Southern African Reflections on Social Work and Social Justice

Otrude N. Moyo (Editor); Lauren Rose Caldie; Otrude N. Moyo; Zandile P. Nkabinde; Vuyelwa Langelihle Sibindi; Martin Moyo; Nenekazi Melody Gxashe; Thandi S. Tshabangu-Soko

Abstract: This is the Special Section on Southern African Reflections on Social Work and Social Justice, comprised of an introduction by the editor, Otrude N. Moyo, a photo essay by Lauren Rose Caldie, and six other articles, which are grouped here in one downloadable special section containing all of the materials.

Keywords: Southern Africa, Ubuntu, Prefectship system, role of education, autocracy

Editor's Introduction: True learning is Unlearning

Otrude N. Moyo

This special section consists of seven articles. In these articles the authors share their journeys to unlearning those aspects in their socialization into their professional lives that have been part of the exclusionary political economies of imperialism, colonialism, apartheid and neo-colonialism in southern Africa. These journeys are not easy nor are they straightforward. Indeed, knowledge of reconstruction and restoration is complicated and convoluted. It dabbles into what is perceived as "right" in improving quality of life, which may be contradictory with the actual reality of experience and/or what we desire to be "right" for the communities we work with. In these circumstances, clearly there are complications and contradictions. Indeed the articles in this special section are self-conscious and self-critical focusing at times on shortcomings of the way we work as exemplified by the article on Schooling in Capitalist Autocracy in Zimbabwe. However, the paramount purpose of these reflections is motivated by a strong desire to stop repeating the same old narratives presented as new experiences in social development.

Ferguson in his Anti-Politics Machine reminds us about the irony of "development" especially in the global south where "development" has succeeded in reproducing a controlling, repressive, self-serving bureaucratic structure that is anti-politics. In this vein, the articles in this special section consider the ironies of development – where the desire for progress means adopting and adapting, instead of unlearning things that are not serving human well-being. Social development is an even more convoluted social construct with diverse meanings. Emanating from the dissatisfaction with economic growth led efforts in improvement of quality of life. This concept too has its shortcomings (but that is a paper on its own). The important point about these articles is their attempt at deconstructing decolonization of development, highlighting that true learning is unlearning. Leaning to unravel the inner landscapes of the political economic systems that sculpt inequalities and oppressions.

The articles in this special issue are about authors attempting to de-program their lives as social workers, social development workers, educators, and our work in that purpose to improve the quality of life for all. Our journey is a process of removal of that which does not serve us in improving quality of life for all. Social development as an approach to improving quality of life is multidisciplinary, meaning it draws from diverse disciplines all giving their own perspective. It is also interdisciplinary meaning that those who purport to be engaged in social development should be able to understand and engage social issues (from social science; humanities approach and natural sciences). Hence, these articles offer a journey to unlearn colonization and learn that within indigenous practices, all social phenomena is interwoven. Again, the major theme running throughout the articles is that true learning is unlearning. In this respect, the articles are a journey of rising above victimhood, suffering and inhumane experiences of history, in order to pave new understandings and practices. This journey is only beginning for the authors here, therefore this is an invitation to engage in this complicated pathway to social justice with a commitment to unlearn those practices that don't serve us fully in the affirmation of human dignity for all. As outlined above, this special section draws from different educational backgrounds and personal

experiences in social development, from education, to agriculture, human service work, social development and international research/community work.

The special section begins with a photo essay complied by a co-researcher on Ubuntu: Lauren Rose Caldie.

Next, I then offer a dialogical dimension of Ubuntu as an African epistemology, guiding the ongoing search and personal journey towards decolonization. In the second article, I highlight the incongruencies in my personal and professional life that have led to the founding of Ubuntu Arts – a youth project that uses art based civic dialogue and community building initiatives through Ubuntu cultural explorations. I see Ubuntu Arts as part of community learning to unlearn, and a beginning to re-write, re-frame and re-right indigenous knowledge, a critical initiative in the narration of Ubuntu in community. Youth and adults who participate in the project engage in story telling about Ubuntu to build knowledge about the concept and encourage Ubuntu in practice, hopefully undoing the current incongruencies between school and home, in terms of cultural orientation.

The third article by Dr. Nkabinde explores the educational changes in South Africa twenty-one years after the end of apartheid. This article examines progress that has been made as well as highlights some of the lingering pitfalls with regards to marked differences in state funding, affecting the overall quality of education. In addition, the article engages the goal of education, curriculum, funding, and educational opportunities based on new policies of inclusion, social justice and equity.

Still on education, the fourth article coauthored with Ms. Vuyelwa Sibindi takes a personal look at the "prefect systems" as part of a relic of colonial experience, and argues that the prefect system in Zimbabwe only serves to propagate in-egalitarian practices, and serves well the autocratic rule that stifles respect for human dignity of all.

Looking at agriculture economics as part of social development in Zimbabwe, Dr. Martin Moyo begins his article Development of Agriculture or Is it Underdevelopment? Advocacy for a Return to Small is Beautiful in Agriculture in Zimbabwe by highlighting the predominance of the share of agriculture to the Zimbabwean economy and argues that given this reality and extensive factor markets problems (i.e. lack of capital, inputs) these two factors (factor markets and share of agriculture) intersect to give an inverse relationship to agricultural output that makes large scale farming less lucrative. This article provides an unlearning of growth led agricultural policies to begin an appreciation of "small is beautiful" as the mainstay of Zimbabwe's agricultural sector.

Ms. Nenekazi Melody Gxashe provides a personal experience of her work as a social auxiliary worker with the Department of Social Development in South Africa. She highlights a personal journey to the opportunities of this position, her current role and her mission to cultivate a social work profession that considers historical and cultural context.

Article seven is by Ms. Thandi S. Tshabangu-Soko, reflecting on the provision of services and benefits, and the struggles for social justice in Zimbabwe. Ms. Tshabangu-Soko brings experience of social service provisioning from both Zimbabwe and South Africa.

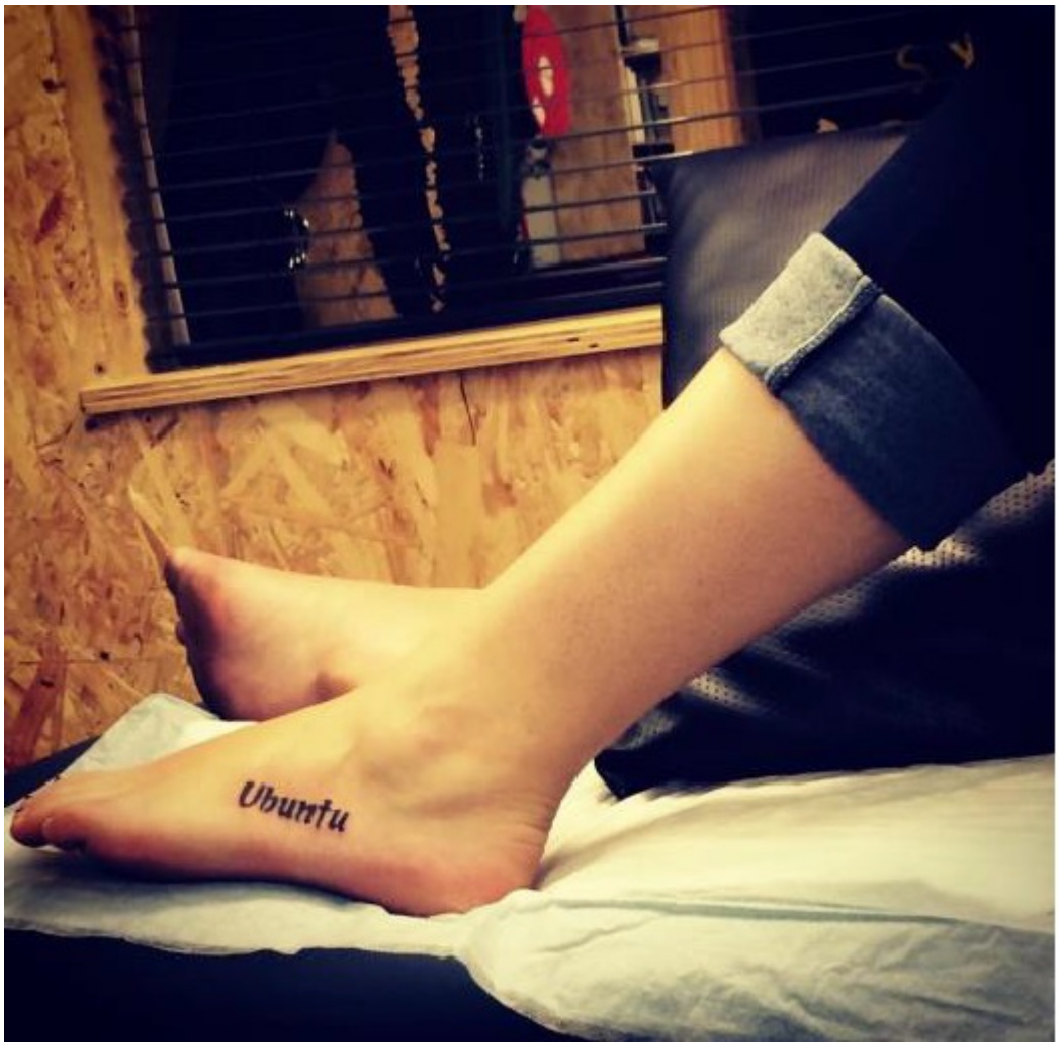
About the Editor: Otrude Nontobeko Moyo, Ph.D., is Chairperson in the Department of Social Work, University of Michigan Flint (moyoon@umflint.edu).

Ubuntu Art Project – Umunt' ngumunt' ngabantu

Lauren Rose Caldie (Compiled by Dr. Otrude Moyo)

Abstract: Lauren Rose Caldie uses narrative and photography to capture the essence of her experience with the Ubuntu Art Project. Contrasting her preconceived ideas of Africa and how the project unfolded for her. She describes how her impression of Africa and "Ubuntu" developed throughout the journey. The Ubuntu Art Project, a two week summer multigenerational gathering in Fort Beaufort, was facilitated by Dr. Otrude Moyo and several of her students. Ms. Caldie describes the many 'contradictions' prevalent in South Africa – the beautiful rainbow of races of people juxtaposed with the segregation that still exists. She notes how the spirit of Ubuntu, one that emphasizes harmony, love for one's fellow man and peace, contrasts deeply with the painful history of apartheid in South Africa. Yet, she highlights how the spirit of Ubuntu might be the way for healing the remaining scars of South Africa's past.

The photographs displayed at various places within this issue are a glimpse at the vast collection of pictures we have amassed during the Ubuntu Research and Art Project, in Fort Beaufort and Healdtown Communities in Eastern Cape, since 2011.

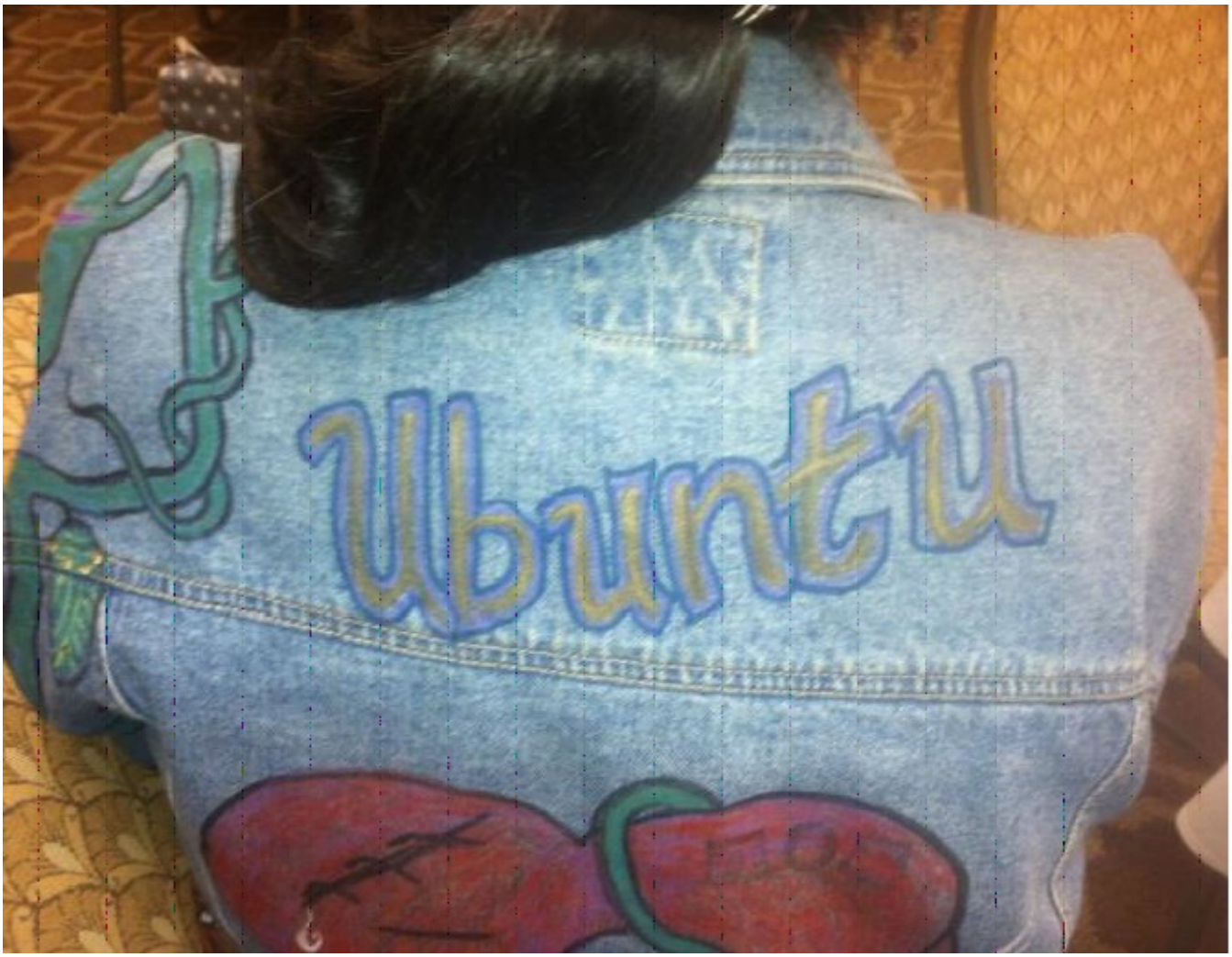


These pictures we hope tell a story of a commitment to learning together about Ubuntu. The photo essay is based on a reflective learning journey by one the student researcher's on this project, Lauren Rose Caldie.

Dr. Moyo first began Ubuntu project as a research study to explore perspectives of Ubuntu in private and public lives of people in Eastern Cape. The research project evolved into Ubuntu Arts & Dialogues in Diversity project. Ubuntu Arts is a two-week multigenerational gathering, which was founded to support civic dialogue and community building initiatives through Ubuntu cultural explorations in Fort Beaufort and Healdtown communities, Eastern Cape South Africa. The initiative uses

dialogues in diversity and art based initiatives to facilitate community building. Ubuntu Arts has been a partnership between social work students from the US and residents of Healdtown community, using Healdtown Comprehensive School as the project site.

My view of South Africa before I went could be best described as foggy. I had silly misconceptions about the wildlife where lions and elephants roamed the dirt roads in the villages, that there were big purple mountains constantly in the distance and grassland fields surrounding it. This isn't to say that I didn't see elephants (protected in national parks) and that the grassland wasn't vast, but I was missing the point, I was missing what gives South Africa its heart, its people.

