentiments of revenge and restorative justice in the formerly oppressed group, and by feelings of fear, loss and nostalgia in the formerly dominant group (Du Preez, P 2014:117–135). It is challenging in such circumstances to prevent people from taking the law into their own hands to establish a new civic culture in line with the new democratic dispensation.

A number of problems associated with the extension of full citizenship rights to previously excluded groups can indeed be detected in South Africa. These include voter apathy (particularly among the youth) (6 million South Africans aged 18–29 years did not even register to vote in the most recent general elections [Calland, 2019]), a lack of social capital, a laxity in moral standards, violence and other unconstitutional means for the attainment of political ends, and an increase in populism. The inculcation in the upcoming generations of a set of citizenship values consonant with the new fully democratic dispensation could be seen as a core element in the restoration of the moral order in South Africa. The disruption of traditional (i.e. the time prior to Western contact) African moral enculturation could be a contributing factor to the current moral decay. According to Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2003), African education traditionally embodied a process of cultural transmission and renewal in terms of which the adult members of society were obliged to guide the development of infants and young children, thereby initiating them into the culture of the society. BJ Van der Walt (2003) supports this view by stating that ethical education has always been the ultimate aim of African education and morality. Due to Western-inspired influences such as individualism, materialism and consumerism, this traditional (pre-colonial) approach has become eroded. Following the work of reputable African scholars of the 1990s such as Motlhabi, Kigongo, Kinoti and Shutte, BJ Van der Walt (2003:52) concluded that African traditional education seems to have dissipated and this has resulted in the moral decay with which many African countries currently have to contend.

The Advantages of Comparative Experiences

Moral decay and the concomitant civic problems currently experienced in South Africa are not unique. Other societies which underwent radical reconstruction and/or where, under the force of globalisation, traditional value systems have been disrupted, are grappling with the same or similar issues. Kim and So (2018:103–104, 109–110), for example, recently catalogued the following as problems regarding the civic culture in Korea: inequalities, marginalisation, racism, micro-aggression, the sending of denigrating messages, discrimination, exclusion, regarding the “other” as a threat, bullying, labelling, stigmatisation, reinforcement of a false sense of superiority, treating immigrants and their children as “aliens” or as “the other”, alienation and segregation. Brown, Langer and Stewart (2011) mention similar problems in their survey of a number of post-conflict societies, among others Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone. The current rise of populist right-wing parties in elections in various parts of Western Europe in the wake of an influx of immigrants, and in reaction to the increasing multi-cultural and multi-religious makeup of the population of New Zealand constitute two further examples. Other examples include the indecision of the United Kingdom’s government when confronted with the forces of supra-nationalism and globalisation, the changed behaviour of the presidency of the United States of America in the face of challenges to the United States’ hegemony and the influx of immigrants from Latin America, and also the current turmoil in Hong Kong in reaction to the threat of citizens being extradited to China. All of these examples testify to the challenge of establishing a new moral order consistent with a restructured social order (cf. Grayling, 2018).

Research Questions

The above outline of the situation in South Africa and elsewhere led us to formulate the following research questions. Firstly, do schools have a role to play in inculcating citizenship values? If so, which values should be prioritised for South Africa? Secondly, to what extent are schools currently teaching these values, and are there areas in the formal and the taught curriculum where their provision falls short of the ideal? Thirdly, how do other societies where a major redistribution of power has occurred, use education to foster citizenship values, and what can South Africa learn from them?

The case for asking these questions does not rest only on their relevance for educational policy and practice and for social cohesion in South Africa, but also on the limited comparative

research into citizenship education in societies that have experienced major political transformation. Although there are comparative studies of citizenship education and education for reconciliation in post-conflict societies (cf. e.g. Paulsen, 2014; Quaynor, 2012), as far as could be ascertained, these do not focus specifically on the questions formulated above. The theoretical and conceptual publications of Davids and Waghid (2017) and Waghid (2019) (see below for details) arguably come closest to addressing the kind of questions in which we are interested.

Aim of Research and Structure of Article

The aim of this article was to report on our research for the purpose of finding answers to research questions enumerated above. The article continues with a description of the method of investigation, followed by an outline of the conceptual-theoretical framework that was employed as theoretical lens during the investigation, a discussion of the current situation in South Africa and of the situation in other post-conflict societies. The international experience is then analysed, discussed and evaluated to gain insight into, and learn from, experiences elsewhere in the world, and apply them if and where necessary, subject to local South African contextual conditions and considerations.

Method of Investigation

The application of interpretivism as theoretical lens presupposes that education in the form of schooling is not a deterministic process. Schooling entails a course of action taken by a specific agent (e.g. the school and, in particular, the teachers as educators) for the purpose of inculcating, in this case, selected citizenship values in the learners. Interpretivism furthermore highlights human intentionality as a key determinant of social behaviour, including teaching-learning behaviour. In the context of internal and external causal factors, teaching-learning can be understood as a process of dynamic “becoming” rather than static “being.” It can also be interpreted as a set of pedagogically justifiable relations and interactions rather than as an “essentialistic” social entity or a component of deterministic development (Packard, 2017:537). Interpretivism, furthermore, concentrates on holistic complementarity and the complex web of association relating to the act of schooling (teaching and learning in the institutional context of a school) (Chapman, 2017:48, 50).