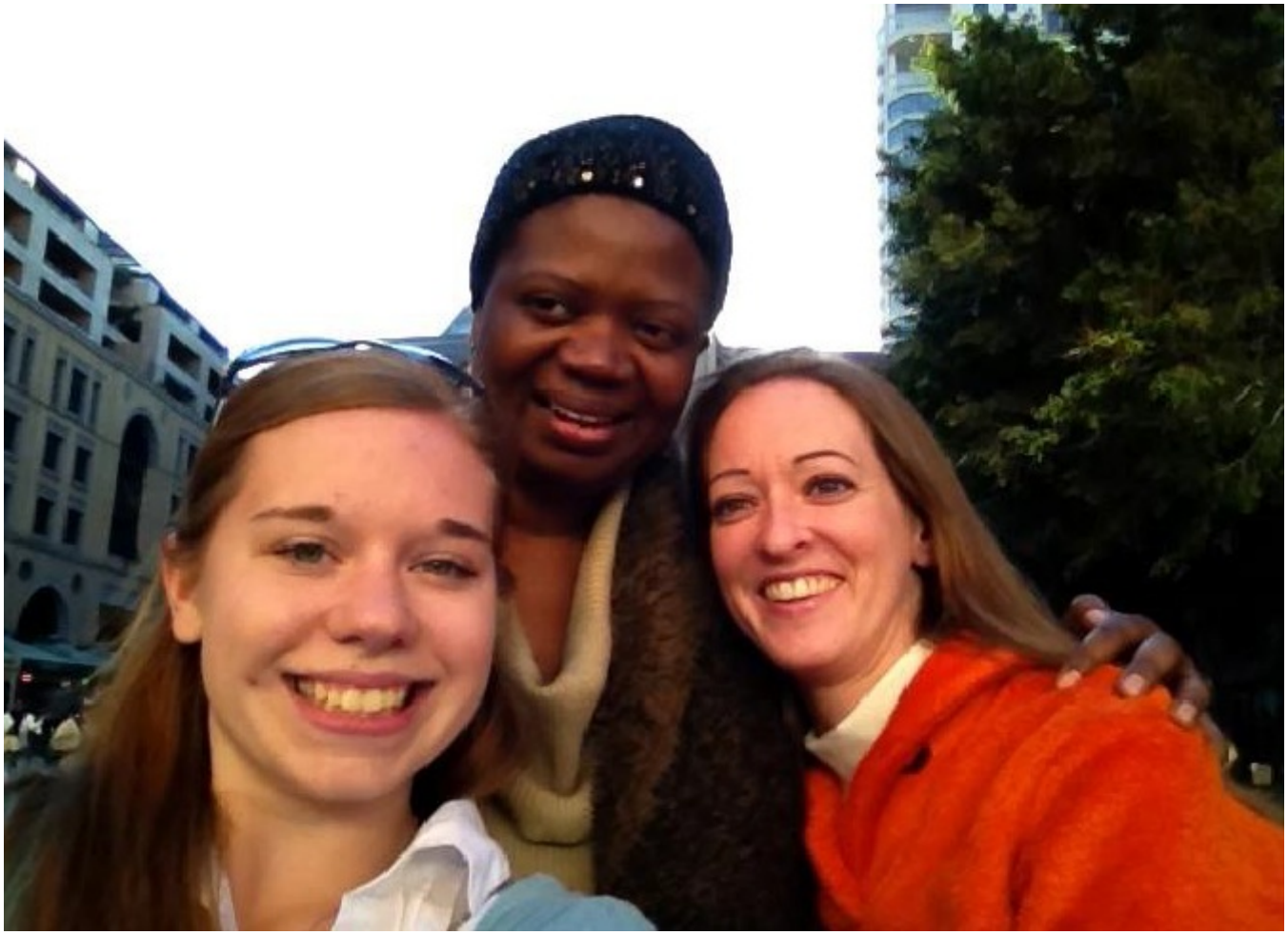


Learning about South Africa from our pre-trip preparations I knew there was a lot of diversity within its peoples, but I did not comprehend how much. I pictured the town made up of four peoples: Native South Africans, Europeans, Indians, Coloreds and other people of color. (Wow, that was hard to write, I am so ashamed to admit that.) When I got there, I found out that although those were the groups apartheid tried to force upon South Africans, a diverse population can not be neatly split up based upon physical appearances. The South Africa that is starting to be embraced today is that of a "Rainbow Nation" where everyone does not neatly fit into one category or another. In fact, it seemed that most people in South Africa do not fit into these groups as South Africa felt like an amalgam of cultures and trans-racial love (we saw many children who seemed that they could be the result of multiracial couples, but we did not see the actual couples) have been just a few of the factors

making the nation more diverse. The sad irony of this was that many groups making up the areas we visited were much more segregated than I had imagined, even when the marginalized groups were in the majority.
I'd be wrong to say I didn't wonder about the people before going, but I had no idea how big of an impact they would have on me. I had thought that we would travel to place A, B, and C, interview a bunch of people, and go home, but I was very wrong! Interviews took not only time, but also special care to get speakers to know and trust us, which was very important. I was naïve in that I thought that people there would not want to learn about me as much as I wanted to learn about them. We spent quality time and learned much about each other, and I am very grateful for that.

What I have learned from South Africa is one of the hardest things to explain. I've learned that Ubuntu is a way of living, not just a philosophy or an ideal. It's real, tangible, and will only live on through the practices of it. Documents, movies or papers may describe it, but one will not be able to understand it until one has both experienced it and lived it. It is within the human spirit, something that drives our humanity, maybe not quite humanity itself, but the action of living out one's belief in humanity. Ubuntu drives what leads us to care for one another better than ourselves.

We were well cared for in South Africa, welcomed into many homes and cared for as if family. From the first night on, we were treated as long lost sisters, who had much catching up to do. I do not think that I would have learned as much about Ubuntu and myself had we not been welcomed and able to get true glimpses of day-to-day life.



If you ask me about what I remember, I will go on and on about how great it truly was, but that does not mean that I was oblivious to the pain around me. South Africa is a place of contradictions to me, of incredible beauty and heart, yet not without its stories of strife that are carried around in the eyes of so many. I wish we could hear more stories, the sweet and the bitter. Even when I could not understand the Xhosa language, I saw the stories as they were being played out in others' eyes.

If I close my eyes, I can see their faces, and hear their voices. The soundtrack of South Africa is bittersweet. The voices like the gentle trill of Auntie, combined with the bouncing rift of the morning doves, the chords of the church choir, the "hooting" of horns on the streets, the rare snippets of traditional music and the waves crashing on the beach, all play on repeat in my mind. When you ask me, "How was South Africa?" I will sigh and take a deep breath, remembering the little things that made it so special. We really did have an amazing time learning so much in such little time. I'm sure everyone there would teach us so much more if we came back.

"Oh, so what were you studying?" The simple answer to that question is Ubuntu, but to explain Ubuntu is like trying to explain love, for South Africans tended to hold it in their heart and have a hard time describing it themselves. It can be described, but it must be experienced as well. The word itself made me want to learn Xhosa in order to grasp a better understanding of where it came from. Reminded that Ubuntu does not necessarily speak English, or does it? To experience Ubuntu, one experiences a togetherness rooted in understanding, care, and concern for everyone, including complete strangers. In these concepts, South Africa is rich.

There was a fullness when we were in the smaller communities within Fort Beaufort that I couldn't describe, a sense that although we were travelers, we were welcome and safe there. As much as some folks (a very small

minority) tried to warn us of the dangers, there was nothing to be frightened about, really. Why do the residents build great walls and some pay for high-tech security systems? Some of the places we felt the safest, like at Auntie's small, cinder block house, had barbed-wire fences that could easily be penetrated, but they were respected. If you have love and show Ubuntu to your neighbors, why do you need to keep your neighbors out? At the core of Ubuntu is to love humanity, love your neighbor, so why then not trust your neighbor? Walls only keep you in, keep you from experiencing the world outside.

The walls at the B&B where we stayed felt safe at first, but quickly became eerie. I remember the children would play football (soccer) just down the road from the B&B, in the torn-up road and in the dirt around it. I would only catch a glimpse of them on our way out or in from our flat, but I wondered what their community would look like without walls. If we hadn't any walls around the Bed and Breakfast, would they have been able to play in the giant green lawn of the B&B's compound or would they still be seen as trespassers in their own land?

The history of South Africa is enough for anyone to understand that there are still visible walls as well as invisible ones there. There is the explanation to the great contradiction, how one can build huge walls, and still practice Ubuntu. The history should not be seen as the "excuse" of why South Africa is still divided, but it gives us the chance to realize how extremely deep South Africa's wounds are. Colonialism and apartheid gave South Africa its wounds, and capitalism, free-markets – call it whatever you wish – have been conducive to these barriers. It seems that the only way to healing is not through the short-lived Truth and Reconciliation hearings, but through learning of what Ubuntu means and how it can bring humanity back together.

Note from the Editor of Reflections: Dr. Otrude Nontobeko Moyo is on the right in the photo above.

Apartheid was about as contradictory to Ubuntu as anything could be. The xenophobic lacing of Africans by South Africans is a crime to humanity. While one philosophy taught fear and superiority, another is teaching acceptance and humility. How did Ubuntu survive then, during the forcing of conformity to take on apartheid or be punished? As "born-frees", Generation Mandela has now come of age; are their philosophies that of their ancestors who believed in and re-constructed Ubuntu, apartheid, individualism, socialism, capitalism, or combinations? Ubuntu does not encourage the separation of any peoples; it welcomes them in, as we were welcomed. Ubuntu surpasses the walls and separations between us. Older than the walls of South Africa, it is a remainder of the humanity in all of us, to work harder to be more inclusive societies, and encourages the potentiality to become more humane.

About the Author: Lauren Rose Caldie, BSW, Community Social Worker at Keystone Community Services, St. Paul, Minnesota (715-456-4331; lrnsosecld@gmail.com).

Navigating my journey towards learning Ubuntu-A way of decolonizing myself

Otrude N. Moyo

Abstract: Growing up within a traditional Ubuntu home and attending European schools during the day leaves one with the sense of living in two worlds. Professor Moyo describes this "double consciousness" she experienced while growing up in her native home, where her family life revolved around Ubuntu values and perspectives, but her schooling was based on European ideologies. Ubuntu was predominantly practice in earlier African communities, where the focus was on the functioning of the collective versus the individual. Ubuntu values emphasize interdependence with others, the wellbeing of the whole collective or family, and cooperation versus competition. Western ideas such as individualization, competition, and capitalism have changed the socialization of today's modern African youth. This narrative is a call to incorporate the spirit of Ubuntu with modern society and preserve its practices as it offers rich history for Africans and African cultural identity.

Keywords: Southern Africa, Ubuntu, autocracy, double consciousness

My youth was spent in environments that were sculpted legally, socially, politically, economically, psychologically by racialization, and in turn white supremacy, education and liberation have meant a reassertion in education of those perspectives that I deem represent me, in this case Ubuntu. As an African woman, my socialization is characterized by W. E. B. Du Bois's double consciousness, describing not only the psychological but political and social challenges of Africanity in a world defined by dominance of Eurocentrism. As an African woman, I have had the presence of those two-souls that are not quite reconciled. For example, throughout my schooling there has been incongruence between my school and home socialization. At home, I was socialized into perspectives, values, virtues of Ubuntu – for example, how one greets those that live together on a day-to-day basis, those that live apart, those who have departed and inviting them for guidance to help us live peacefully with our selves and strive for that common good Ubuntu as a philosophy of life is relational, there are no ready made moral decisions, there are only consultative relationships that guide the ethical decision making, which in turn is guided by experience and continued dialogue where change is continually experienced as transformative. However, in my western, Eurocentric schooling Ubuntu was discarded, and its existence relegated to antiquity. As such, the incongruence of my life at home and my experience of schooling without Ubuntu brought a lot of turbulence in my mind and spirit. I realized at a tender age that I had to complete "their" schooling and begin to educate myself about Ubuntu as indigenous knowledge.

My journey to consider Ubuntu is exemplified in Kate Rushin's poem, "The Bridge Poem," where she calls all of us to be our own Bridges, the bridges to our own education and self-acceptance. As such, at a young age I lived Du Bois double consciousness, that I had to complete "their" western schooling. Thereafter, I could begin my own education. If I could begin to be the bridge to my own liberation, then perhaps I could be useful! After completing my doctoral studies, the pathway to my education has been to unlearn the knowledge, values and

practices that do not serve the well-being of all. Specifically, it has been to learn Ubuntu.

The urgency of my research on Ubuntu is driven by the unsettling observation that even today, young people in southern Africa are not offered a space to understand their own cultural practices/identities, let alone offer a diversity of perspectives about organizing society for that common good. In this regard, the incongruence of my western schooling and the lived experience of my education, I have hungered to decolonize myself – by returning self to the cultural practices that are indigenous to me. I feel strongly that it should not take young people in southern Africa and/or else in the world, adulthood, like it did me, to complete their schooling before they can get an education about their heritage! It is in the spirit of cultivating an education of Ubuntu that I write this reflection. Let us consider what Ubuntu means to me.

What is Ubuntu?

Ubuntu is the worldview, value system, philosophy of life, and an old tradition in southern African societies. Ubuntu is the philosophy of life most recognized in southern Africa, familiarized within the Nguni aphorism "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu"- "a person is a person through the humanity of others." Ubuntu links individuality – the essence of "one's being" to the humanity of others, to a collectivity that is interdependent. Ubuntu is grounded in relationships, a communitarian ethics where individuality and collectivity are symbiotic. It does not end here, but symbiotic connections of Ubuntu extend to spirituality, to connections with the natural and physical world; plant life and animal world. Now, decolonization means to me that after centuries of experiences of colonization, expropriations of imperialism, racism, exploitations and all sorts of oppressions, we must recall and return to Ubuntu as foundational for our contemporary ways of life, education and knowledge building. Indeed, the systemic, cultural, interpersonal experiences of exploitation and domination have placed difficult demands on reconstructing and living Ubuntu, but this means a greater urgency to explore our versions of decolonization, visions of justice and comprehensively honor our differences. Specifically, we must examine the ways of our international engagements to determine whether we are continuing to promote assimilationist visions, or mutual learning, cultural creativity and integrity.

Ubuntu has been part of my life as long as I remember. In my everyday socialization, I remember my father's folklore wisdom about cautionary tales (insumasumane/izinganegwane), of hardworking ants banding together to conquer elephants; of the clever hare tricking crocodiles to line up from one river bank to the other for a count foiled in getting the hare to the other side of the bank.

These folklore/cautionary tales were about relationships that were rich in Ubuntu and those that were empty. In my young life Ubuntu was like the air we breathe, taken for granted as if it always be available. Growing-up, I began to notice how Ubuntu was cultivated in day-to-day simple things. For instance, in everyday greetings, acknowledging and affirming the presence of each other's existence, "siyabonana", meaning, "I am seeing you, I am meeting you!" In our hurried lives this profound humane acknowledgment of a fellow human being; in a greeting that has evolved to simple "sawubona." These changes have been of interest to my scholarship, as a way to re-right the African indigenous heritage as a source of figuring out improvement of quality of life.

Besides the incongruence of my western education and my lived experiences, my journey to explore Ubuntu is connected to my diasporic life. In my family history, it used to be my grandfather went to work at Wenela to be able to pay the "hut tax," head tax and related taxes related to living as an African in Western-sculpted spaces. In order to pay for his very existence, he had to work in gold mines of South Africa. Growing up, I did not even realize that Wenela was not a place but an agency. I used to think it was a physical place. The real Wenela was the Witwatersrand Native Labor Association (WNLA), a recruiting agency for migrant workers across southern Africa, popularized as WENELA! Instead of going to Wenela, now I have to straddle southern African and United States just to provide the basic necessities, where local economies have changed to be outward looking towards those places where capital is concentrated. My straddling has become more intentional rather than accidental. Coming from the margins, I have never been quite comfortable with the status quo. So, my educational desire has

been to broaden my students' perspectives by introducing indigenous worldviews and values and begin conversations about what the world would look like if we were to consider Ubuntu as the worldview structuring how we relate to each other, our perspectives, values, our institutions, societal organizations, etc.

As an African from southern Africa working in the United States I keep asking myself: Do people of southern Africa want freedom and development that would continue to disconnect them from their cultural frameworks and their identities? Did they want a way of life that would continue to subjugate their own identities as Africans of various ethnic groups, ways of doing things – as the late musician Busi Mhlongo states: "Kade sithath 'imikhuba yezinye izizwe siyenz 'eyethu" (it has been a long time that we have assumed and reproduced ways of "others" – how long will we continue to assume ways of life of other people to define our lives, our relationships?)

How it changed for me?

Du Bois's double-consciousness is perhaps a multi-consciousness of the world I live. As a public scholar, my purpose has been to problematize and unravel the existing worldviews and political economies of exclusion. I began teaching in 2001 at the height of neoliberal politics. The year 2001 is significant in my life because that was the same year – in August 31-September 08, 2001 – that the World Conference against global racism was held in Durban, South Africa. For me this conference marked significant interest in the world to examine global racism, specifically how racism and racial injustice impacts the social and economic relations of global, South Africans, and indigenous peoples of the world. I remember vividly and with disappointment how the United States and Canada walked out of this 2001 conference due to the presumed criticism of Israel's "racist practices" against Palestinians. Momentous for me as a student of society, the denial by the US and Canada to engage in global racism at this conference marked an affirmation for me to begin unlearning and undoing global racism in my encounters. By that refusal to engage the world in addressing global racism signified that the transnational political landscape was reconfiguring yet again to continue racism, oppressions and continued material inequalities, especially for the global south and for Africans. This conference had meaning for me to understand alternative discourses to global racism – particularly, questioning ourselves in social work and those engaged in social development: How do we engage relationships that cease to foster new forms of imperialism and oppressions?

Another incident that sparked my interest to consider dialogues about Ubuntu in Eastern Cape, was the derogatory names I kept hearing about myself. When I lived in Fort Beaufort I kept hearing local Xhosa people call me 'iKwerekwere' – a derogatory word for Africans from other parts of the continent. I emphasize this there are no derogatory terms for Whites/Europeans foreigners in South Africa; names that elevate whites, umlungu! Only Africans in South Africa are foreigners, never Whites! I had been called this derogatory name several times. But one day I turned around and said to the Xhosa person calling me 'iKwerekwere' – and said in Xhosa "ikwerekwere ngunyoko" meaning, "ikwerekwere its your mother!" It puzzled my Xhosa neighbors. How come I spoke their language? For me this name-calling had to stop, not only because of its implicit denigration and disrespect that lead to tragic xenophobia, but I also realized that my Xhosa neighbors in their own socialization had been denied a dialogue about southern African history. Indeed southern African history from the African experience had eclipsed Abantu! Recently, to continue the ethnic divide, the President of Zimbabwe, Mugabe, participating in ethnic hatred in Zimbabwe, called people who are Kalanga, from Matabeleland living in South Africa, "uneducated" and "criminals." The reader may notice, the politicization of ethnic relations in a different place. Zimbabweans who are Ndebele, Kalanga are presented as criminals (to be killed) and the Shona as hard working to be embraced! This is a political ploy to incite conflict, xenophobia and hatred. To me, this was a similar story line to the Gukurahundi killings of the Ndebele in the 1980s. These horrendous experiences have spurred my activism to teach anti-violence. I knew that I had to do something to enable the few young people I come into contact with to unlearn these hateful practices. I had to engage a different space for unlearning apartheid and structural violence that was playing in my interpersonal life- hence, dialogues in diversity through Ubuntu Arts became a seed and ,my activism in cultural community development.

My agency and plan of action at the personal level meant I had to work hard at findings ways of decolonizing of self – based on my experiences and the philosophy of life Ubuntu. The agency and activism about our "common good" has to be placed in our own hands. In 2001, I started my first job full teaching in social work. The area of my interest has been social welfare – meaning well-being in multicultural societies. When I started teaching, I desired a learning environment that would engage students in various worldviews in understanding the provision and assurance of quality of life, and problematize the United States example instead of universalizing it. As a student of society, I had a conviction that my version of decolonizing of self was going to be useful to generating different political spaces for emancipatory education founded in indigenous cultural worldview; in the knowledge and languages of Ubuntu. In my version of emancipatory education, Southern Africa's vision of good societies must be based on Ubuntu knowledge about the nature of humans, nature of society and justice. Our relationship with other humans and non-humans had to come from abantu. Yes, we could borrow from other cultural frames, but we must know and cultivate our own wisdom from our own experiences and knowledge. Many of us have never known who were are! As Razack (2002) puts it clearly for me, I desired to "unmap" a White Settler culture in me, using Linda Tuhiwai Smith's Decolonizing Methodologies to re-center, re-research, rewrite and re-right.

Throughout my ten years teaching in the United State's public universities, I had been trying to pave a different space for education – to use the questions of Manicorn & Walters (2013): How to design learning climates for engendering critical consciousness and deep dialogue? As I indicated above, ten years I had been trying to move my teaching of social welfare in ways that engage other cultural worldviews. The more I moved my teaching the more I needed teaching/learning materials about Ubuntu. As a matter of fact, I had gotten inpatient with my own teaching, particularly the lack of awareness about the African continent, especially within the field of social work. I began to push myself to consider opening up spaces for learning about southern Africa in my own teaching of social welfare and social policy, but there were very limited materials about Ubuntu as a worldview and its influence. I desired teaching materials that would offer discussions of lived experience of Ubuntu. Moreover, in today's world, where our histories and experiences continue to be sculpted in traditions/values that pursue high self-interest and personal ends, so that the collective is subjugated, "enspirited" leadership that considers the symbiotic interdependence of individuality and the collective – where I am because we are – could perhaps offer a different approach to pathways to social justice. Furthermore, in a world where continued economic and social problems persist, because of the prevailing strong pursuit of individualism and self-interest – there is a need to renew the commitment to that "common good," because it would happen by itself, and it has to be reconceptualized and reinvigorated. In 2011, I began my journey to my version of emancipatory education, hinging on mutual learning through collaborative dialogue, where learning is ubiquitous and perpetual, and specifically seeing the view that knowledge is something produced, not merely discovered (Manicorn & Walters, 2012).

The Context of Ubuntu Arts Project

Three years ago, I changed positions to teach at a public university that was keen to extend international perspectives to their student body as part of promoting high impact learning. My diasporic living enabled my interest to begin to utilize international study abroad as a way to explore transformative education with select undergraduate students from the United States, to dialogue with southern African students around the concept Ubuntu. I am working towards complete mutual exchange where students from southern Africa also travel to learn in the United States. As I write, a student, colleague in social development from the University of Fort Hare, has visited the University of Michigan -Flint as our intercultural guest. This is an important visit as it marks that mutual exchange instead of continued travels to the global south by those who are privileged in the global north. My travel to southern Africa with US students was not necessarily ignited by the "wander bug" but a commitment to open dialogue and learning to consider that which has been subjugated, Ubuntu. From the start, the "ethics of poverty tourism," as described by Selinger & Outterson (2009), and the accompanying "moral controversies about international travel by westerners to the global south and/or areas of material want," has been at the forefront of my work.

I had lived in the Eastern Cape of South Africa and had an affinity. I had personally talked to various principles and teachers about my interest to engage dialogues in diversity and learn about Ubuntu. When I moved to the US I followed my request with letters. I wrote to a couple of school principals in Eastern Cape, South Africa, requesting the use of their schools to be a research and community project site for engaging Ubuntu. The principal of one comprehensive high school responded to my request and invited me to use the school as the field site to draw participants to understand Ubuntu in private and public lives.

The research uses collaborative ethnography as a way to engage community in exploring perspectives of Ubuntu. I say collaborative ethnography to mean the deliberate and explicit collaboration at every point of the research process, conceptualization of the project, fieldwork and writing. Also, I use collaborative in the interview and the actual telling of the story of Ubuntu. Most importantly, how the avenue of gathering about Ubuntu and dialoging about Ubuntu could become a community's way of coming together to improve quality of life. On one hand I engage the community to explore Ubuntu, and on the other hand, I run a winter/summer camp for youths to dialogue about Ubuntu through the use of arts.

The project runs on a very shoestring budget using the school as the center, offering art materials, snacks for a five-hour, two-week arts gathering to any young, adult, child who is interested. My USA social work students become part of the dialogues in diversity and are part of the gathering

Before, going into "the field" I began to focus my teaching of social welfare to examine diverse cultural worldviews and the impact of these worldviews on the ideology that is used to foreground views about human nature, institutions, societal organization and way of life for varied societies. This was a way to facilitate a dialogue for my undergraduate students to begin to problematize the universalized individualism and its impact. From these courses, students self-selected to further engage in Ubuntu. I say self-selected because those students who expressed an interest to learn more about Ubuntu, became candidates to travel with me to South Africa.

Prior to traveling, I began collaborating with the undergraduate USA students who were interested in Ubuntu. As a mentor, I facilitated a space of learning about southern Africa through assigned readings, novels, documentaries and discussions. The discussions were informal, but a critical space for self- reflection, and allowed for personality dynamics to play out. The discussions engaged the moral controversies of "poverty tours" and tourist voyeurism of the African continent. These discussions not only facilitated the deconstruction of "Africa", but also facilitated a care for humanity. Before leaving the US, to travel to the Eastern Cape, I needed to be sure that my USA students and I cared deeply about the humanness of each other before pursuing our journey to engage communities in Bhofolo/Fort Beaufort. It was important to me that we build a collective sense of being and understanding of each other's strengths to contribute to the process of collaborative research with the community. As a mentor who was somewhat of an insider, meaning speaking the language and being familiar with the region, it was crucial for me to share the history of my experience living in Bhofolo, sharing conversational Xhosa and Ubuntu as a concept.

Our learning in South Africa began in Johannesburg before going to the field in Eastern Cape. We spent a couple of days visiting the historical sites in Johannesburg, namely the Apartheid Museum, Hector Pieterson Museum, Constitutional Hills – understanding the landscape of oppression and social activism against it. Each evening we would gather to have a conversation about our experiences, noting our encounters. The most instructive moment was the way that my USA students began to notice those things perceived as NOT Ubuntu through our everyday encounters. I remember a simple wave by another motorist and a student commenting that person has Ubuntu! Whilst in Eastern Cape we attended a class at one of the universities and our host, a lecturer, engaged extensive discussions on the significance of Ubuntu in contemporary life. The Eastern Cape is the citrus capital of the world but at the same time the poorest region for those who work these farms. Racism is still very blatant in these parts, and most of our encounters were racially charged – I, an African woman, was traveling with young white women. I remember being excluded from an invitation to attend "White" church. Whereas the "white students" traveling with me were invited by white families to fellowship together at the exclusion of me their black professor.

However, my students were actually well prepared that they too declined these exclusionary invites. I remember too getting into a book store owned by a white Afrikaner woman – after spending our money, and just perusing through the book store, this white woman approaching me as a black woman, told me to stop perusing her books because her customers did not like books leafed through by black hands! No matter how well prepared we were, such encounters with racism were disturbing as one student commented: "The racism I saw there was another thing that made me literally sick to my stomach. This is what led me to the conclusion that people chose to ignore the heinous acts that went on not so long ago in their country. It kept me wondering why the whites wouldn't feel remorseful about what their people did to non-white men, women, and children" (UWEC Student Joan Laundy).

Ubuntu Arts Project

I have since extended my "research" of Ubuntu to engage small-scale solidarity work in Eastern Cape, South Africa, in two villages of Bhofolo and Healdtown, in Eastern Cape, South Africa. Ubuntu Arts is an art based civic dialogue and community building initiative. It is a small project engaging local youth , adults and children in dialogues in diversity through Ubuntu Arts. The research part is addressing perspectives of Ubuntu. Community members share their perspectives and these interviews are video recorded with consent. Then, findings of the research are shared with the participants in a documentary style to jump start conversations about Ubuntu. Community members embrace their own voices. Instead of hearing someone else explain to them their own lives; they learn from each other. Ubuntu Arts and Dialogues in Diversity facilitates community building through cultural explorations. In the week-to-two weeks participants engage spoken word; story telling; beadwork, painting, music and dance that is expression of Ubuntu and at the end of the gathering participants share and showcase their work to the rest of the community members. Eastern Cape South Africa. The initiative uses dialogues in diversity and art based initiatives as a tool to address broader community issues.

Programming of Ubuntu Arts

Ubuntu Arts uses a variety of arts based initiatives- welcoming activities that engage song exploring "I am because we are"; dialogues about "What is Ubuntu to me? How can we use Ubuntu to address community issues?" Participants engage photography; poems and story telling, and use inspirational talks like Chimamanda's "Single Story" to encourage story telling; beadwork, painting/drawing to represent their ideas of Ubuntu. At the end of the gathering, an art exhibit is presented which draws community members to interact with the work, and consider broader discussions about Ubuntu as a foundational worldview in addressing community issues, and supporting positive ways of life. South African community members teach and engage Xhosa culture, sing, dance and use street theater and comedy to engage difficult topics. These dialogues engage USA students and support the growth of future partnerships with local social workers to sustain and extend the programming. US students are co-facilitators, co-researchers and co-creators of Ubuntu Arts.

The program is at its infancy. The program is currently offered through a high school as a way to mentor high scholars and non-traditional youths to attend university. A visit to the local university is one of the activities. US students in the past have donated application fees for each one of the participants interested in applying to go to university. In the future we anticipate working with local libraries to reach more youths.

I see Ubuntu Arts as part of learning to unlearn apartheid and beginning to re-write, re-frame and re-right indigenous knowledge, a critical initiative in the narrative of Ubuntu in the community. Youth and adults who participate in the project engage in story telling about Ubuntu to build knowledge about the concept, and encourage Ubuntu in main curriculum, undoing the current incongruencies between school and home in terms of cultural orientation. We also attend Grahamstown Arts Festival.

On return to the US, post-debriefing efforts are undertaken with students: "I have grown as a person through this experience…Looking back and reflecting on the time that I spent at the Healdtown School working with the kids on painting, beading, drawing, writing and games, I learned a lot about Ubuntu, and how it can be reflected in

everyday life. I learned about how Ubuntu is about building friendships and relationships with people, and being part of a community with people. I also learned that Ubuntu is about sharing, respecting, and showing kindness and genuinely caring for each other. I was able to experience this throughout the time that I spent at Healdtown. I believe that the kids also were able to learn a lot about Ubuntu, and how they are able to express Ubuntu in their everyday life, and through their artwork" (UWEC -Student Kara Kraase).

In the Future

We hope to engage adult community workshops to offer both dialogues and art initiatives to unlearn violence, build individual strengths and leadership skills through Ubuntu dialogues, to address community issues and offer an incubation to community based solutions to community issues. Eastern Cape is materially poor – most of the communities we work in have an unemployment rate of 70-80 %. Inefficient infrastructure and lack of income generating activities is glaring. Making an income is a priority for most adults and it is hoped that Ubuntu Arts can be an incubator for self-employment opportunities.

Concluding Remarks

Living as an African woman, I understand why indigenous knowledge and experiences were subjugated during colonial era. However, with the changing of times, where we speak of post-coloniality and post-apartheid, it is disturbing that Ubuntu remains on the margins of southern African education systems, the psychology of people, of communities, in the economy and/or political authority. Indeed, the glaring absence of Ubuntu in my schooling speaks to the pervasiveness of coloniality. Its tentacles far reaching, even as the legal part is slowly being eroded. Notice I use schooling because education is what I continue to do for myself, that self-transformative bridge I cross everyday for myself and can be encouraged in solidaristic learning. When I approach most Africans in southern Africa to share that I am exploring understandings of Ubuntu – I am usually met with puzzlement and sometimes deep questions that Ubuntu is not knowable in those ways – through Eurocentric research ways! To me this means, Ubuntu like the air we breathe – has been taken for granted, it is presumed it just exists and will always exist! But, this is not so, there must be a way to record it beyond orality. For the White people that I encounter, and those that care to ask about my research, my exploration of Ubuntu is perceived as non-essential research! Again, an expression of coloniality – that process of domination and exploitation of the capitalist/patriarchal/imperial western/Eurocentric/ Christian-centric spread through out the world, as such decolonizing knowledge and power in learning about Ubuntu is my journey into decolonizing myself. A task and a process of liberation from the assumed principles of knowledge and understanding of how the world is, and should be, as well as forms of organizing the economy and political authority

In a sense, there is greater global awareness of Ubuntu as an indigenous concept of southern Africa because of global technological processes that have brought the world much closer. For instance, today there is Ubuntu computer operating system. If the reader had to do a “Google” search of Ubuntu on the internet, the search yields thousands and thousands of entries, of businesses, community services, foundations, etc. In a round about way, Ubuntu has been recast as a political ideology of the “political elite” says van Binsbergen (2002). Indeed, Ubuntu was used at the framing of the Truth and Reconciliation process following the harrowing, horrendous experiences of apartheid. Further, Ubuntu has been used in the framing of the South African, the social welfare white paper, but very little in reality expresses this (Government Gazette, 1996). It has been my interest to explore the usage of Ubuntu in both public and private lives of people in southern Africa. I have been interested in the performances and usage of Ubuntu. Increasingly, the usage of Ubuntu in popular culture and some political spaces raises concerns about the continued colonization, commodification and appropriations that continue systems of exploitation, domination and oppression in the name of indigenous.

References

Bewaji, J. A. I & Ramose, M. B. (2003). The Bewaji, Van Binsbergen and Ramose Debate on

"Ubuntu." *South African Journal of Philosophy*, *22*, 4:378-414.

Biko, Steve (1990). *I write what I like*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dubois, W. E. B. (1903). *The souls of Black Folks*. Chicago: A.C. McClurg &Company.

Ferguson, J. (1994). *The Anti-Politics Machine: development, depoliticization and bureaucratic power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

Goduka, I. N. (1990) Ethics and Politics of Field Research in South Africa. *Social Problems, 37* (3) 329-340.

Government Gazette, 02/02/1996. The South African Government White Paper, No. 16943:18.

Manicorn, Linzi & Walters, Shirley (2012). *Feminist popular education in transnational debates: Building pedagogies of possibility*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Ramose, M. B. (2002). The Philosophy of Ubuntu and Ubuntu as Philosophy, in P.H. Coetzee & A. P. J. Roux (eds.), *Philosophy from Africa: A text with readings*. Oxford University Press, pp. 230-237.

Ramose, M. B. (1999) *African philosophy through Ubuntu*. Harare: Mond Books.

Razack, S. (2002). *Race, space and the law: Unmapping a White settler society*. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Selinger, E. & Outterson, K, (2009). *The ethics of poverty.* Boston University School of Law Working paper No. 09-29 Retrieved: http://www.bu.edu/law/faculty/scholarship/workingpapers/2009.html

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J (2002). Ubuntu and the globalization of Southern African thought and society, in Boele Van Hensbroek, P. (Ed), African Renaissance and Ubuntu Philosophy, special issue of *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy, 15*, 1-2:pp 53-89 http://www.shikanda.net/publications/ASC-1239806-182.pdf. Accessed July 10, 2014.

About the Editor: Otrude N. Moyo, Ph.D., is Associate Professor & Chair in the School of Education and Human Services, Social Work Department, University of Michigan Flint (moyoon@umflint.edu).

Post Apartheid Education in South Africa: A Review of Progress and Pitfalls

Zandile P. Nkabinde

Abstract: This paper explores the educational changes in South Africa twenty-one years after the end of apartheid. The paper will examine progress that has been made as well as highlight some of the lingering pitfalls with regards to marked differences in state funding, affecting the overall quality of education. In addition, issues like the goal of education, curriculum, funding, and educational opportunities based on new policies of inclusion, social justice and equity will be addressed. Current educational changes will be discussed against a background of the past apartheid education

Keywords: Apartheid, Post-apartheid education, Bantu Education Act, Afrikaans, Afrikaners, Coloreds and Blacks.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of post apartheid education is to improve the quality of life for every South African regardless of disability, race, color or creed. Apartheid education set the stage for educational disparities in school funding, quality of content and resources in black schools throughout the country. Thus, post apartheid education is aimed at eliminating illiteracy, ignorance, and exploitation of any person by another including those with disabilities. South Africa still faces high rate of school drop outs, high rates of unemployment among black youth, and escalating school fees.