Interpretivists assume and accept that interpretively theorised material, such as that about the role of the school in inculcating citizenship values in learners, offers an account of this undertaking, without denying that a different theory (for example, the deterministic theories of socio-economic reproduction or cultural reproduction of dependency theory) about schooling and the

inculcation of citizenship values might have yielded different results (Chapman, 2017:50). As Van Huyssteen (2006:46) correctly concluded, “our epistemic task is to stand in a critical relationship to our tradition(s) and worldviews.”

The interpretive-constructivist method was used throughout this research. In the process, we were aware of the pitfall of attempting to glean normative guidelines from experience in other post-conflict societies that seem to have succeeded in employing schools for the establishment of a culture of morally justifiable citizenship values. We employed the method in examining and evaluating the experiences in other countries and societies that have struggled through the travails of post-conflict situations, and then attempted to learn from those experiences and suggest ways and means of incorporating those lessons in the South African education system.

We further used a review of the literature to compare policies and practices in post-conflict societies for the purpose of gaining deeper insight into how the inculcation of citizenship values in post-conflict societies could be managed in schools. Learning from the experience of other nations or education systems and identifying best policies, practice and ideas is continued to this day. In fact, the rise of international testing regimes, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), has given learning from comparison a new lease of life. Forestier and Crossley (2015) relate, for instance, how Hong Kong historically (in colonial times) borrowed education policies from England. When Hong Kong came out tops in PISA tests in recent times, England began looking toward Hong Kong for best education policies, ideas and practice. The comparative approach as applied in this research is an example of what Durkheim referred to as an “indirect experiment” and hence, in the widest sense of the word, as a form of indirect empirical research (Li, 2017:957). It would have been ethically unjustifiable and practically unfeasible to conduct a true experiment for purposes of studying education systems. Comparison remains the only feasible empirical approach. The Editor of the *South African Journal of Science* underscored the need of conducting such indirect experiments regarding the development of education and training in South Africa; the country does not have the luxury to experiment any further; it needs to adopt policies and practices that have a proven record of effectiveness in dealing with the enormous challenges facing education (Cherry, 2011).

A fundamental theorem of comparative education is that education systems are shaped by contextual societal forces and that education

policies, practices and success in the transplantation thereof are context-sensitive (cf. Mundy & Read, 2017:308). Therefore, when examining and evaluating foreign education experiences, contextual similarities and differences between the “exporting” and the “importing” countries should be brought into the equation. For this reason, a part of this article was allocated to the mapping of the contextual features of education in South Africa. Before that can be done, however, account should first be given of the conceptual and theoretical framework that was used as theoretical lens.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

We used the social space and ethical action theory as theoretical framework. Before justifying the choice of the theory and setting out the main tenets thereof, we first explain the considerations which led us to opt for this theory.

Schools as educational institutions

“The school” is one of the societal institutions brought into being in differentiated societies, that is, in societies where different tasks have been allocated to different societal structures (Verburg, 2015:420). Their main task is to structure and organise the process known as “teaching and learning.” Like all other societal institutions (such as the family, the state and the church), the school fulfils a broader education function than merely the mechanical teaching and learning of facts. It uses the teaching-learning process as a vehicle or instrument for the more encompassing guiding, leading, shaping, forming, equipping, nourishing and nurturing of the young (De Botton, 2012:115). This process can also be described as the “leading out” or “bringing out” (Grayling, 2002:160) of less mature people to become mature members of their community, their region or nation-state, ideally able to cope with the challenges of trans- and internationalism. The teaching-learning task of the school, which is mainly of a didactic nature, should ideally be employed to fulfil a pedagogical role, that is, the role of preparing less mature people for their life journey and the fulfilment of their personal life tasks (Van Crombrugge, 2006:189 ff).

Citizenship values

Our stance with respect to the issue of citizenship values is transformative in that we sense the need for an action agenda (Haddadi, Hosseini, Johansen & Olsson, 2017:1082) to find a solution to the less than desirable situation in South Africa. South Africa requires an action agenda for social reform and change, and this can be brought about by reinvigorating the practice of inculcating citizenship values in learners at school. The research reported on in this article, therefore, unavoidably possessed a moral dimension – South

African schools require a moral sense of where they should be heading in helping to address the current situation in the country. Our point of departure coincides with that of Chang, Pak and Sleeter (2018:2), namely the conviction that the values inculcated in learners should be for the common good of the world (and, of course, the particular community, nation-state and region); these values should serve for the betterment of society in future.

Care as citizenship value

Waghid's pedagogy of care (2019) is useful for considering the issue of care as a citizenship value. This theory, which claims that contemporary society – in general – might be lacking relationships of resonant significance, is reminiscent of the work done by Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984) on caring as a relational human experience. It also resonates with the work of Metz (2018) on “the sub-Saharan philosophical tradition of relationality, communality [...] and morality” (Waghid, 2019:126). It is for these reasons that Waghid (2019:vi) argues that his “pedagogy of care” is not so much about “caring for” or even “caring about” the learners in our classes. He explains (2019:xii, 114) that his pedagogy of care is not a form of one-way communication (from the teacher to the learner) that seeks to obey fixed institutional roles, hegemonic responsibilities and typecast expectations in the sense of who should be caring for whom and who needs to be taken care of. Instead, he understands it as “caring with”; as a form of paracletic, reciprocal caring alongside each other (i.e. where both teacher and learner are equal pilgrims on their respective journeys through academia). Waghid's (2019) understanding of “caring with” is theoretically circumscribed and triangulated with reference to conceptual signposts such as reflexive loyalty (p. 81), Ubuntu and the cultivation of moral, compassionate and restorative justice (p. 89), and embodied care (Waghid, 2019:114; Waghid & Davids, 2018; Waghid, Waghid & Waghid, 2018).

The citizenship value of critically caring in a diverse or multi-cultural world (Koonce, 2018:101) can be understood as one of the most basic values to be inculcated in learners. Learners have to be educated to recognise, understand and have the skills to overcome discriminatory practices, marginalisation and bias in any form. The school should create a caring and empathetic atmosphere (critical empathy [Kim & So, 2018:112]) in which all are welcome and where care is experienced as genuine and allows for reciprocity (Koonce, 2018:103). An understanding has to be brought home that an ethic of caring is built on a relationship between the one that is caring and the other that is (being) cared for (Noddings, 2003:24).

Respect, equity and justice as citizenship values

Other basic citizenship values that have to be brought home through school education are mutual respect, understanding of and valuing difference and diversity, the creation of an emotionally safe environment for all in a particular social space, as well as compassion (Koonce, 2018:111). The school should strive at bringing home a deeper understanding among the learners of the need for equity and justice through heightened consciousness and engagement, and the eradication of barriers between an “in”-group and “outsiders” (Chang et al., 2018:3). There is a deep and progressively persuasive need for understanding diversity, cross-culturalism and justice for minority groups, both in local and in global contexts (Chang et al., 2018:4; Nussbaum, 1998:69). Davids and Waghid (2017) extend this list by proposing a conditional and responsible tolerance that is based on equal respect (p. 35), openness (p. 69), agreement vs disagreement (pp. v, 86), recognition (p. 11), circumspection (p. 14), liberty (p. 59), Nussbaum's notion of resistance to shaming the Other (p. 99), equal political friendship (p. 115), forgiveness (p. 128) and lived (even embodied) inclusiveness (p. 146). They link their understanding of tolerance to the notion of authentic citizenship (Davids & Waghid, 2017:151–166; also see Potgieter, 2015, 2016; and Potgieter, Van der Walt & Wolhuter, 2014 for similar perspectives).

Another important citizenship value that has to be inculcated to ameliorate the current state of affairs in South Africa (and elsewhere) is to accompany the learners towards understanding their own socio-cultural standing in society and, where applicable, to gain the skill of critically reflecting on their own privileged social potentialities and engaging with the plight of less privileged learners through heightened social consciousness. In the end, the inculcation of this value could imply a radical transformation of privileged learners' ideologies, values and the principles of division between themselves and those whom they tend to regard as “the other” (Chang et al., 2018:3; Kim & So, 2018:111).

The social space and ethical action or function theory as theoretical framework

Two core ideas discussed in the previous subsection also reverberate in the social space and ethical action or function theory, as outlined by JL Van der Walt and others (Andresen & Van der Walt, 2018; Van der Walt, JL 2017a:7, 2017b, 2017c, 2017d, 2018), namely space and ethically/morally justifiable behaviour. Space, in this case the space of school as teaching-learning institution, can be defined as the situation in which people and their relationships are physically located in the real world (Verburg, 2015:420).

Other modalities of societal life, such as the ethical or moral, cohere with the spatial dimension of reality occupied by a social space such as the school. The school, and by implication every teacher as educator, every learner and every other person or party involved, is expected to fulfil his or her function and purpose in the life of the school with a sense of responsibility and accountability. At the same time, each of these actors should be showing respect for the social spaces, the right to self-determination and the functions of all other individuals and groups occupying their respective spaces in reality (Strauss, 2009:763, 781). The school as social space should, furthermore, provide for all forms of diversity, including cultural, religious and ethnic diversity (Van Goor, Heyting & Vreeke, 2004:187). The task of the school should be seen as being interwoven with those of all other societal institutions (e.g. the parental home, the extended family, the community, religious institutions and the state) (Strauss, 2009:779, 781–782; Verburg, 2015:64, 100, 107). This is because an individual member of the school, such as a learner, could be a member of an array of other societal relationships and institutions.

The social space and ethical action or function theory emphasises the fact that the actions and behaviour of the agents in the social spaces should be ethically/morally acceptable. This, according to Strauss (2009:765), is what is referred to as “social morality”: the showing of the necessary respect in the course of social interaction. As already intimated, each participant or agent in a particular social space, in this case the school, should demonstrate care for the interests of all other people and the groups to which they belong. Justice, fairness, respect for others and care are closely related to the notion of caring for others and their interests. Observation of this norm in the context of social interaction among people, such as in a school, provides space and opportunity for all to discover and formulate the meaning of their existence and to live and exist accordingly. Doing so also provides space for diversity in the context of co-existence (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2014:23).