OVERVIEW

South Africa, a country located at the southern tip of the continent of Africa, gained its independence from apartheid/colonialism in April 1994. The country has an estimated population of about 49 million people occupying 473,000 square miles (Gwalla-Ogisi, Nkabinde and Rodriguez, 1998). Education under apartheid was divided along ethnic, racial, and even regional lines (Compton, 2008).

Prior to 1994, the South African education system comprised of eighteen departments serving different racial groups (Nkabinde, 1997). Thus, each education department was responsible for formulating its own policies along racial lines. The apartheid system of government divided its citizens along racial lines, with the highest group having the most rights and privileges and the lowest group the fewest. The racial classification went as follows: whites comprised of the immigrant Afrikaners (Dutch, English or people of European descent), coloureds (people of mixed descent), Indians (from India/ Asiatics), and Africans (indigenous black people). In 1994 South Africa witnessed the collapse of apartheid and the birth of democracy. This political transformation led to the dispensation of a new educational system. This paper addresses post-apartheid education and how it has been affected by changes over the past two decades after 1994

EDUCATION POLICIES

The beginnings of formal education in South Africa date as far back as 1652 when the first settlers arrived. Geber and Newman (1980) explained that in the early years, education for Africans was seen primarily in terms of the labor they would provide. Then it became logical not to allow blacks to have a say in the planning, structuring, and implementing of education (Molobi, 1988). Many schools for Africans were built during the first quarter of the nineteenth century throughout the Cape Colony. These schools were established and controlled by the missionary societies. The overseas missionary societies, primarily responsible for this undertaking, included the Moravian, London, Rhenish, Wesleyan, Berlin, Paris Evangelical, and Glasgow Missions, as well as the Church Missionary Society and the American Board Mission (Behr, 1978). Prior to 1953, the types of schools blacks attended, as well as the content of what was taught, were different. These schools were mainly traditional

missionary schools.

In 1953, the Bantu Education Act (No. 47) was introduced, and the South African government imposed a system known as "Bantu Education." This act widened the gaps in educational opportunities for different racial groups (Wikipedia, 2011). According to this report the concept of racial "purity," in particular, provided a rationalization for keeping black education inferior. According to Simon (1991), the introduction of Bantu education in South Africa marked the origin of the crisis in black education. This system was characterized by rote learning and a curriculum virtually unrelated to Africans' aspirations or practical job qualifications (Johnson and Devlin-Foltz, 1993). Under apartheid, schools for black students suffered from enormous underfunding, were under-resourced and overcrowded (Kotze, Van Duuren, Afrika, Rkiep, and Abdurahman, 2009).

The Aim of Bantu Education

Bantu education was meant to replace the traditional missionary schools whose curriculum was criticized for creating inappropriate expectations in the natives, that is, expectations that clashed with life opportunities in the country (Moodie, 1994). There was a belief that education available to blacks prior to 1953 was alienating them from their communities. Therefore, a new type of education was designed with the aim of training blacks for certain types of jobs, thus keeping them in their place or subordinating them in all ways to the ruling minority class. One of the deep seated intentions of this Bantu type of education as described by Arnold (1981), was to produce black carpenters, laborers, and artisans who were needed by the white economy, but not black philosophers or thinkers who might provide the political leadership to challenge the status quo

According to Herbstein (1992), Bantu education's aim of negative social engineering was designed to make black school graduates incapable of competing on equal terms with their white counterparts. As a result of this strategy of deliberate inequity, there are high illiteracy rates, overcrowded and poorly maintained classrooms, high pupil-teacher ratios, high failure rates, insufficient funding, and low teacher morale among the black population. Therefore, the current state of education in South Africa is not accidental but is a continuation of past disparities. Nekhwevha (1999) described how apartheid education in South Africa excluded the culture and language skills of the Africans from the curriculum in order to keep them in a state of alienation. Hailom and Banteyerga as cited by Nekhwevha (1999) stated that: "Africa today is full of challenges. Education is expected to be an effective tool in coping with these challenges. However, the existing education in Africa is the legacy of colonialism. It has been geared to meet and maintain colonial interests under the cover umbrella phrase "modernizing Africa." What we see today is that the so-called "modern education" is not satisfactorily addressing the problems of Africa to meet the needs and aspirations of the African people. In other words, it has not done much to boost the material growth and spiritual development of Africa. What is vividly observed is that African wisdom and knowledge is being systematically undermined; African self-concept and pride; African understanding and interpretation of the environment; all in all, the culture and psychological make up of the African. If Africa is to regain its place as the center of culture and civilization, it needs to re-think and reframe its education in the context of Africa and its problems and aspirations" (pp. 491-492).

The Aims of Post-Apartheid Education

Chisholm (1995) described the aims of post-apartheid education as follows: In the first instance, it signaled a move away from the determination of policy by a white minority state for a black majority; in the second, official state education policy, historically geared towards building a united white nation, was now re-oriented to redressing inequalities and nation-building between white and black; in the third, instead of being predicated on exclusion and denial of rights, social, political and educational policy became based on the principles of inclusion, social justice and equity (p. 50). In addition to moving away from the apartheid goals, the new South African government wanted to implement new goals that reflected the democratic ideals of the new government (Makonl, Moody, & Mabokela, 2006).

According to the report of the South African Consulate in New York, the South African Schools Act 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), provides for:

* compulsory education for learners between the ages of seven and 15 years of age, or learners reaching the ninth grade, whichever occurs first

* two categories of schools, namely public schools and independent schools, and the establishment and maintenance of public schools on private property

* conditions of admission of learners to public schools

* governance and management of public schools, the election of governing bodies and their functions

funding of public schools (p. 2).

Disparities in the Current Schooling of Black South Africans

Despite a continued emphasis on redressing the effects of past educational injustices, all is not well, especially for poor rural black children, those in the urban townships as well as those African children schooled in the former Homelands. In South Africa, educators and practitioners are challenged to design and implement effective and quality education for all South Africans. However, demand for quality education in black schools outweighs the supply of professionals and resources. During apartheid, the provision of education was very unequal. There were different departments of education arranged along racial lines with separate budgets and administration.

Historically, the allocation of educational funding was grossly unequal where white education enjoyed more funding resulting in wide-scale disparities with regard to all aspects of education (Naicker, 2000). However, the end of apartheid era saw some improvements, as efforts were made to improve education for blacks, but separately and grossly unequal. Access to quality schooling in South Africa is now based on finances. White schools, which were previously well-funded and provided high quality education, are still privileged. Black middle class families in South Africa tend to send their children to historically White schools.

Post-apartheid Curriculum

The educational changes in South Africa in the early 1990s marked the end of Bantu Education. With the collapse of apartheid education, Curriculum 2005, sometimes referred to as outcomes based education (OBE), was introduced. The OBE as described by Msila (2007) introduced new learning styles initiating change from passive, rote learning to creative learning and problem solving through active participation in the learning process. In addition, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was established in order to provide structure for the new curriculum (Msila, 2007). According to Msila (2007) the NQF was meant to prevent learners from being trapped in any one learning situation by promoting movement between different areas and levels of education and training

According to Nekhwevha (1999), OBE differs from apartheid education, which promoted passive learning, rote-learning, teacher-centeredness, and rigid content based syllabi and curricula. Instead OBE stands for learner-centeredness, democratic curricula/programs, active participation and critical thinking as well as reasoning, reflection and action (p.500). Nekhwevha (1999) pointed out that one of OBE oversight is the absence of an understanding of African education philosophy and culture. Most problems currently facing African schools, including South Africa, are high dropout rates, alienation and unemployment, partly caused by incompatible Eurocentric curricula. Nekhwevha (1999) contended that a curriculum drawing on a traditional African education philosophy could reduce these negative factors which are embedded in the current curricula.

Curriculum reform has been modernized to make it more relevant to the needs of citizens of a developing country as well as a developing economy. The new curriculum has focused on formerly neglected skills such as mathematics, science and technology. The report by the Ministry of Education (2005) stated that schools of Mathematics, Science and Technology, called Dinaledi schools, have been established as part of a National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and technology aimed at:

* raising the participation and performance of Black learners (especially females) in Mathematics and Science at Senior Certificate level

* providing high-quality education in the three subjects to all learners

* increasing and improving human resource capacity to deliver education in the three subjects (p.3)

Hewitt and Matlhako (1999) reported that history is overwhelmingly being told not from African eyes, but from White South African eyes, and sometimes through eyes of the dominant world intelligentsia (p. 158). This trend is not only damaging to the African psyche but it keeps the African in a perpetual position of intellectual dependency. South African history books continue to present a biased and one sided view of South African history.

African history is centered on the subjugation of Africans. The land theft, exploitation of African labor, and violence against the Africans by the settlers are always minimized. On the other hand, the historical achievements of Europeans are overemphasized. African historians are to be trained in order to promote Africa-centered interests as well as to prevent distorted history from being taught and perpetuated. The mis-education of Africans about their past history must be challenged. Current historical events leading to the end of apartheid must be taught in schools. As students are taught about authentic European history, it is fitting to have students in South Africa exposed to Africa, its history, cultures, languages and achievements.

School Funding

South Africa's new educational policy mandates that the government make education free to all South Africans. Under apartheid there was no free compulsory education for black South Africans while white South Africans received a quality free public education (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2015). In 1995, the educational dispensation declared that education was to be free and compulsory for all six-year old children in South Africa (Nkabinde, 1997). According to Wikipedia report (retrieved in 2015), South Africa currently spends over 20% of its budget on education, more than any other sector

Fiske and Ladd (2004) reported that while racial inequalities in school funding and fees were reduced after the end of apartheid, they were not completely eliminated. For example, the South African Schools' Act of 1996 gave substantial powers to school governing bodies, which according to Chisholm (2012) were given the right, among other things, to decide on school language policy, and the level of school fees to supplement government funding. According to this author, school spending was equalized on the basis of pupil/teacher ratios, but the right given to school governing bodies to raise fees helped ensure that schools in wealthier communities were able to use fees to appoint additional teachers and maintain infrastructure, and therefore maintain quality (p.92). School fees are also used to restrict black Africans from enrolling in the formerly white schools. This is supported by a report by Yamauchi (2011), who noted that white schools in South Africa tend to overprice education in order to limit black students. Therefore, black schools remain overcrowded, impoverished and inferior. It can also be pointed out that the South African School Act (1996) made education compulsory but not free (Chisholm, 2012). Therefore, the transition from apartheid to democracy, as observed by Hammett and Staeheli (2013), required the South African government to negotiate competing needs for economic development and greater equality. Resource-rich schools belong to white minority, while resource-poor schools belong to the majority black schools, thus making desegregation efforts complicated. Most black middle class families send their children to formerly white schools,

but there is no movement from white schools to black and/or African schools. Thus historically disadvantaged African schools remain unchanged in terms of racial make up.

Today, access to quality education is now determined by class rather than race (Ndimande, 2013; Lemon, 2004). According to Lemon (2004), for the poor majority, the system offers neither equality of opportunity nor significant redress to compensate for the injustice of apartheid education. Lack of teaching resources as well as overcrowded black schools have resulted in students' poor achievement. This in turn limits their opportunities to attend colleges thus reducing their prospects of entering the skilled labor market.

New Language Policy

Language policy as it applied to the African population under apartheid, was designed in such a way as to promote ethnic identity, while limiting proficiency in the official languages (English and Afrikaans) in order to limit access to employment (Henrard, 2002). According to this author, the principle of mother tongue education was conveniently applied to further the political interests of division amongst all communities (Henrard, 2002).

Nekhwevha (1999), contended that one of the most challenging developments arising out of South Africa's post-apartheid education system relate to the adoption of English as the medium of instruction in schools, technikons, colleges and universities. The new language policy in South Africa is in support of multilingualism. Fiske and Ladd (2004) identified the three principles for determining the language or languages of learning: (a) The right of the individual to choose the language of learning; (b) The right to develop the linguistic skills necessary for full participation in national, provincial, and local life; © And the need to promote and develop South African languages neglected under apartheid (p. 64).

In a new education dispensation, minority white schools are allowed to preserve their religious and cultural values and their home languages. Some of these schools use the language e.g. Afrikaans in order to limit African access. While the South African constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of language, community schools have a right to choose the language of instruction. Following are the excerpts from the South Africa's Language in Education Policy in Akanbi, (2009):

* Learners have the right to be taught in the language of their choice.
* The governing body of a school may decide on the language policy of the school.
* Schools must provide for more than one language of teaching where necessary.

A majority of former white schools do not teach African languages as a school subject (Lemon, 2004). African students whose home language is not Afrikaans and/or English end up suffering academically. There is also a lack of native language speaking subject advisors in these schools (Akanbi, 2009).

The sad part is that even some of the black middle class parents who send their children to these schools see African languages as unimportant. However, Lemon (2004) warns about this trend as it puts African children in danger of cultural alienation from their environment. Languages carry histories of the society, traditions and rituals of the group. By undermining African languages in the curriculum, African identity and heritage are also marginalized. Teaching children in their vernacular languages is critical to their cognitive, emotional, and socio-cultural development. Therefore, the maintenance of vernacular languages in South Africa is essential in avoiding the slow death of African cultures and identity.

Teacher Training

Teacher training in post-apartheid South African has undergone major transformation in the past two decades. During apartheid teachers were unequally schooled, qualified and trained. Schafer and Wilmot (2012) reported

that under apartheid the majority of teachers (mostly Black) received state-controlled college teacher training and a minority of teachers (mostly whites) received a university teacher training. The teacher training of African teachers served to reinforce the subservient position of the black race (Nkabinde, 1997).

When the first teacher certificate was introduced for black South Africans, two years of teacher training were allowed for primary school teaching for candidates with a Standard Six Certificate. Primary school teachers qualified for the Lower Primary Teacher Certificate. In order to teach at a secondary or high school level, the teacher must complete at least a Standard Eight Certificate or obtain a Junior Certificate before qualifying for the Junior Primary Certificate. For completion, the training requires two years. Other advanced teachers' diplomas include the Junior Secondary Teachers' diploma, which requires the candidate to have a matriculation certificate. This course also requires two years to complete. African teachers have fewer academic credentials than their white counterparts. Kachelhoffer (1995) explained that the majority of black teachers are trained according to a three-year curriculum at teacher colleges for primary and secondary education. Their white counterparts are trained at teacher colleges for primary education and at universities for secondary education; both programs are offered over a four-year period. This type of training gives white teachers an advantage over their African counterparts. Chisholm (2012) described a critical priority after 1994 which was meant to ensure more and better quality teachers. According to Chisholm (2012), between 1994 and 1999, the state undertook three main initiatives in this regard:

> First, policies were effected to rationalize, redeploy and redistribute teachers within the system rather than train new teachers. It resulted in many qualified teachers leaving the profession. Second, in line with international trends and on the basis of the poor quality of the majority of teacher training colleges in the former Bantustans, the state set in motion processes to bring teacher education within the ambit of higher education. This entailed the closure of many colleges of education. Both efforts resulted in immediate shortages of teachers and the third
> initiative, the introduction in 2005 of bursaries to attract young, new teachers to the profession (p.93).

Teachers in post-apartheid era are expected to teach in the midst of new political transformation without being properly trained. It is noted that most teachers in South Africa's schools today got inferior education under the Bantu education system and according to a New York Times report (2009), this has seriously impaired their ability to teach the next generation.

Inclusive Education Policy:

South Africa as it emerged from apartheid and as it attempts to transform itself from the history of exclusion to that of inclusion, has adopted inclusive education in its policy development since the 1994 democratic elections (Hay and Beyers, 2000). The driving force in the adoption of inclusion in South Africa is the provision of equal rights and equal access to educational opportunities for all students regardless of race, gender, disability and/or creed. According to the Education White Paper 6, (July, 2001) inclusive education and training is defined as follows:

- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- Acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases.
- Broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures

- Changing attitudes, behavior, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners.

- Maximizing the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions, and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning (p. 6-7).

The report also suggested the following key strategies required to achieve this vision:

- transforming all aspects of education, developing an integrated system of education, infusing special needs and support services throughout the system.

- pursuing the holistic development of centers of learning to ensure a barrier-free physical environment and supportive and inclusive psycho-social learning environment, developing a flexible curriculum to ensure access to all learners.

- promoting the rights and responsibilities of parents, educators and learners.

- providing effective development programs for educators, support personnel, and other relevant human resources, fostering holistic and integrated support provision through intersectoral collaboration.

- developing a community-based support system which includes a preventative and developmental approach to support; developing funding strategies that ensure redress for historically disadvantageous communities and institutions, sustainability, and ultimately access to education for all learners (p.4.)

Through inclusion the new government is aiming at reducing the disparities of the past as well as improving access to education for all previously neglected population groups. According to Hay and Beyers (2000), the concept of inclusive education fitted neatly with the new policy of a unitary education system where racial classification as well as disability is no longer used to differentiate departments. Inclusion in a South African educational context addresses issues of redress and equity. While inclusive education is now promoted in South Africa. The following challenges have been identified by Prinsloo (2001): *Inclusive policies have not been able to protect individual rights adequately.

- Marginalized and excluded voices are not heard.

- The way in which people with disabilities experience inclusion and exclusion in education have not been satisfactorily determined.