The social space and ethical/moral action theory now enables us to examine and outline the proposed transformative agenda (ethical/moral dimension) of the school as a social space.

The purpose of the transformative agenda outlined above: Addressing the current situation in South Africa

Current state of morality

The list of the key civic values above, that is, values that one would expect to prevail in a healthy, balanced and caring society, constitutes a transformative agenda for the amelioration of the currently unacceptable moral situation in South

Africa. However, to address the moral problems of South Africa effectively, the unhealthy moral conditions prevailing in the country at present should be understood. The rest of this section is devoted to a description of this situation.

Lawlessness seems to be reigning supreme in South Africa. The moral bankruptcy of the nation can be observed in the fact that people no longer honour hard work and service to the community (cf. Du Preez, M 2013:9–10; Patel, 2019). Instead, they perpetrate injustice and indulge in self-enrichment in the form of favouritism, nepotism, corruption, white-collar crime and even state capture (cf. Pauw, 2017). A survey found that 75% of South Africans pay bribes, when asked for a bribe by officialdom (Ethics Institute of South Africa, 2017).

The lawlessness and demonstrable lack of a strong common moral fibre in the country can be ascribed to a number of factors. During the turmoil leading up to the changes of 1994, a low-key civil war was waged in the country. In this war, one of the aims was to render the country ungovernable and, as a result, a trend of “anything goes” – any means to achieve the desired end is acceptable – developed. As a result, violence is still regarded today as a means of achieving political ends.

The role assigned to schools as per policy

The current South African socio-political dispensation and education came about at the end of a long period of turmoil, which had division and polarisation as a corollary. The *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* of the Department of Education, Republic of South Africa (2001:1) states that the current socio-political dispensation in South Africa was born from a vision of a common value system characterised by democracy, social justice and equality. The *Manifesto* states that education in South Africa should promote the following values: equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness and social honour (Department of Education, Republic of South Africa, 2001:3). These values can be deduced from the ideals of democracy, social justice, non-racism and non-sexism, human dignity (*Ubuntu*), an open society, accountability (responsibility), the rule of law, respect and reconciliation. To achieve these goals, the *Manifesto* identified the following strategies: nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools; role modelling; infusing classes with a culture of human rights; equal education opportunities, universal literacy; making arts and culture part of the curriculum; returning history to the curriculum and building a historical consciousness; introducing (integrative) religious education in schools; promoting multilingualism in schools; using sports to promote social bonds and nation-building in schools; promoting anti-racism

in schools; freeing the potential of girls; dealing with human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and nurturing a culture of sexual responsibility; making schools safe; developing an ethic of care for the environment; and nurturing patriotism and common citizenship.

Education system contextual, and societal contextual problems envisaged in turning policy into practice

Solomons and Fataar (2011) express strong doubts about whether South African schools will experience success in inculcating the values discussed so far in learners. The basis for their doubts is, firstly, the strong sense of self-centredness, to the extreme of a-social behaviour (for example, Du Preez, M 2013:9–10) which works against the establishment of the values expressed in policy and, secondly, the fact that the curriculum merely prescribes (in the view of Solomons & Fataar) the passive teaching of values. There is no room for the active acquisition of values. This fear of Solomons and Fataar has been borne out by empirical research done by Botha, Joubert and Hugo (2016). In research conducted in a primary school in a residential suburb in Pretoria that matched the demographic profile of the country, they surveyed 9-year-old learners' perceptions of democratic values. The finding was that these learners understood the values of respect, care, honesty and responsibility — the four values the authors found in the literature to be the constituent values of democracy (the learners at that age, of course, do not know these terms, although they comprehend the notions). The problem is, however, that their everyday behaviour was not consistent with these values. An illustration of this was the persistent occurrence of bullying and associated behaviour at the school. In South African schools bullying is – at least according to the results of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) – more rife than anywhere else in the world (Mullis, Martin, Foy & Drucker, 2012).

At the level of teachers' understanding and implementation of values education in South African schools, Masote (2016:vi) found that moral standards in South African society have been declining steadily over the past two decades. Masote (2016:vi) further concluded that the professional training of life skills teachers, especially with regard to dealing in pedagogically justifiable ways with multicultural practicalities such as the cultural differences that exist between teachers and learners as representatives of different communities in the same classroom context, needed to be addressed urgently. He suggests that the issue of the moral regeneration of South African society will be impossible to discuss

successfully in school classroom contexts without a sustained history of authentic, mutual trust between the school on the one hand, and the parents or legal caregivers and the community on the other (Masote, 2016:121–125). At the moment this seems to be largely missing.

Gleaning insights from international experience
Relevance of comparative study from a South African vantage point

The term “post-conflict societies” refers to states that have experienced a major redistribution of power across social groups in their transition to democracy. As argued in the introduction, such shifts are often accompanied by social disturbances and mentalities that threaten the fledgling democratic rule. Such disruptions include formerly subordinate groups exacting revenge on the previously dominant groups, or the latter not coming to terms with the changed political situation and continuing to harbour racist sympathies or a sense of superiority. It is consequently relevant to examine how other countries with such experiences have turned to education to promote the values that sustain their incipient democracies. Examples of such countries include the former communist countries of Eastern Europe, Northern Ireland, Bolivia, Chile and Rwanda. In each of these states, a formerly privileged social, ethnic or religious group had to share power with other groups in the transition of the country from authoritarian rule to democracy or from a restricted to a full democracy. South Africa could learn from their policies and practices, either in a positive way in terms of adopting examples of good practice, or in a negative way by avoiding less successful or counterproductive practices.

What then can we learn from existing literature as we, within our contextual ecology, devise educational policies and practices to deal with the important citizenship values identified above, namely, mutual respect, intercultural understanding, awareness of one's own social-cultural status and that of others, and the school as a diverse learning space?

The pitfall of using education to vilify particular groups

It comes as no surprise that many studies focus on problems and shortcomings in attempts at fostering citizenship values, rather than on examples of good practice, probably because of the perceived need to meet the academic requirement of critical analysis. One of the most commonly cited problems is the tendency, particularly of new states emerging from the collapse of communism, to use subjects such as civic education, citizenship education and history education to vilify other ethnic groups or neighbouring states in order to foster a national

identity and in-group cohesion (Carras, 2001; Koren, 2001; Koulouri, 2001; Plut, Pesikan-Avramovic & Pesic, 2002). Even where such countries try to foster civic-inclusive identities, such as in post-Soviet Moldova, they can face resistance from the teaching profession and the population, who regard these policies as covert attempts to re-Sovietise them (Anderson, 2007).

According to Janmaat (2007), the vilification of out-groups serves identity construction and in-group unity in two ways. Firstly, it establishes a clear boundary between the in- and the out-group, which is reinforced by depictions of the in-group as being innocent and virtuous and the out-group as malicious and treacherous. Secondly, focusing on out-group hostility deflects attention from conflict within the in-group, which fosters cohesion of the latter. As instrumental as this vilification may be for cementing (in-group) unity, it undermines tolerance, mutual respect and international cooperation and has, for this reason, sparked many initiatives of UNESCO and other international organisations to combat (ethno-)nationalist, hate-mongering narratives in textbooks (Pingel, 1999).

The pitfall of avoiding controversial issues

A second problem identified in post-conflict states is the practice of avoiding controversial issues (Quaynor, 2012). Studies about Northern Ireland (King, 2005), Cyprus (Koutselini & Papanastasiou, 1997) and Rwanda (Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy & Longman, 2008; Kearney, 2011; Weinstein, Freedman & Hughson, 2007) have observed the propensity of teachers to shun discussions of sensitive topics in class, their failure to adopt a multiple-perspectives approach in their teaching and their inclination to present historical accounts as being the unquestionable truth. These pedagogical practices will not enable children to develop a critical awareness of the interests and status of their own social or ethnic group or an understanding of, and empathy with, other groups. Neither will they foster a spirit of critical inquiry and the insight that historical accounts represent selections of past events.

The pitfall of segregation education and the requirements with respect to desegregated education

Lastly, existing research has identified ethnic segregation as an important obstacle in states with major power shifts. Kosovo is known for its complete separation of ethnic Albanians and Serbs in all social domains, including education (Paulsen, 2014). Hromadžić (2008) observes that even officially integrated schools in Mostar, Bosnia, enrol Bosnian and Croatian children in separate classrooms. Others, focusing on Northern Ireland, have lauded the efforts of integrated schools to bring Catholics and Protestants together but have

lamented the sheer paucity of such schools amidst an otherwise completely segregated school system along religious lines (cf. McGlynn, 2007). Accordingly, there are few opportunities for the youth of various and often antagonistic sides to interact with one another in these states, and this undermines the function of schools to bring students of all walks of life together under one roof. This is only likely to consolidate inter-ethnic prejudice and animosity (cf. Allport, 1954).

Positive object lessons

In view of this litany of problems, caveats or pitfalls, one might be tempted to conclude that South Africa has nothing to learn from states with very similar experiences. Yet, a few studies have highlighted promising educational interventions in transition or post-conflict states aimed at fostering civic engagement and intercultural understanding. Finkel (2014) examined the effects of various adult citizenship education programmes financed by nongovernmental organisations and charities in South Africa, Poland and the Dominican Republic on a number of civic outcomes. He found that programmes focusing on local problem solving and community action were particularly effective in enhancing political participation, political efficacy and tolerance of people with different opinions. He noted, however, that such programmes tended to foster those values more among the educated and engaged than among the disengaged, and warned that citizenship education could, as a consequence, unintentionally widen disparities. Tobin (2010) conducted a comparative study of Poland and Romania and observed that citizenship education programmes that are effective in promoting civic knowledge focus on learning by doing approaches that pay attention to local and national issues and involve teacher professional development. Nonetheless, the programmes he highlighted also involved Western partners and sponsors, which raises the question of whether these programmes can be continued when external support ends.

Synopsis: What South Africa can learn from the experience abroad

What is the take-home message for South Africa from all of these studies? The studies highlighting problems teach us that consistently negative portrayals of particular social or ethnic groups in textbooks and other educational materials, as well as a segregated school system, should be avoided. In contrast, discussing an issue from multiple perspectives, allowing for free discussions of controversial issues, and engaging in participatory forms of learning are all promising pedagogical approaches to foster key civic values and are, therefore, worth promoting. These messages are certainly not new and South Africa already has made great efforts to address these issues. For

instance, the highly integrative and comprehensive school system of the country keeps ethnic and social segregation in check.