- Parent and community groups are not making adequate and responsible contributions to the process of inclusive education.

- The implications of changing professional roles for teacher education have not been determined.

- Ways in which specialized teaching techniques can contribute to overcome barriers to learning should be utilized.

- How do we evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education?

- How can pressures to exclude be overcome? (p.344).

According to Prinsloo (2001) this long list of unresolved issues is a clear indication of the challenges that face educators, policy makers, parents and communities in the implementation of inclusive education. Fataar (1997)

described access to quality schooling in post-apartheid schooling as a privilege for the few. The author stated that while funding for private schools increased in the 1980s, there was also a move towards the "semi-privatisation" of white schools in the 1990s. Fataar (1997) further stated that another feature of South African education was the vocationalisation of the curriculum in the pursuit of black skilled labor. While more money has been allocated to formerly neglected African schools in recent years, less money has been allocated to formerly privileged white schools. This funding formula has allowed well-resourced white schools with parent communities that could afford to pay school fees to preserve a privileged schooling system (Fataar, 1997). The emerging African middle class do send their children to these selective white well-resourced schools. However, the majority of African children are still educated in segregated and poorly resourced African schools. The challenge for the South African government is to ensure that quality education is available for all citizens not just the selected few.

CONCLUSION

South African policies on education carry much promise for the future. Due to the country's wealth in natural resources, South Africa's prognosis with regard to redressing educational disparities is good. Rault-Smith (2008) reported that while advances have been made in education and training provision in the past two decades of democracy in South Africa, there is awareness that many of the consequences of the past have not yet been rectified. For instance, access to educational opportunities is still a dream for many African students.

One of the many challenges facing education in South Africa is the preparation of highly qualified teachers for different content areas, especially the sciences. The implementation of inclusion has also been plagued by lack of resources. The disparities that existed before apartheid are still evident in many parts of the country, particularly in rural and farm schools. Because of the legacy of apartheid, the highly unequal character of schools persists despite comprehensive reforms since 1994, in pursuit of equal education for all (Government Gazette, 2009). For example, the unequal education of the past is still evident today. Fataar (1997), contended that White and Indian education are generally well-endowed. Colored education is in a parlous state, while African education is by far worst off (Fataar, 1997). According to Compton (2008), despite policy changes in South Africa, in terms of real transformation, most African schools are still overcrowded with lack of basic resources and poor preparation of teachers. This observation is supported by Abdi (2001) when he reported that as far as black South Africans are concerned, the effects of disempowering educational systems are still being felt

References

Abdi, A. A. (2001). Integrated education and black development in post-apartheid South Africa: critical analyses. *A Journal of Comparative Education*, *31*(2), 229-244.

Akanbi, L. B. (2009). *Promoting Literacy Development in a Multilingual Society: The South African Language in Education Policy*. Retrieved from http://www.kennesaw.edu/education/eece/TTLS/pages/Best Practices/Promoting Literacy...11/12/2009.

Behr, A. L. (1978). *New perspectives in South African education*. Durban, South Africa: Butterworth.

Chisholm, L. (1995). The restructuring of South African education and training in comparative context. In P. Kallaway, G. Kruss, A. Fataar, and G. Donn (Eds.), *Education after apartheid: South African Education in Transition* (50-67). Cape Town: UCT Press

Compton, M. (2008). Interview with Thulas Nxesi, President of Education International. In M. Compton, L. Weiner (Eds.), *The global assault on teaching, teachers, and their unions: Stories for resistance* (211-215). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fataar, A. (1997). Access to schooling in a post-apartheid South Africa: Linking concepts to context.

International Review of Education, 43(4), 331-348.

Government Gazette: Republic of South Africa, Pretoria (April 2009). 526 (32133).

Gwalla-Ogisi, N., Nkabinde, Z., & Rodriguez, L. (1998). The social context of the special education debate in South Africa. *Journal of Special Needs Education, 13*(1), 72-85.

Hammett, D., & Staeheli, L. (May 2013). Transition and the education of the New South African Citizen. *Comparative Education Review, 57*(2), 309-331.

Hay, J., & Beyers, C. (2000). *Apartheid's contribution to South African Inclusive Education Policy*. A paper presented at the International Special Education Congress at the University of Manchester, July 24-28.

Kotze, E., Van Duuren, L., Afrika, C., Rakiep, L., & Abdurahman, Y. (2009). Telling our teaching stories: Overcoming despair in Mitchells Plain, South Africa. Transformations: *The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy, Vol. XX* (2), 113-128.

Henrard, K. (March 2002). Post Apartheid South Africa's Democratic Transformation Process: Redress of the past, reconciliation and "Unity in Diversity." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics, 1*(3), 18-38.

Hewitt, C. L., & Matlhako, M. (1999). History education in post-apartheid South Africa: African identity, and regional economic integration.
Journal of Developing Societies, 15(2), 145-171.

Lemon, A. (June 2004). Redressing school inequalities in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies, 30* (2), 269-290.

Makonl, S., Moody, C. D., & Mabokela, R. O. (2006). "Separate but Equal": A comparative analysis of provision for education of blacks in the
United States and South Africa. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 34*(3), 45-49.

Msila, V. (2007). From Apartheid education to the Revised National Curriculum Statement: Pedagogy for identity formation and nation building in South Africa. *Nordic Journal of African Studies, 16* (2),
146-160.

Naicker, S. M. (2000). *From apartheid to inclusive education: The challenge of transformation*. A paper presented at the International Education Summit for a Democratic Society at Wayne State University

Ndimande, B. S. (2013). From Bantu education to the fight for socially just education. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 40* (1), 20-35.

Nekhwevha, F. (1999). No matter how long the night. The day is sure to come: Culture and educational transformation in Post-colonial Namibia and Post-apartheid South Africa. *International Review of Education, 45*(5/6): 491-506.

New York Times. (2009). *Eager students fall prey to apartheid legacy*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com

Nkabinde, Z. P. (1997). *An analysis of educational challenges in the new South Africa*. Lanham: Maryland: University Press of America.

Prinsloo, E. (2001). Working towards inclusive education in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of*

Education, 21(4), 344-348.

Rault-Smith, J. (2008). Schooling in the future: A South African scenario. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education, 11*(1), 39-53.

Schafer, M., & Wilmot, D. (2012). Teacher education in post-apartheid South Africa: Navigating a way through competing state and global imperatives for change. *Prospects, 42*(1), 41-54.

South African Department of Education. (2001). White Paper No. 6 of July 2001: *Special Needs Education-Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

South Africa: Organization/Control of Education System, (2009).

South African Consulate General (2010). South Africa: Education. www.southafrica-newyork.net/consulate/education.htm retrieved 2/9/2010.

Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System-South Africa Ministry of Education.

Working Document, (September 2005). *Ministerial seminar on education for rural people in Africa: Policy lessons, options and priorities*. Hosted by the Government of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 7-9 September. Country Report: South Africa, pp. 1-9.

Yamauchi, F. (2011). School quality, clustering and government subsidy in post-apartheid South Africa. *Economic of Education Review, 30*: 146-156

About the Author: Zandile P. Nkabinde, Ph.D., is Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education at New Jersey City University (201-200-2446; Znkabinde@njcu.edu).

Unlearning Schooling in Autocracy

Otrude N. Moyo with Ms. Vuyelwa Langelihle Sibindi

Abstract: Dr. Moyo and Ms. Sibindi's narrative explores the history of education in South Africa and Zimbabwe, specifically the prefect system. Acknowledging that schools in both South Africa and Zimbabwe have traditionally been designed to promote obedience, Dr. Moyo and Ms. Sibindi discuss the need for a new approach in schools, one that promotes independent thinking and freedom. Historically, schools in Zimbabwe and South Africa reflected the power hierarchy of the apartheid and an unjust society, where Africans, and those who are poor were conditioned to be subservient to the powerful few. Dr. Moyo and Ms. Sibindi draw on the principles of Schooling in Capitalist America (Bowles) as well as their own experiences of the prefectship program while they were students. Comparing Zimbabwe's history of being an "autocratic political economy", these writers describe how the prefect system rewards students for obedience, conformity and allows for a few privileged students to manipulate their power. This narrative warns that school may be sold as a tool to help empower the poor in a capitalist society, but may actually just be a means to condition young students to become obedient workers, autocrats rather than empower them to develop their own voice and critical thinking skills. This narrative advocates for current schools in Zimbabwe to embrace egalitarian and Ubuntu traditions and values, not the outdated values of colonial Zimbabwe.

Introduction:

In today's global interdependent world, education has become the center of most of our lives. Most individuals and societies value education and connect education to individual and societal aspirations of progress. Whilst education is crucial in our lives there are varied and divergent views about educational institutions' role in societies. Within a functionalist and systems perspective, the belief is that people gain literacy through schooling in order to become informed citizens to actively participate in the presumed democratic world (Morapedi & Jotia, 2011). A structuralist analysis of education systems in capitalist democracies highlight the hidden agendas of capitalist democracies arguing that education basically evolves to mirror, support and reproduce the hierarchies and social relationships fundamental to the capitalist workplace and necessary for profit (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Yet, others see the purpose and role of education as a way to improve equity and socio-economic advancement of a society. Increasingly, education is seen as a way to socialize citizens to promote those globally shared egalitarian ideals of peace, therefore schooling is seen as a platform to socialize the younger generation to become future leaders contributing to building a culture of equality and peace. Still, others see education as a way for skills development specifically for young people to join the workforce as workers, and/or in self-employment as entrepreneurs, in turn contributing to economic growth. Missing in these discussions are dialogues about the role of education in transitional political economies emerging from the aftermath of colonialism, neo colonialism, and enduring neoliberalism. Further, missing in these dialogues is the centering of indigenous ways, like Ubuntu within the education system.

We have wondered how many of us as students, teachers and political leaders have become self- questioning about the role of education within Zimbabwean society? How many of us are attempting to question and rearticulate the role of schooling and in turn, education in our lives? We have not been part of this conversation, so in our limitations we presume it is not happening. Of course we are familiar with the literature. For example, the Universal Period Review (UPR) of the Republic of Zimbabwe (2011), outlines the problems of irrelevancy of the primary and secondary schools curriculum to the needs of the country. We are familiar too with "*The Development of Education National Report of Zimbabwe*" by the Ministries of Education, Sport and Culture and Higher and Tertiary Education. Implicit in our wonderment is the question: Does the prevailing education system within the Zimbabwean society align with progressive, egalitarian values and does it center indigenous ways like Ubuntu?

This paper is about our reflections of our school experiences, and broadly, our observation of schooling in Zimbabwe – post independence. The basis of this reflection is our experience of the prefect system as a sub-institution in the schooling system in Zimbabwe and its implications to transformative education. This reflective paper came about as a result of the first author's mentorship of the second author. The first author had attended the same boarding school in the 1980s, which the second author attended after the economic meltdown in late 2000s. This article came out of our shared reflections of both our schooling experiences. Vignettes from our experiences are used to connect schooling experience of the prefect system with the broader political economy of Zimbabwe, which we language as autocratic capitalism. In both our reflections we were struck by the continued similarities in our schooling, therefore our keenness to analyze the impact of our education system from our experiences. As a reflective paper, we are desiring a dialogue about the role of education in present day Zimbabwe. On the other hand, we are engaging in a dialogue about transitional political economies – specifically unlearning cultures of inequality, instead of fostering independent and critical thinking, personal growth and an agenda for citizenship and leadership that is based on relational ethics that value all people.

Defining the Workings of the Prefect System in Education

Whilst the prefect system is embedded and prevalent within the education system in Zimbabwe, very few commentaries are available about this sub-institution. A major resource has come from the experience of the Prefect System and the democratic process in Botswana (see Morapedi & Jotia 2011) and about South Africa (Mathebula, 2009). These authors investigated the efficacy of the prefect system in promoting democracy in Botswana secondary schools.

What is this prefect system? These are students selected by the school administration to maintain an orderly atmosphere among the student body and in the school system in general, through supervision and punishment of other students. In most cases, prefects are nominated/selected by the teachers and the school administration. In cases where students have an input on the selection, sometimes the existing prefects screen those who are to succeed. This process tends to be self-perpetuating, in that prefects select students who share similar thoughts, attitudes and actions about how to run a school. The prefect system is prevalent in most of southern Africa and continues as the backbone of primary and secondary education system in Zimbabwe. Ideally, the selection to the prefectship system presumes the highest character and honors those students by recruitment to the prefect system. Therefore, it presumes meritocracy. But, the question remains, can authority placed by adults who are not peers be fair and advance egalitarian relationships within a school system? Prefects are given the rights and responsibility to punish students who are not seen to be following rules and regulations. From our experiences, the prefect system is an extension of hierarchies in the education institution where student leaders are appointed by teachers and school administration to uphold administrative rules. Both authors went through this system with great trepidation, thinking this system is unpalatable and promotes inegalitarian values and relationships in a school environment. Both public (government sponsored) and private (mission/religious schools) schools use this system. However, through our dialogue we moved from a sense of frustration to facilitating a dialogue about the pros and cons about this prefect system, and begin to consider alternatives. This article is written in the spirit of engaging alternatives.

Despite the dramatic transformation of the Zimbabwean society to improve national literacy rates and the numbers of students graduating from high schools and tertiary education, the school climate in Zimbabwe continues to reproduce colonial status quo, especially with regard to the prefect system. We argue that Zimbabwe is an autocratic political economy, meaning that there is prevalence of the consolidation of political and economic power to a few, who then use their authority to direct political voice and resources to their own benefits, withholding basic necessities from the majority of the population. Autocratic capitalism as a system has several interconnected parts and mental constructs in Zimbabwe, exemplified by the (B)Vakuru culture (big men and big women of the ruling party), meaning those who use their political authority to amass public resources and dole out privileges to their cronies in the charade of electoral process. Long arms of political authority cultivate institutions and relationships that maintain this status quo as we will see below. Similarly, the education system in

Zimbabwean as exemplified by the prefect system tends to mirror autocratic political economy.

To situate our discussion, we draw insights from Bowles and Gintis's seminal work on "Schooling in Capitalist America", but for us the problem is described in the vignette below, Schooling in Autocratic Capitalism Zimbabwe. Let us summarize Bowles and Gintis's argument about Schooling in Capitalist America and show how their thesis is important to our discussion. We are more interested in Bowles and Gintis (2002) framing of the "hidden curriculum" of this capitalist education system, the intermingling of equality of opportunity in education, where education is the mechanism of social control and schooling is something done to and for the poor. On the one hand, schools are seen as the leveling of the playing field for the poor, and yet the reality of experience in schools contradict this. Are schools sorting places for who will become upper middle class and who will remain poor? Instead of emancipatory learning – rote learning and testing is emphasized. Compliant students are rewarded for following orders and students who are independent and creative are devalued. Following our vignettes we will attempt to use Bowles and Gintis' lens to explore the contradictions of education in Zimbabwe today.

Vignettes:

Experience A

My high school was a mission (religious) boarding school. Historically, when public education was not available to all citizens, mission/religious schools provided education to Africans. A boarding school means that as students, we are confined to this institutional environment for at least nine months of the year, with about three and a half months in a term. Our school year had three terms. Institutions have their own cultures. In my four years of high school education, procedures and process for selecting prefects were not transparent. There was no application process to provide opportunity to all eligible. Not only was the process not transparent but there was no prefect profile so that all students had a shared understanding of the qualities required for prefectship. The criteria used for selection was not shared with students, the qualifications for selection were never clearly articulated. In the four years of my high school education, students were just nominated by the school administration and presented to the student body. Basically, no student input was taken nor were the previous prefects openly consulted about the next prefects. In my view, no student's feelings or ideas were taken into account to the running of our lives as students in a boarding school. Entering our boarding school was like joining a miniature prison with uniforms, scheduled meals, scheduled play, study time, lights off and control of friendships. As students we dubbed it "iJele"-the prison. In this prison like environment it is difficult to pose the fundamental question: why are we doing things this way or that way? Since there is no break from this system that our parents mandated us to attend, the societal expectations, the rules and orders of the institutions are quickly accepted as "normal", even as this order violates one's rights and dignity. In this school environment we had become programmed to accept authority without question. But, as human beings we are creative and devise ways to resist, to work with and/or against the system. Within a prison like system called a school, I learned how to survive in an exploitative environment that was molding me to be compliant to ideas that I did not agree with. Everyday our young voices were silenced. Those of us not awarded the privilege of prefectship lived in harassment and fear of prefects and their punishment. Punishment meted out included picking thorns (ubhima) with bare hands for horses. A traumatic experience that still lives with me!