The studies showing examples of good practice contain messages that may be more novel. For instance, the involvement of non-governmental organisations and foreign donors in successful educational programmes highlights issues of stability and a sense of ownership. It is vital for citizenship programmes to be integrated in mainstream education and that they do not depend on external funds for their continued existence. Such programmes should also be closely monitored to see whether they reach out to all students and that it is not only the already-engaged who benefit from them. Recent research suggests that some forms of citizenship education have stronger positive effects on socially disadvantaged groups than on privileged groups in terms of fostering their political engagement (Hoskins, Janmaat & Melis, 2017; Neundorf, Niemi & Smets, 2016). It would, therefore, be appropriate to examine whether such programmes could also be implemented in South Africa. Further, initial and continuing teacher education needs to prioritise education for democracy in order to prepare teachers well for the pedagogical approaches noted above. In view of the aforementioned issues regarding the teaching of history, this seems to be the most pressing task.

Conclusion

As the inculcation of civic values in South African education is imperative in view of the serious moral decay in the South African society, South African education policymakers correctly decided that schools should inculcate civic values. Their views confirm that schools should be seen as the social spaces where the inculcation of civic moral values could be the most effective. However, the arguments of leading scholars, as well as empirical research, suggest that this task will be difficult in the South African context.

Experience in comparable countries showed, firstly, that schools can be successful in the mission of inculcating citizenship values, on condition that there is no negative depiction of any group or category of people in the curriculum. Secondly, active, and not only passive, moral education should be offered. Thirdly, while desegregation may constitute a thrust against the formation of narrow identities, there is no proof that the desegregation of schools per se will result in moral restoration (of the kind argued for in this paper). Desegregation can only be a beneficial force in the absence of negative depiction, criminalisation or unequal treatment of any one group.

Authors' Contributions

This article is the outcome of a collaborative effort of all four authors. All four authors reviewed the final manuscript.

Notes

- i. Published under a Creative Commons Attribution Licence.
- ii. DATES: Received: 15 January 2019; Revised: 5 September 2019; Accepted: 17 December 2019; Published: 31 December 2020.

References

- Adeyemi MB & Adeyinka AA 2003. The principles and content of African traditional education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 35(4):425–440. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-5812.00039>
- Allport GW 1954. *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Anderson EA 2007. 'They are the priests': The role of the Moldovan historian and its implications for civic education. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 37(3):277–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920701330156>
- Andresen E & Van der Walt JL 2018. The impact of neoliberal employment trends on TVET in England. In M Carmo (ed). *Education applications and developments III*. Lisbon, Portugal: World Institute for Advanced Research and Science.
- Botha A, Joubert I & Hugo A 2016. Children's perceptions of democratic values: Implications for democratic citizen education. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 6(1):a343. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v6i1.343>
- Brown G, Langer A & Stewart F 2011. *A typology of post-conflict environments* (CRPD Working Paper No. 1). Leuven, Belgium: Centre for Research on Peace and Democracy, University of Leuven. Available at <https://soc.kuleuven.be/crpd/files/working-papers/wp01.pdf>. Accessed 25 September 2020.
- Calland R 2019. Ramaphosa saves the ANC's bacon. But this could be its last chance. *City Press*, 11 May. Available at <https://citypress.news24.com/News/ramaphosa-saves-the-ancs-bacon-but-this-could-be-its-last-chance-20190511-2>. Accessed 19 September 2019.
- Carras C 2001. Preface. In C Koulouri (ed). *Teaching the history of Southeastern Europe*. Thessaloniki, Greece: Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe.
- Chang H, Pak SY & Sleeter C 2018. Multicultural education: Using our past to build our future. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 20(1):1–4.
- Chapman CS 2017. Commentary: Interpretive methodological expertise and editorial board composition. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 51:47–51.
- Cherry M 2011. Education and training need the involvement of all levels of government. *South African Journal of Science*, 107(7/8):Art. #850, 1