Vignette B:

My story goes like this-beginning of my A-level year, I too was nominated to the prefect system. A seemingly honor, and the excitement of being a young adult among the chosen ones! Even in this excitement it remained troubling to me that the selection process was a secret; no application, no interview, no voice from my peers about my leadership qualities. As a teenager, in a uniform dress code, the prospects of wearing a different uniform from the rest of my classmates was exciting. Within a couple of days of this elation, the repressiveness of the prefect system quickly began to express itself. Other students-those not selected-were being negatively treated

by "us", the new prefects. I began to notice my peers being punished for things they did not do; minor infractions from being late for meals; it was like this whole prefect association had this unearned power, but also that those prefects were beginning to be bullies. Within a couple of days, I had questions about the behaviors and actions of my peers, now the chosen prefects. The ways we, the "prefects", were supposed to be working as prefects, went against my own values and cultural upbringing, whereas my peers were bullying other students to obedience. Any disagreements, and my peers were supposed to be punished. I witnessed bullying by the so-called prefects on a day-to-day basis. One day I could not hold it in, so I talked back to the prefects and to the head girl about their actions and behaviors towards other students. As a prefect I began to have serious questions about a system that was controlling other students through punishment and fear. From the uniforms onwards to the ways of working, the prefect system was creating unhealthy hierarchies within the student body. Those chosen where made to feel superior by the teachers and administration. This was unpalatable to me. I started talking back and asking questions about this prefect system. I began to actively engage my peer prefects about the workings of the prefect system in my school. I argued that the way things were, the school was becoming a place of deadening the spirit instead of awakening our spirit! I wondered daily if my fellow students really engaged in self-questioning about the purpose of education in their lives. My desire for education was liberation. I am a young idealist, desiring to live those egalitarian practices. Not to disrespect adults, but I questioned a system that selects student as part of student governance without students' voices. Among my peers, this questioning was perceived as "disrespectful" to the school administration and the order of prefects selected. I was supposed to be adhering to rules and mechanisms designed to keep us all in check. When I questioned the unfairness of the process where student leaders are selected out of favoritism and their authority not questioned, I was demoted. The reader may presume that I write out of bitterness or victimhood-no-I write out of liberation. It was a great thing that I was not part of this system and I could keenly observe, witness its workings, and in turn begin my talking back to power.

As a young woman, whose identity and self-esteem was still forming, the demotion was hurtful. But the most painful part was to live and witness an education system where hope is supposed to grow, but instead it grows hate and spitefulness. What was most painful to witness was my fellow classmates turn into merciless bullies, demanding unearned respect through threats and punishment of other students. But, all this made sense to me when one considers the broader political economic system we live, where power is consolidated to a few who hold authority, to deny the many their basic necessities of food, work, water etc. It was troubling that my education, which is supposed to set me free, was actually holding me at ransom.

In my school, the prefect system was used by the school administration to enforce interests of specific groups of people, and to maintain control of students through fear. Fellow students as prefects used their authority to settle scores. There was no differentiation between bullying and maintenance of order. The school atmosphere was stifling and without care of students' well being. Through my horrendous experience I conclude that what this school and many others are cultivating through the prefect system are corrupt leaders, who have no sense of humility, nor respect for themselves or their fellow students. Students were believed to be above the rules themselves as they are the rules. My wonderment: shall we continue to uphold such an autocratic system and to what end? The spirit of "Ubuntu" from our value system as the Ndebele phrase says "Inkosi yinkosi ngabantu" – "one is a leader because of assent of the people, not subjugation!" My experience brought me to ask: whose culture are we cultivating if we do not respect our own culture and the words of our forefathers?

This somewhat adverse experience helped me realize my voice and that I could use it to advance fairness. I grew up as an only child. I was raised by my maternal grandparents who cultivated in my that I own my own voice and my choices. Therefore, I try to be responsible for my actions and live fairly on a day -to- day basis. However, what I was experiencing in the prefect system in my school, was contrary to my values. As I write this, I believe this is a voice of the many defenseless students all over Zimbabwe who hope for a change in the prefect system in schools. We as Zimbabweans should seek to promote freedom and empowerment, not disempowerment in schools. As schooling is sold to us as a mechanism to progress, it is therefore imperative that schools cultivate student leadership that is democratic, respects differing viewpoints, and supports education beyond passing examinations. Students in schools should learn to speak without fear and trust that their rights as human beings

are protected.

I understand that the prefect system is embedded in the historical experience of Zimbabwe, but this system should be transformed so as to advance egalitarian ideals where leaders are chosen by their communities; where leaders serve the interest of their communities, not vice versa, people serving the leaders. Power is a paramount thing in all societies, but how we distribute power across societies should be the order of cultivating ethical politics in the schools, not an anti-politics machine. This goes to the broader society as well.

Examining the Issues with the Prefect System

Our concern for writing this reflection is to engage in a conversation about the role of education in Zimbabwean society. Our understanding of education post-colonial rule is that education is supposed to decolonize the mind and cultivate transformative consciousness towards empowerment. Given this presumption, the education system should attempt to decolonize the mind and draw its knowledge(s) and values from the indigenous ways of understanding, taking into account that indigenous knowledge is not static, but a continued negotiation of a shared vision of our humane relational existence, at the core, Ubuntu. We see decolonization as reparation of our own cultural knowledge and ways of being. At least this is why I went to school. This is why we continue to self-educate beyond schooling, made possible for us through capitalist democracy or autocracy!

The main thesis of *Schooling in Capitalist America* is that schools reproduce the inequality desired by the capitalist system. Schools prepare young people for adult work rules by socializing people to function well and without complaint in the hierarchical structure of the modern corporation. Schools accomplish this goal by the correspondence principle, namely by structuring social interactions and individual rewards to replicate the workplace (Bowles & Gintis, 2002, p. 1). In our prefect system, the school prepares young people to function in autocracy where leaders are not questioned. Like factory workers who work for their pay -checks, students produce work for grades, which has limited relevance to their lives.

Further, Bowles and Gintis argue that schooling in America has a strong bearing on the economic status of parents rather than the educational effort of individual students. And, the success and future of children in this environment relies on the parental status, not student effort. Students from particular ethnic groups, from particular political parties, from particular households get to be the school leaders not because of their own leadership qualities and efforts.

The Prefect System: The Cradle of Autocracy In Zimbabwe's Education System

Within the Zimbabwean society today as described in the vignettes above, the educational climate continues to be steeped in cultural imperialism and undemocratic processes. First, autocracy thrives within capitalism. Currently, the education system is situated within a mindset that capitalist arrangements are equal to democracy. However, there is a clear contradiction because education in Zimbabwe remains highly undemocratic. As explained in the vignette, the prefect system outlines the undemocratic nature of school systems. The prefect system as experienced was controlling other students instead of cultivating critical thinking and liberation. The education system was actively creating hierarchies in the student body where those chosen by the administration were made to feel superior. The voices of those not chosen were stifled. Those chosen as prefects were the ones mentored for "greatness" and these students were the ones having unearned privileges, thereby cultivating an undemocratic culture.

Second, the selection process to the prefect system had no clearly articulated procedure or process. The lack of transparency of the process means the process comes from above and cannot be questioned. This idea that things come from a higher authority is archaic and is detrimental to school leadership, particularly to the growth of young minds, where societal structure is not questioned. In such an environment there is no collective responsibility, but those in authority have an unquestioned authority and they appoint their own people. The

presumption is that these prefects are selected on their merit, but what is merit when the process of earning that merit is not clear to all?

Third, we argue that an education system, where knowledge, values and skills are disconnected from the aspirations of students, is destructive. Unlike Bowles and Gintis's "hidden assumptions" about the roles of education, there are no hidden assumptions in the Zimbabwean education system. Zimbabwe as exemplified in the prefect system is explicitly reproducing credentialed people to grease the autocratic political economic system; this is observed in the ways that credentialing is given to ruling party "big women." Currently, the broader political economy runs on channeling the material prizes to those closest to the seats of political power. In our view, the school system, especially the prefect system, mirrors the broader polity where leaders self appoint and demand worship, instead of proving their leadership qualities in serving others. As in the political economic system of Zimbabwe, the long arm of government reaches out to tax even the poorest of the poor to sustain itself. The prefect system is used in the similar manner to keep the school administration in power for its own sake, not to further student well-being. In an autocratic political economic system, those in power are only generous to themselves and to those closest to them. People who are poor continue to be taxed to extend the power of the ruling. Those who are poor are harassed-they are considered disposable beings whose very poor circumstances created by an unequal order are used against them to keep them in check.

This has become acceptable as the way things are! A society where only 20% of the labor force is formally employed, often without pay, what is the purpose of education? For those who gain access to the positions of employment, often times it is through cronyism and then they only use their positions to exhort resources from those poorer. As mirrored within the prefect system where there are no applications, no procedures for students to prove themselves as leaders in the school system.

In the example of the vignette above there were no clear guidelines for students to be selected to the system. No interviews for candidates to ensure equity and fair process. Moreover, students were never encouraged to develop persuasions to win the votes of their peers as in an electorate democracy. The prefect candidates are not asked or required to reflect and review their own qualities for suitability in school governance. Because someone is coming from a particular environment does not make them an automatic positive leader. The school environment – like the political economic system – those in leadership positions are not supposed to prove themselves in working for the public, but prove themselves in maintaining a system of inequality. So, in the prefect system leaders are born and preference is given to those students from particular environments, for example those whose parents are wealthy and are able to purchase their way; those students who are materially poor whose schooling expenses are paid by the school, so that gratitude to the school is forever maintained. An elitist and cronyism system is thus maintained.

The Zimbabwean education system is designed to reproduce the autocratic system where everyone is made compliant to the consolidated power of the few who have authority to withhold from others what they need! Our lived experience of schooling mirrors clearly the reproduction of an autocratic society that is hierarchical, fears dissent and sees opposition as nothing but a threat to the establishment. In such an environment, schooling is about passing examination not the cultivation of critical thinking beings!

Autocracy is currently cultivated in Zimbabwean education system – the school that we are the product of is based on the transmissionist model where learning is authority received from textbooks and modules. Learning is authority-based, focused on rote knowledge geared towards examinations and credentialing. It is heavily based on cognitive learning and all the other “learning” is subverted. In this environment, students are still expected to grow up to do menial jobs. We ask the question where democratic practices are not cultivated: are students expected to gain social, emotional, cultural learning by osmosis? In an educational environment where passing of examinations, not creativity, is the whole framework of the Zimbabwean education system, parents pay the money for students to pass examinations as these are the sorting mechanism of who gets the privileges of higher education, and who does not. Now with the heavy privatization of the education system, even if you were able to

pass those examinations, the availability of money becomes the new mechanism of sorting – who gets an education and who does not? Zimbabweans are familiar with this sorting game so that they are increasingly buying their certificates, diplomas and doctoral degrees, but does this mean they have an education? The remaining critical question: What role does this kind of education system and these outcomes have on the society as a whole?

Furthermore, in these parts, whilst schooling credentials have been valued, education in these parts does not quite matter when it comes to wealth making, as success in business is politically doled out. Even if graduates became successful business people, the conditions of the place are such that one has to pay their political homage for their businesses to thrive. Paying homage to the Bakuru (big men and women) to let you play! The political process is the decider on who will enter what businesses; who will hold what wealth and who will pay to keep the autocratic system afloat through their labor; who will become part of the torturable classes and disposable persons to us, as education in Zimbabwe becomes just posturing to that global world. Within an autocratic system, which Zimbabwe is, fairness is a word that has no meaning. There is no hidden agenda about this one – one has to pay the Bakuru for one to play – have a business! In this case, Zimbabwean education has become a sham to pick mostly poor people's pockets for promise of credentials, jobs and upward mobility that can not exist for all but only a few who have ascribed statues. Indeed, considering the colonial experience, it has always been like this, it is not surprising that the fruit did not fall far from the tree!

From our experience we see the prefect system as embedded in the colonial education, which is still dominant even to this day. This system was first brought up to maintain discipline and good relations among students; however in its historic and current form it grooms future leaders of an autocratic system. Its legitimacy is maintained by the order and membership of those who were prefects and went on to assumed leadership roles in various societal institutions. For Zimbabwe, what is ironic is that it is the grooming of leaders to consolidate power and have authority to punish without question. In Zimbabwe, students in most schools are not given the exposure to participatory democracy – for instance to have young people select their own leaders. The prefect system does not give a chance to students to elect their representatives or their leaders. Their leaders are chosen for them. This lack of student involvement in electing their leaders was also observed and noted in Botswana by Morapedi and Jotia (2011). The denial of children to participate in their own student leadership is part of an autocratic system where consolidation of power is given to the school administration who then chooses who is to represent the administration in the student body.

Decolonizing the Mind: Promoting Relevant Education System through Ubuntu

We see decolonizing the mind through dialogues about *Ubuntu* as our African value system and knowledge as critical in transforming the school system. Some people hold archaic knowledge and value systems – for instance that children should be seen and not heard, a corruption of *Ubuntu*. This translates to the broader societal outlook – things have historically and are currently done in a very paternalistic way and the children and general public have no way of pointing out that this is counter productive to liberation.

We believe that student leadership in schools should advance democratic ideals not autocratic ideals as seen within the Zimbabwean case. It means recognition that all people matter. A need for participatory and deliberative practices is essential in decolonizing the mind and the systems that make for a society. We see the decolonizing of the mind and system as crucial if it incorporates dialogues that engage indigenous knowledge and values like *Ubuntu*. The dialogues about *Ubuntu* do not necessarily mean assuming dogmatic things about what is perceived as indigenous, but it means a discourse in schools that engages the aspirations of future students about their own lives. As we have outlined, our aspirations are for an egalitarian education system that is inclusive and advances our potentialities as individuals, communities and societies.

References

Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (2002). Schooling in capitalist America revisited. *Sociology of Education*, *75*(1),1-18.

Mathebula, P. T. (2009). *Citizenship education in South Africa: A critique of post-apartheid citizenship education policy*. A thesis submitted to the Wits school of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy.

Marist International Solidarity Foundation (2011). Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Retrieved: http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session12/ZW/FMSI-MaristI I InternationalSolidarityFoundationOnlus-eng.pdf.

Morapedi, Z. & Jotia, A. (2011). Building democratically active citizens Through
The Prefectship System in Botswana schools. *Current Issues in Education*, *14*(1), 1-35. Retrieved from http://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/view/.

Moyo, O. N. (2014) Surviving structural violence in Zimbabwe: The case study of a family coping with violence. In Bouju, J. & de Bruijn, M. (Eds.), *Ordinary violence and social change in Africa*. (84-100). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

The Development of Education; National Report of Zimbabwe (2004). Ministries of Education, Sport and Culture and Higher and Tertiary Education.
http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2004/zimbabwe.pdf

Shizha, E., & Kariwo, M. T. (2011). *Education and development in Zimbabwe*: *A social, political and economic analysis*. Boston: Sense Publishers.

About the Co-Author: Vuyelwa Langelihle Sibindi, is a 2018 Candidate for Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication, at Lupane State University in Lupane, Zimbabwe. Otrude N. Moyo, Ph.D., is Associate Professor & Chair in the School of Education and Human Services, Social Work Department, University of Michigan Flint (moyoon@umflint.edu).

Development of Agriculture or Is it Underdevelopment? Advocacy for a Return to Small is Beautiful in Agriculture in Zimbabwe

Martin P. Moyo

"The guidance we need…cannot be found in science or technology, the value of which utterly depends on the ends they serve; but it can still be found in traditional wisdom of mankind." (E. F. Schumacher, 1973.)

Abstract: Martin P. Moyo's narrative calls on the need to redesign the current agricultural system in Zimbabwe. Historically, a loop sided economy, with a formalized sector for a few and informal sector for the many meant that ,Zimbabwean communities encouraged families to grow their own food, and promoted cooperation among farmers. The economic crisis in 2008 left the agricultural infrastructure less stable and also precipitated a drop in socio-economic and political stability in Zimbabwe. Land availability for growing crops has been limited, overly dependent on rainfall, based on urgent needs and driven by the largest profit available from corporations rather than what will feed people. Food production has decreased and much of the population is not receiving adequate food supply. Dr. Moyo describes how small scale farms can be the most efficient way for growing food. Dr. Moyo discusses that focusing on bringing farmers together to support one another to meet the demands of the market is more socially and ecologically responsible than the current system. As Ubuntu tradition of earlier times focused on the holistic wellbeing of communities, earlier agricultural systems also focused on what farming methods would be best for the most people. Farmers pooled resources in order to increase each other's agricultural production and lent out cows to poorer families to support food production and crop growth. Adaptations of these earlier farming strategies can help with unemployment, improve sustainability and increase food security for communities.

Introduction: Development of Agriculture or Is it Underdevelopment?

I grew up growing some of the food we ate and keeping livestock. In another environment my parents would have been "hobby farmers" because they had "day jobs." But in Zimbabwe they were subsistence farmers, keeping livestock and growing their food using rainfed agriculture whenever possible. They were not alone in their practices, these are livelihoods for many people in southern Africa. As long as I can remember, each year when the rain clouds gather, I watched my now elderly parents prepare their best seeds stored from last year's harvest and prepare their fields by spreading manure to welcome the new growing season of their rain fed agriculture. Each year they have worried about availability of seeds, manure, sometimes floods and then the severe droughts challenging their food security. Not only this, but the encroachment of science and technology the value of which utterly depends on the ends they serve (Schumacher, 1973); today, genetically modified seeds; factory farmed chickens and other livestock and the threats of pests and pesticides.