- page. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajs.v107i7/8.850>
- Davids N & Waghid Y 2017. *Tolerance and dissent within education: On cultivating debate and understanding*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58109-5>
- De Botton A 2012. *Religion for atheists: A non-believer's guide to the uses of religion*. London, England: Hamish Hamilton.
- Department of Education, Republic of South Africa 2001. *Manifesto on values, education and democracy*. Pretoria: Author. Available at https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/manifesto0.pdf. Accessed 12 December 2018.
- Du Preez M 2013. *A rumour of spring: South Africa after 20 years of democracy*. Cape Town, South Africa: Zebra Press.
- Du Preez P 2014. Reconciliation through dialogical nostalgia in post-conflict societies: A curriculum to intersect. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 44(1):117–135.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2013.859875>
- Ethics Institute of South Africa 2017. *South African Citizen's Bribery Survey 2017*. Available at <http://www.tei.org.za/>. Accessed 17 September 2019.
- Finkel SE 2014. The impact of adult civic education programmes in developing democracies [Special issue]. *Public Administration and Development*, 34(3):169–181. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1678>
- Forestier K & Crossley M 2015. International education policy transfer – borrowing both ways: The Hong Kong and England experience. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 45(5):664–685.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2014.928508>
- Freedman SW, Weinstein HM, Murphy K & Longman T 2008. Teaching history after identity-based conflicts: The Rwanda experience. *Comparative Education Review*, 52(4):663–690.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/591302>
- Gilligan C 1982. *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Grayling AC 2002. *The meaning of things: Applying philosophy to life*. London, England: Phoenix.
- Grayling AC 2018. *Democracy and its crisis*. London, England: Penguin Books.
- Haddadi A, Hosseini A, Johansen A & Olsson N 2017. Pursuing value creation in construction by research – A study of applied research methodologies. *Procedia Computer Science*, 121:1080–1087.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2017.11.138>
- Hoskins B, Janmaat JG & Melis G 2017. Tackling inequalities in political socialisation: A systematic analysis of access to and mitigation effects of learning citizenship at school. *Social Science Research*, 68:88–101.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2017.09.001>
- Hromadžić A 2008. Discourses of integration and practices of reunification at the Mostar Gymnasium, Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Comparative Education Review*, 52(4):541–563.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/591297>
- Janmaat JG 2007. The ethnic 'other' in Ukrainian history textbooks: The case of Russia and the Russians. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education*, 37(3):307–324.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920701330180>
- Kearney J 2011. A unified Rwanda? Ethnicity, history and reconciliation in the *Ingando* peace and solidarity camp. In J Paulson (ed). *Education and reconciliation: Exploring conflict and post-conflict situations*. London, England: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Kim JH & So K 2018. Understanding the "other": Rethinking multiculturalism in South Korea through Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 20(1):102–117.
<https://doi.org/10.18251/ijme.v20i1.1509>
- King JT 2005. A difficult dialogue: Educating citizens in a divided society. PhD dissertation. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.
- Koonce JB 2018. Critical race theory and caring as channels for transcending borders between an African-American professor and her Latina/o students. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 20(2):101–116.
<https://doi.org/10.18251/ijme.v20i2.1432>
- Koren S 2001. Minorities in Croatian history and geography textbooks. *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*, 23(2):183–199.
- Koulouri C 2001. Introduction: The tyranny of history. In C Koulouri (ed). *Teaching the history of Southeastern Europe*. Thessaloniki, Greece: Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe.
- Koutselini M & Papanastasiou C 1997. Civic education in Cyprus — issues in focus: A curriculum research study. *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education*, 2(3):113–129.
<https://doi.org/10.2304/2Fcsee.1997.2.3.113>
- Li YC 2017. International education comparison: An intellectual tradition and its contemporary considerations. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 38(6):955–963.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2016.1187873>
- Masote SE 2016. Teachers' understanding and implementation of values education in the foundation phase. PhD thesis. Pretoria, South Africa: University of Pretoria. Available at https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/60957/Masote_Teachers_2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y. Accessed 12 August 2020.
- McGlynn C 2007. Rhetoric and reality: Are integrated schools in Northern Ireland really making a difference? *Irish Educational Studies*, 26(3):271–287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03323310701491547>
- Metz T 2018. An African theory of the point of higher education: Communion as an alternative to autonomy, truth, and citizenship. In A Stoller & E Kramer (eds). *Toward a philosophy of higher education: Contemporary philosophical proposals for the university*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72128-6>
- Mullis IVS, Martin MO, Foy P & Drucker KT 2012. *PIRLS 2011 international results in reading*. Chestnut Hill, MA: TIMMS & PIRLS International Study Center, Lynch School of Education, Boston