Since graduating with my undergraduate degree in Agriculture in 2001, I have worked with rural farmers in southern Africa who pride themselves on growing the best of everything from nature itself! I have experienced the wisdom of subsistence farmers on one hand, and on another I have heard "expert talk" about underinvestment in southern African agriculture; inefficient internal markets and the possibilities of genetically modified organisms having a potential for boosting agriculture yields and "climate proofing crops" (Draper, Kiratu & Hichert, 2009). I have often wondered with all this talk if it is indeed development of agriculture or is it underdevelopment? Schumacher's quote above reminds us that there is indeed wisdom in learning from subsistence farmers augmented by science and technology that serves the improvement of quality of life. It is without a doubt that farmers like my parents are indeed worried about climate change but also their fate with genetically modified organisms, the negative effects of synthetic fertilizers, and heavy use of pesticides – these technologies, while convenient and likely to increase yields, have long term negative effects. For example, horribly tasting foods that are nutritionally deficient, increased environmental risks like ground water pollution, disruption of ecosytems and increased toxins, allergens and carcinogens that cause immune system disorders and fertility issues, etc. So the

pertinent question has been: Is it development when businesses are dousing people and the environment with toxins in the promise of improving plant yield? These are complex issues facing the development of a financially successful agriculture sector in southern Africa that is socially and ecologically responsible.

My elderly parents once had day jobs-they were once teachers and education administrators before the collapse of the economy. The lesson learned in this whole ordeal is that my parents have always been rooted on the land, even with their day jobs. What was their life experience telling me? With the collapse of the economy their experience speaks to wisdom to trust the self-sufficiency that comes from being socially and ecologically responsible. Their trust and loyalty in their own self-sufficiency has been unwavering. Making sure that they plant their first crop; keeping and maintaining their own varied livestock has mitigated their loss of those economies tied to the ebbs and flows of the money markets, which they have always been on the margins. It took me time to realize that my parents, like most Zimbabwean small scale farmers, had been rooted on the land not just as property but the land as the giver of life and livelihoods, never mind changes in science and technologies. Each year my dear parents cast seeds on the earth to grow their own food and each year it is a memory for me to not lose their wisdom, lest I become a "desert" myself.

They pride themselves on growing and eating the “real” stuff – nature grown crops, grass fed livestock, still in nature. Now, growth of factory farmed chickens, genetically modified everything – these are the complex questions about the development of agriculture in southern Africa. My efforts have been: How can I improve the quality of life of these people who have so much wisdom from their practice experience? I have gone on to complete my doctoral studies in agriculture with a focus on climate risk management and improving crop yield for rural farmers, and in turn ensuring food security. Currently, I work for an international agricultural research institute where our charge has been to use best practices to improve rural farmer’s crop yields. In this regard, my efforts have been in livelihoods, social development and improvement of food security for southern Africa. This narrative will focus on my work specifically in Zimbabwe. The article is not testing a hypothesis but is a reflection of my observation about agricultural experience in Zimbabwe as it relates to improving quality of life.

The Place of Agriculture in Southern Africa

Agriculture is a very important sector in southern Africa as it contributes about 35% in terms of GDP; provides 70-80% of employment; and contributes significantly (up to 30%) in foreign exchange earnings (Kandji et al., 2006). In Zimbabwe, the agricultural sector has long been key to its economic stability and growth. It forms the basis of the direct and indirect livelihoods of almost 70% of the population and economic growth is also directly linked to the performance of this sector (Anseeuw et al., 2012). The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO, 2005) reveals that agriculture contributes about 17% of Zimbabwe’s GDP. The importance of agriculture to national GDP is also confirmed by the link between rainfall and fluctuations in GDP growth.

Agriculture in Southern Africa (Zimbabwe, included), has been described by Draper et al. (2009) as a complex, uncertain and "messy" topic to address. The issues related to agriculture are not static, linear, rational or stand alone, yet they have massive impacts and consequences to general quality of life (Draper et al. 2009). As stated above, one of the major factors noted across developing economies is the predominance of the share of agriculture to the economy. Second, is the co-occuring poorly functioning and/or non existent factor markets (Unal, 2008). In Zimbabwe this is true too. We see that agriculture consist of a substantial share of the economy, and at the same time problematic factor markets. What is meant by factor markets? Factor markets (refer to services that maintain the main factors of production) particularly for capital goods, are the defining characteristics of a market economy. However, historically in Zimbabwe, attempts to create a socialist economy meant a substitution of factor markets with central economic planning, often competitive with factors markets. Why is this an important factor to understand? According to Unal (2008), the intersection of a larger share of agriculture in the economy and poorly functioning factor markets produces the widely commented on inverse relationship between farm size and yield per acre. It means that as farm size gets bigger, more capital inputs are required. However, in conditions where capital inputs are small, yield gets smaller (Unal, 2008). Indeed, the relationship between farm size and

yield has long been a focal point of agriculture economics but there is no conclusive understanding of why it occurs. However, the critical part to understand is that this inverse relationship between size and yield has far reaching implications to social development policy, i.e. to employment, land reform and market efficiencies.

Looking at the farm size and yield in Turkey, Unal (2008) outlines the prominent implications, first, if in developing countries there is an inverse relationship between size and yield, it begs the question: Was the Zimbabwean government justified to engage in redistributive land reforms? While it is not the purpose of this paper to examine the extent to which land reform in Zimbabwe was redistributive, the issue here is that if there is an inverse relationship between farm size and yield, the drive to correct land inequities is justified since small is beautiful! Indeed land reforms has played an important role in economic transformations, creating agricultural surplus, growing consumer demand, and creating political stability to maintain rapid industrialization for countries like Japan, South Korea and Taiwan (Heltberg, 1998 quoted by Unal, 2008).

Another implication of the inverse relationship between farm size and yield are the implications to employment. Sen (1999) quoted by Unal (2008) argues that the choice of technology in agriculture is crucial for resource allocation and employment, since in most developing countries, the majority of the population is employed in agriculture. Further, Sen (1999), argues that certain types of technologies are more appropriate for countries in which labor is abundant, relative to other factors of production. Since labor is abundant, small scale-farming is more favorable for labor intensive farming than large-scale farming that requires more capital inputs. In this regard, a focus on small scale farming for Zimbabwe seems the most practical, given the abundant labor as opposed to capital improvements that are scarce.

This inverse relationship also causes environmental deterioration and disintegration of communities. Unal (2008) argues that land concentration, combined with mechanization in agriculture, creates landless laborers who lack alternative means of procuring a livelihood, either cultivate ill suited and environmentally sensitive tracts of land in forests and arid lands, or migrate to other places in search of employment. Due to its policy implications for employment, efficiency, equity and sustainability, IR has been one of the most important and hotly debated topics in agricultural economics. However, still there is no consensus on what causes it. Again, in this paper we are not testing this inverse relationship but are sharing our observations and experience to provide commentary on what has happened to the agricultural experience in Zimbabwe.

The Current Status of Agriculture in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's agriculture is currently facing serious challenges of productivity. In recent years, productivity has declined drastically and the country is unable to feed itself. Over the past 15 years, Zimbabwe has also gone through a period of socio-economic decline and political instability, with land tenure a major issue. The unplanned and chaotic land reform is sometimes blamed for food shortages. However that may not be the case, as 80% of maize, the staple crop, has always been produced by small holder communal farmers. While government and donor programs have provided free or subsidized inputs in recent years, they tend to be provided in insufficient quantities to drive productivity improvement and noticeable increases in income.

The current challenges in Zimbabwean agriculture could be blamed on government policies, many of which lack technical support, processes, and systems to support implementation. As mentioned earlier, the lack of development of factor markets to an economy that is largely agrarian means the cementation of that inverse relationship between farm size and yields. Yields are a function of the inputs – if these are insufficient then a decrease in yield is expected. To exacerbate the situation, Zimbabwean agriculture has continued to rely on rain fed agriculture, but in light of climate variability and change, droughts have been prevalent, negatively impacting yield. In addition, the national agricultural extension service lost many of its experienced extension officers during the economic crisis years, and lacks resources to effectively reach the more than 1.5 million communal farmers. This results in low productivity gains as new technologies to support farmers are not shared.

Over the past 15 year s there were four major channels for assistance to agriculture development in Zimbabwe. These included the government, the United Nations group (coordinated by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for agriculture), the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), and bilateral initiatives (the Protracted Relief Programme (PRP), although was atypical – although it started as a bilateral programme of the Department for International Development (DFID), it eventually involved several donors) (Anseeuw et al., 2012). Anseeuw et al. (2012) notes that although each sphere was well coordinated (except for the government, where project implementation was mainly ad hoc) there was little coordination between these different entities. The main reasons for the lack of coordination were the different approaches to assistance, different political stances towards Zimbabwe, and donor visibility. On the ground, separate and fragmented implementation led to less coordinated and limited (scattered funding) initiatives (Anseeuw et al., 2012). Programs were varied to support the varied agricultural sectors. Given the political environment, consolidation of land and particularly the prime agricultural land destroys agriculture. On one hand the prime agricultural lands became under utilized resulting in decreased agricultural capacity. FAO's approach has been to consolidate land to yield higher productivity in agriculture.

Economic problems with what many called an economic meltdown were severe, with the country's official inflation rate being quoted at a staggering 230 million percent (%) in 2008 (Shumba, 2010). Zimbabwe has a population of about 12.7 million people and is among the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) worst affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic (CSO, 2012). HIV prevalence among adults 15 years and above in Zimbabwe was estimated to be 23.7% in 2001, 18.4% in 2005 (Malaba, 2006) and further declined to 15% in 2012.

The resulting loss of livelihoods, increased poverty, reduced food security, and decline of the formal economy have resulted in millions of Zimbabweans needing emergency support primarily provided through donor funded, NGO implemented programs. Social and economic systems have collapsed, decimating the productive capacity of actors at multiple levels

Rohrbach *et al.* (2004b) suggest that the labor constraints associated with the HIV/AIDS pandemic has a major bearing to the farming system, limiting affected households' capacity to produce crops and herd animals. Price-Smith and Daly (2004) concur and point out that HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe is shrinking productivity, leading to a decline in the growth of human capital, and killing the productive working class. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO, 2007) also reveals that HIV/AIDS and emigration due to economic conditions undermines the capacity of households to gain access to and produce food, depleting agricultural labor, which depletes the time and resources of care givers who might otherwise be able to produce food. Productivity is low, which is related to a low level of capital endowment, leading to a restricted uptake of productive farm technologies and, subsequently, to low yield and output (ZimVAC, 2009). However, it is also important to explore and note the impact of remittances on agricultural gain, since those who have emigrated also continue to somehow indirectly support agriculture.

The national average yield for maize production has ranged between 600-700 kilograms/hectare in recent years, with the national average reaching 850 kilograms/hectare in the 2013/14 season due to improved rainfall conditions. Reliance on government or donor input programs and production of maize or other low value crops, often with very little surplus, has trapped smallholder farmers in a cycle of poverty, food insecurity, and dependency.

Does a market oriented agriculture approach improve food security and productivity?

Zimbabwe has had a mixed farmer agricultural system, with large scale commercial farmers, small scale commercial farmers, rural/communal farmers, subsistence farmers and urban farmers. Since 1980, public research focus has been on developing sustainable crop and livestock production systems for the low rainfall areas. Today, often talked about is the promotion of a market oriented agriculture approach that could improve both food security and productivity. A market driven/oriented approach according to ICRISAT (2010) is one that enables the poor smallholder farmers to capture larger rewards from markets, while managing their risks. This approach

assumes that markets will provide the
"pull" or demand for goods which will then enable the smallholder farmers to capture rewards, in this case raise income of farmers who provide these goods. The rewards and the demands of the markets motivate adoption of innovations and stimulate agro-enterprises that raise rural incomes and create opportunities to invest in and beyond agriculture (ICRISAT, 2010). It is critical to note that the market-oriented approach recognizes women and youth as key role players. This type of approach is currently lacking in Zimbabwe, and there is a need to enable farmers to be part of this development process. But, the major questions remains: Can a viable agricultural system develop without those factor markets? Can a socially responsible and ecologically accountable agriculture system emerge in Zimbabwe?

Currently, in Zimbabwe most of agriculture interventions remain emergency-oriented, being time bound, rainfed, and thus very limited in scope (Anseeuw et al., 2012). There is a need to improve public investment, as well as research and development investment in agriculture – which is currently lacking, by ensuring that any development funds availed are well spent (Draper et al., 2009). There is a need for a policy shift by the Government and the role of government in the sector (providing a sustainable and suitable environment for investment in the sector) should be clearly defined. There is a need to deal with the current situation where there is a lack of a relevant and well-defined policy and institutional framework, leading to an ill-defined overall development strategy and unstructured institutional entities (Anseeuw et al., 2012). In this vein, supporting a market driven approach as a development strategy where farming is seen as a socially responsible and ecologically accountable business could be part of the solution.

Linking farmers to markets is critical for improved livelihoods of smallholder farmers as research indicates that they currently face disadvantages in marketing their produce. Communal farmers' primary marketing constraints are due to their inability to consistently supply the large quantity as well as high quality produce for the market. Regional farmers' organizations could emerge as the hub to bring together farmers to discuss, share ideas, network and sell their products. It is imperative to support farmers to gather, share and find solutions to local farm issues. This farmer network could become a catalyst to developing best practices in farming.

The big corporate farm mentality is one to unlearn for Zimbabwe. Historically, this approach resulted in small holder farmers being bypassed in the process of transformation of agriculture and agri-businesses. The big corporate farm mentality looked down on traditional solutions to improve productivity. A recent baseline study by ICRISAT (unpublished) of two irrigation schemes in Zimbabwe (Silalabuhwa in Insiza District and Mkoba in Gweru Rural District) reveals the subsistence nature of farmers/irrigators. ICRISAT notes that there is a big task in working with farmers in trying to overcome market impediments, as well as in identifying new markets. Farmers have known how, although noting the existence of potential (better) markets for farmers, the study notes that a number of impediments exist, which prevent farmers from accessing them. These are identified as: I) they require reliable supplies and farmers are not able to consistently supply the market with the desired produce; ii) access is associated with high transport that dissuades farmers from supplying to that market; and iii) these markets need produce on a regular basis which the "subsistence" nature of these irrigation systems currently cannot meet. The study reveals that farmers need to take farming as a business concept seriously, so that they can realise the potential income available at these markets and help farming to be a profitable livelihood option. A market driven agriculture approach that is socially responsible and ecologically accountable could therefore even drive improved productivity. For Zimbabwe we argue for a market driven approach that is socially responsible and ecologically accountable, mitigating the problems experienced by other parts of the world, such as heavy use of synthetic fertilizers, heavy use of pesticides, loss of soil resources, deforestation, and loss of identity and culture of farming. Land reforms as part of improving access to land for farming for most people has been somewhat accomplished in Zimbabwe. The critical question is: How can a financially successful agriculture sector that is socially responsible and ecologically accountable be supported for the future of Zimbabwe?

Learning from Farmers :Strategies for Sustainable Food Security

In Zimbabwe if not for people being subsistence farmers and doing their own thing – producing their own food, the economic meltdown could have made the most severe impact on the population. But because Zimbabwe is a country where subsistence agriculture is the mainstay – this should be where the country focuses for improving its economy and food security. Currently, my observation is that Zimbabwean agriculture support has not provided that symbiotic wisdom – learning what local farmers produce and why. There is a need to broadly work with farmers, symbiotically using their indigenous knowledge (from the local subsistence farmer) and the best practices harnessed from the scientific world.

My personal experience with rural farmers and research in the area of increasing crop yields achieving food security; where all people, at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life (IFPRI, 2002). Small scale farmers, including rural and urban farmers, have historically provided their own livelihoods first, and then they sell whatever else is surplus. Sustainable food production as an agricultural and social development approach is inspiring in the sense that local needs, nutrition, and preference crops could be harnessed for the well-being of people and then as surplus for markets. The market driven approach where people matter may provide more opportunities for farmers, as it may broaden the choice of enterprises which communal farmers in the marginal areas could use to ultimately improve their incomes.

The communal areas have social dynamics that could lead this market driven production system. In an environment where resources for farm implements have been hard to come by, particularly with the prevailing economic hardships, households, families, and communities have historically pooled resources together to prepare the fields, store seeds, plant, weed and harvest together. I came of age at post independent Zimbabwe but still today some rural communities set aside a day to work together for the common good (*amalima*). These practices are dying out but they are the cultural pride of Zimbabwe's agriculture that could be incorporated n income generation in communal areas. Still today, in some communities the *amasiso* concept is practiced (where cattle are lent to poorer households, for milk, for manure, and for draft power!). Although this is a dying tradition in some positive situations, it provided equitable use of resources – so that all households, even the poorer ones had some self sufficiency.

I want to emphasize that subsistence farming is the mainstay of southern African economies – it should be encouraged and improved, not criticized. Indeed, Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* makes sense for Zimbabwe's agricultural approach, but this also has to be driven by broader interventions. The promotion of small scale and subsistence agriculture, if managed with best practices, can not only offset food shortages but helps off-set high unemployment by providing land for people to work for their own upkeep. It ties to local nutritional needs; health and environmental stewardship are great positive possibilities. It has been my observation that small farmers continue to maintain their autonomy and self-sufficiency to provide their own food. Working in large commercial farms means workers have less autonomy to produce their own food, since they have to produce export crops yielding well deserved financial gains only to a single corporation. Moreover, even the wages of most commercial farm workers are too low for these workers to purchase their own food, which is a basic necessity.

What could be done to improve agriculture in Zimbabwe?: a Return to Small is Beautiful - Agriculture as If People Mattered

There is no silver bullet intervention to improve agriculture in Zimbabwe. The country needs a structural paradigm shift and a transformation towards sustainable agricultural production, based on in-depth structural and broad policy changes. Rain fed agriculture predominates these farming systems and there is need for a shift in mind set among farmers to consider food security and then, income generation from their farms. It is clear that "Business As Usual" approaches are not yielding desired results and changes. Development interventions have tended to focus mainly on the problem of the farmers' capabilities or discreet value chains, with weakly

coordinated responses involving large amounts of training and capacity building around those two areas.