- College. Available at https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/pirls2011/downloads/P11_IR_FullBook.pdf. Accessed 6 October 2020.
- Mundy K & Read R 2017. Education for all: Comparative sociology of schooling in Africa and beyond. In K Bickmore, R Hayhoe, C Manion, K Mundy & R Read (eds). *Comparative and international education: Issues for teachers* (2nd ed). Toronto, Canada: Canadian Scholars.
- Neundorf A, Niemi RG & Smets K 2016. The compensation effect of civic education on political engagement: How civics classes make up for missing parental socialization. *Political Behavior*, 38:921–949. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-016-9341-0>
- Noddings N 1984. *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Noddings N 2003. *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education* (2nd ed). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Nussbaum MC 1998. *Cultivating humanity: A classical defense of reform in liberal education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Packard MD 2017. Where did interpretivism go in the theory of entrepreneurship? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 32(5):536–549. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2017.05.004>
- Patel E 2019. *Trade and Industry and Economic Development Department: Budget vote speech 2019/20*. Available at <https://www.thedti.gov.za/editspeeches.jsp?id=5913>. Accessed 16 September 2019.
- Paulsen AG 2014. “This is Kosova”: Segregation and dialogue through education in Kosovo. Master’s thesis in Peace and Conflict Transformation. Tromsø, Norway: The University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway. Available at <https://munin.uit.no/bitstream/handle/10037/6789/thesis.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>. Accessed 7 October 2020.
- Pauw J 2017. *The president’s keepers: Those keeping Zuma in power and out of prison*. Cape Town, South Africa: NB.
- Pingel F 1999. *UNESCO guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision*. Hannover, Germany: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung.
- Plut D, Pesikan-Avramovic A & Pesic J 2002. What is democracy in textbooks? In H Daun, P Enslin, L Kolouh-Westin & D Plut (eds). *Democracy in textbooks and student minds: Educational transitions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, Mozambique, and South Africa*. New York, NY: Nova Science.
- Potgieter FJ 2015. Beyond tolerance: Educating for religious respect and hospitality in pedagogic-multilogical sanctuaries. In N Popov, C Wolhuter, K Skubic Ermenc, G Hilton, J Ogunleye & E Niemczyk (eds). *BCES Conference Books: Quality, social justice and accountability in education worldwide* (Vol. 13, No. 1). Sofia, Bulgaria: BCES. Available at <https://bces-conference.org/onewebmedia/BCES.Conference.Books.Vol.13.2015.No.1.pdf>. Accessed 8 October 2020.
- Potgieter FJ 2016. “Teach your children well”: Arguing in favor of pedagogically justifiable hospitality education. In N Popov, C Wolhuter, J Kalin, G Hilton, J Ogunleye & E Niemczyk (eds). *BCES Conference Books. Education provision to every one: Comparing perspectives from around the world* (Vol. 14, No. 1). Sofia, Bulgaria: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society. Available at <https://bces-conference-books.org/onewebmedia/BCES.Conference.Book.2016.Vol.14.No.1.full.text.pdf>. Accessed 8 October 2020.
- Potgieter FJ, Van der Walt JL & Wolhuter CC 2014. Towards understanding (religious) (in)tolerance in education. *HTS Theological Studies*, 70(3):Art. # 1977, 8 pages. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i3.1977>
- Quaynor LJ 2012. Citizenship education in post-conflict contexts: A review of the literature. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 7(1):33–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1746197911432593>
- Solomons I & Fataar A 2011. A conceptual exploration of values education in the context of schooling in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 31(2):224–232. <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v31n2a482>
- Strauss DFM 2009. Social space: Philosophical reflections. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 23(4):762–794. Available at https://journals.co.za/docserver/fulltext/high/23/4/high_v23_n4_a9.pdf?expires=1593366784&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=D8EF134F9B0C8A303DACA220AB592421. Accessed 28 June 2020.
- Tobin K 2010. Civic education in emerging democracies: Lessons from post-Communist Poland and Romania. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 9(3):273–288. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1475240910382996>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2014. *Global citizenship education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the 21st century*. Paris, France: Author. Available at <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227729>. Accessed 8 October 2020.
- Van Crombrugge H 2006. *Denken over opvoeding: Inleiding in de pedagogiek* [Thinking about education: Introduction to pedagogy]. Antwerpen, Belgium: Garant.
- Van der Walt BJ 2003. Morality in Africa: Yesterday and today. The reasons for the contemporary crisis. *In die Skriflig*, 37(1):51–71.
- Van der Walt H 2017d. Vergifnisonderwys: Is dit (voor-)teoreties toereikend begrond? *LitNet Akademies*, 14(3):641–660. Beskikbaar te <http://www.litnet.co.za/vergifnisonderwys-dit-voorteoreties-toereikend-begrond/>. Geraadpleeg 12 Desember 2018.
- Van der Walt JL 2017a. Some recent responses to neoliberalism and its views on education. *HTS Theological Studies*, 73(3):a4493. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i3.4493>
- Van der Walt JL 2017b. *The neoliberal revolution in education: Three instruments for diagnosing and addressing the problem*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Education and New Developments, Lisbon, Portugal, 24–26 June.
- Van der Walt JL 2017c. Vergifnisonderwys: Die sleutel tot die ontlooiing van ongelukkigheid oor sosiale

- onreg. In *Die Skriflig*, 51(1):a2256.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v51i1.2265>
- Van der Walt JL 2018. The birth of a “new” theory of education and its application in comparative education. In N Popov, C Wolluter, JM Smith, G Hilton, J Ogunleye, E Achinewhu-Nworgu & E Niemczyk (eds). *Education in modern society* (Vol. 16). Sofia, Bulgaria: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society. Available at <https://bces-conference-books.org/onewebmedia/BCES.Conference.Book.2018.Vol.16.Full.Text.pdf>. Accessed 8 October 2020.
- Van Goor R, Heyting F & Vreeke GJ 2004. Beyond foundations: Signs of a new normativity in philosophy of education. *Educational Theory*, 54(2):173–192. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.2004.00013.x>
- Van Huyssteen JW 2006. *Alone in the world? Human uniqueness in science and theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Verburg ME 2015. *Herman Dooyeweerd: The life and work of a Christian philosopher*. Jordan Station, Canada: Paideia Press.
- Waghid Y 2019. *Towards a philosophy of caring in higher education: Pedagogy and nuances of care*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03961-5>
- Waghid Y & Davids N (eds.) 2018. *African democratic citizenship education revisited*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-67861-0>
- Waghid Y, Waghid F & Waghid Z 2018. *Rupturing African philosophy on teaching and learning: Ubuntu justice and education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Weinstein HM, Freedman SW & Hughson H 2007. School voices: Challenges facing education systems after identity-based conflicts. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 2(1):41–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1746197907072128>