There is a need to focus on strengthening systems – to focus on the "whole system" in which smallholder farmers operate, placing particular emphasis on facilitating market systems that are competitive, inclusive and resilient. By "whole systems" I refer to all actors and stakeholders that affect the different parts of the economic environment in which small holder farmers participate. This includes the farmers themselves, government partners, donor agencies, non-government organizations, private sectors players (buyers, input suppliers, transporters, financial service providers, etc.) and various players at community, provincial and national levels. There is a need to improve those factor market approaches to advance profit and market systems development strategies to increase agricultural outputs. We should work on applying farmer-centered approaches to increase the production capacities of smallholder farmers whilst improving farming techniques and practices through business/ enterprise-based models.

Helping small farmers get access to farm inputs like financial loans, technical support and land rights can have a catalytic effect on improving the productivity of small farms. Small farmers are keen business people, given opportunities they are able to manage risks and diversify into better markets. But, this opportunity is severely hampered by lack of free flow of information, ideas, resources to make for efficient markets.

Zimbabwe must not only look at and rely on foreign direct investment in the sector but creating a domestic local environment that creates, develops and support local investors. It is vital for Zimbabwe to re-engage social development. Both government and donors have to shift from an assistance-aid approach to a developmental one. There is also a need to learn from the Malawian experiences – where input subsidy was too expensive for the government and relied heavily on donor support. When donors pulled the plug, the sector collapsed (Draper et al., 2009). In Zimbabwe, the rural market economy collapsed because of the economic crisis, as well as constant chaotic interventions by the state and donors. This led to the collapse of input and output markets and efficient price-setting mechanisms, among other things (Anseeuw et al., 2012). Who the farmers are is important. In many cases women and young people are denied access to inputs where these are doled politically according to region, ethnicity, party politics etc.

There is a need to initiate capacity building programs of rural farming communities for sustainability of various agriculture interventions. One of the major impediments to agriculture growth in Zimbabwe has been a lack of efficient and effective support to agriculture, mainly a lack of research and agricultural extension services, leading to a limited transfer of technology from research and restricted dissemination of productive farm technologies. From my work in rural areas, I have noted that farmers are generally risk averse and they strategically cultivate crops for family subsistence and survival. Historically (through the location of communal areas in poor climatic and poor soils regions), they have been forced to acquire technical skills needed to cultivate crops that are reliable and less risky (such as small grains) but not of high value. This trend needs to change and the government (and donors) needs to invest heavily in training of young farmers and providing resources to research and extension institutions to conduct quality research and provide technical support regularly. Draper et al. (2009) raise a valid argument that international agricultural research projects with substantial payoffs for a large number of beneficiaries should be given investment priority.

Deteriorating infrastructure and lack of adequate and suitable infrastructure is one of the major constraints in resuscitating Zimbabwe agriculture. Most of the farming areas are inaccessible (for marketing and movement of produce) due to lack of or dilapidated infrastructure. There is therefore an urgent need to improve rural infrastructure such as roads, telecommunications, fuel supplies, electricity and input manufacturing industries (to reduce the high costs of production).

Agriculture interventions need to be oriented towards broader integration of the agricultural sector (agribusiness development, manufacturing and industrial development, financial sector development etc.), and wider macroeconomic and governance restructuring. Placing "social development" at the center near land where local

people build communities that create new economies that can counteract the devastating effects of globalization. Currently, most of agriculture interventions focus narrowly on food and agricultural production (Anseeuw et al., 2012). There are very few financial institutions that provide any financial support to smallholder farmers. There is therefore an opportunity to have a policy backed by legal framework that works towards cooperation between government (also dealing with the new tenurial situation) and financial institutions in providing financial support to small holder farmers with tacit support and involvement of extension services.

Lastly, there is a need to make use of traditional community systems that have been used in food production and in smoothing out drought eventualities. In the past I heard that there used to be community "chests/*iziphala*" - where individual households contributed to cultivation for meeting of community needs to mitigate droughts and storing of seeds for next crops. As indicated earlier, people also used to set aside a day where they worked for "the common good" – this could be another way of making sure there are crops set aside for communities in times of drought. It is critical to note that these social institutions only cater for food security. Socially responsible agricultural businesses will be income generating but also producing surplus to be sold as part of community oriented businesses. To conclude, there is also a need to develop enterprise combinations, which include the communal farmers' food safety crops (small grain crops) as well as high value crops, which are economically viable and technically feasible for the communal areas. Local and community grounded economies where small, local and organic farmers work together is the future for southern Africa's agriculture. To conclude, E. F. Schumacher reminds us that people who live in highly self sufficient economies are less likely to be involved in large scale violence than those people whose lives depend on global systems of free trade.

References

Anseeuw, W., Kapuya, T., & Saruchera, D. (2012). Zimbabwe's agricultural reconstruction: Present state, ongoing projects and prospects for reinvestment. Development planning division working paper series No. 32: Development bank of Southern Africa limited.

Draper, P., Kiratu, S., & Hichert, T. (2009). How might agriculture develop in Southern Africa? Making sense of complexity. International Institute for Sustainable Development(IISD). Retrieved from http://www.iisd.org/library/how-might-agriculture-develop-southern-africa-making-sense-complexity

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). (2005). FAOSTAT Online. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/ag/agl/aglw/aquastat/countries/zimbabwe/index.stm.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). (2007). Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/hivaids/

Heltberg, R. (1998). Rural market imperfections and the farm size productivity relationship: Evidence from Pakistan. *World Development 26*(10), 1807-26.

ICRISAT (2010). ICRISAT Strategic Plan to 2020: Inclusive Market-Oriented Development for Smallholder Farmers in the Tropical Drylands. Patancheru 502 324, Andhra Pradesh, India: International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). 60 pp. ISBN 978-92-9066-536-6.

International Food Policy Research Institute. (2002). *Reaching sustainable food security for all by 2020. Getting the priorities and responsibilities right.* Washington, D. C: IFPRI

Kandji, S. T., Verchot, L., & Mackensen, J. (2006). *Climate change and variability in Southern Africa: Impacts and adaptation in the agricultural sector*. United Nations Environmental Programme and World Agroforestry Centre. 48 pp.

Malaba, J. (2006). *Poverty measurement and gender: Zimbabwe's experience. Inter-agency and group meeting on*

the development of gender statistics. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs: New York.

Moyo, M., Moyo, M., & van Rooyen, A. (2014). Increasing irrigation water productivity in Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe through on-farm monitoring, adaptive management and Agricultural Innovation Platforms. ICRISAT Baseline Data Survey Report. Project Number: FSC-2013-006. Unpublished.

Rohrbach, D.D., van Rooyen, A.F., & Hargreaves, S. K. (2004b). Disaster mitigation options for livestock production in communal farming systems of Zimbabwe: 3. Final Report. ICRISAT, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, FAO, Rome, Italy and ILRI, Nairobi, Kenya. 24pp.

Schumacher, E. F. (1989). *Small is beautiful: Economics as if people mattered*. London: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc.

Sen, A. K. (1999). *Employment, technology, and development*. Oxford: ILO and Clarendon Press.

Shumba, G. (2010). Zimbabwe in 2010: A short guide to the future. Retrieved from http://www.actsa.org/Pictures/UpImages/Zimbabwe/Zimbabwe%20in%202010%20A%20Guide%20to%20the%20Future.pdf.

Unal, F. G. (2008). *Small is beautiful: Evident of an inverse relationship between farm size and yield in Turkey.* Working Paper No. 551, the Levy Economics Institute.

Unganai, L.S., Bandason, T., & Jogo. W. (2004). Economic benefits of seasonal climate forecasts in farm management in Zimbabwe. Technical Report, NOAA/OGP.

Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC). (2009). ZimVAC urban food security assessment, January 2009. National Report. Harare: ZimVAC.

About the Author: Dr. Martin P. Moyo, Ph.D., Scientific Officer, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT-Zimbabwe), Matopos Research Station,
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (ph: (26) (377) 465-8318; m.moyo@cgiar.org).

Window to Everyday Experiences of a Social Development Auxiliary Worker in South Africa

Nenekazi Melody Gxashe

Abstract: As social workers, we are driven by an intention to help and support those with less resources, but sometime the "professionalization" of this helping career leaves otherwise capable individuals overly dependent on professional social workers to "fix" or rescue them. Ms. Gxashe's narrative addresses this very dynamic within the social work field and reflects how we may unintentionally encourage people to not take ownership of their own problems. Additionally, she notes that the social work profession may view clients as "the problem" rather than victims of a larger, unjust system that perpetuates oppression. Ms. Gxashe suggests that embracing principles of *Ubuntu* when working with clients may enable us to look at how the functioning of the bigger system contributes to individual suffering. In other words, we can use the spirit of *Ubuntu* to see individual problems as not the fault of the individual only, but symptomatic of a broader societal dysfunction.

Introduction

My position is complex and multilayered moving from basic administrative work, case updates, filing and making appointments; to actual follow-up with case interventions and legislative developments. I recognize that my position entails both care and social control. In this respect, I share the dilemmas that I encounter in my work as an auxiliary worker and in my aspirations to become a professional social worker. I continue to ask questions about the relevance of the social work profession in the light of the vast problems of poverty, unemployment and everyday violence experienced in my community. I will return to share the programs undertaken by the department of social development as well as my roles and functions. I will end the reflection with a composite of my typical day to highlight my experience.

How did I Become a Social Auxiliary Worker?

I became an auxiliary worker out of necessity. It was in October 2007, I came across the Daily Dispatch (Eastern Cape newspaper), which was a friend's newspaper. Notice that it was difficult to buy individual newspapers. Out of necessity we have cultivated a sense of sharing. To cut the story short, I usually try to find a newspaper among the ones circulated within the community. The one who is able to afford a paper purchases it for the day and circulates the paper among neighbors. This is the way that I grew up connected to the world around me, even at a time when papers did not write positive things about people like me! As I was perusing the Daily Dispatch back in 2007, I noticed the advert for the position that I currently hold – social auxiliary worker. The advert basically required a 12th grade certificate and completion of social auxiliary work courses. For the most part, the training has been on the job. Social auxiliary workers support social workers and often times perform the functions of social workers when professional social workers are scarce.

I have always worked in my community one way or the other, but without direct pay. Supporting community members as neighbors, friends and relatives, was part of my upbringing. Growing up in Eastern Cape where material resources are not easy to come by, most people work to support each other outside of formal employment and outside the formalized support system of the social development department. In an environment with high unemployment, I consider myself fortunate to have held a paid position. However, the work place is often at odds with my own lived experiences.

Dilemmas of Social Auxiliary Workers

As a social auxiliary worker, one is perceived as a paraprofesssional. Categorization of social auxiliary workers as paraprofessionals captures a narrow slice of experience. Paraprofessional work is part of "modernity" building.

Such progress, as outlined by western experiences, is part of the new South Africa. It therefore entails contradictions to reconcile the past with the present. In my experience the contradictions of the past and present tend to be reproduced in the work and aspirations of social auxiliary workers. I work in the Eastern Cape but my environment has been greatly influenced by the ways of consumerism and capitalism, which come to us through the media.

Professionalization of social work in turn social auxiliary work

I have strong passion for my work. Since my hire in 2008, I have demonstrated exceptional ability to learn and do the work presented to me. But dilemmas abound, particularly in my aspirations to become a social worker. I have noticed that the work we do as social auxiliary workers is really about intervening, not so much in the people who experience societal problems but most often in the lives of those perceived as the problem by others. So, that role to control those "others" who are perceived as problematic is an active part of my work. For example through my current work, we noticed that children who were in our foster care system were not completing their high school or furthering their education beyond high school. We were able to gather relevant stakeholders, i.e. Department of Education, universities, and children themselves, in order to work to motivate the children to complete their high school. Whilst this was a success, our attempt to regulate and control the lives of these foster care children became a priority, more than the broader care to ensure that all children are motivated and have opportunities to complete high school and move beyond. This is one dimension of my dilemmas with the social work profession. Particularly, in the environment like Eastern Cape where social problems are vast and dire, the focus on social control as the way we often work makes it difficult to do the broader care work for a just community and society.

Further, I know and often say that my mission is to become a professional social worker and make a difference in my life and the lives of the poorest of the poor. But the idea of social work as a profession with structured training and in particular, differentiated ways of engaging with so called "clients", presents challenges in making a difference in people's lives. The commitment to the profession ends up being a commitment to an institution, not to making a difference in the lives of those that we are supposed to serve. It begins with credentialing, and therefore weeding out, workers like myself away from particular kinds of approaches. These approaches become reserved for the qualified social worker. We too in South Africa have a hegemonic social care system propagated and sustained by the so-called professionals. Who, in my view, are perceived of possessing the know-how to fix social problems, but do they? As an auxiliary social worker, I am so conscious of the two-faced role I play. For example, learning departmental policies, governmental acts, keeping up with the bureaucratic functions of my job and the demands for social control, and on the other hand, the care I have to provide for the people who are requiring help. It is also interesting that many who come into the field of social work think of themselves as having passion and duty to care for the people that require their care. But as an auxiliary worker, I also find that my work entails things that are not necessarily care, in actuality, they may be opposite to care. Many times my job has meant maintenance of a system in which care presumably occurs. Don't get me wrong, there is care in the work I currently do. But I realize that the work I do prioritizes seeing individual's failings rather than the poor conditions that impair their quality of life and overall functioning.

Professionalism comes with power and more control over other people's lives. A definition of societal problems and how these problems will be alleviated often usurps the initiatives of ordinary people to solve problems. The professional approach is different from people in a community coming together to solve their "own problems." Often times, our agencies define the problems and the way we should approach those problems. Our current, social work environment is still heavily driven by the professionals not the people who we are serving, I believe things will change if people facing issues employ social workers. Historically in South Africa, things were done for people in a patronizing way. Now, the professionals' control of social problems as social workers define them. The authority that comes with professionalism, brings back the same old notions- that someone else has to do the work, rather than communities doing the work themselves, with their own knowledge and skills. As a social auxiliary worker, I have been interested in the politics of professionalism-how ordinary people become dependent on entrenched professionals; this system demands that we find alternatives to this kind of conventional social

work, where people are seen as problems, instead of the environments that create those problems.

I have this dilemma about the social work that I aspire to. I ask how far is social work empowering people to do what they want with their lives today? What will be the roots of the social work I practice in the Eastern Cape? Does this social work draw from my lived experience – as I mentioned I used to work in my community for my neighbors, friends and relatives – does the social work I aspire to take into account Xhosa ways of doing things? Apartheid defined people like me, in my community, as "problems"Our existence was perceived as the problem, and today, that mentality of people as the "problem" has not gone away. We continue to define and see others in our communities as "problems" for the target of social work professional expertise. As I am working in the Eastern Cape, I have noticed bewildering approaches. The Department of Social Development was changed from welfare to social development; increasingly government has extended social grants as ways for people without incomes to live. Many people in the community view this as government creating a dependency syndrome. Given the prevailing consumer society, what alternatives exist to redress this presumption of dependency? As social development workers, we introduce community development projects, women's co-operation and youth projects, however we encounter lack of interest. But, the big question is: Does this aid really help people become self-supporting members of society? Or, is it just a temporary measure to control the people who would otherwise cause harm if they did not have it? The South African social grants continue along the pathways of the aged – described as deserving individuals – who have encountered misfortune through no fault of their own, and are given the social grants as economic support. What about those who are presented as "undeserving" how do they get assistance? In South Africa today very few people have chosen poverty, most people have had hardships thrust upon them by an economic system that has not been responsive to meeting basic human needs including work that pays a decent wage.

Is a social work approach steeped in social control rather than care, such as in South Africa? Currently, the South African White Paper on Welfare defines Ubuntu as: "the principle of caring for each other's well-being and as a spirit of mutual support. Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through a recognition of the individual's humanity. Ubuntu means that people are people through other people. It also acknowledges both the right and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well being" (South African Government Gazette, 20/02/1996). Can a social work profession that approaches work through individualization of social problems and individualized interventions achieve the spirit of Ubuntu? It is important to begin to see how we are transforming social work given our lived experiences.

My Job as a Social Auxiliary Worker

My current job is to provide support to social workers in the rendering of social work services with regard to the care, support, protection and development of vulnerable individuals, groups, families and communities through the relevant departmental programs. It means conducting basic observation for assessments aimed at identifying conditions in individuals, groups, families and communities that justify relevant intervention. In critical terms, I do see my job as "processing" those perceived as deviants, the seemingly problems of society, who undermine the good workings of a capitalistic society. In the communities, I work with social workers to attend to any matter that could result in, or stem from, social instability in any form. As a supportive role, my job is to collect and provide information to identify the appropriate intervention required to address particular conditions; I also assist with the development and planning of programs to render the recommended interventions efficiently, effectively and economically. Further, my role is to support social workers facilitate the implementation of intervention by providing continuous support, basic counselling and guidance to the affected individuals, groups, families and communities. I also monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the recommended interventions, report on progress, and assist in identifying the need to amend the interventions, depending on the conditions. In addition, I disseminate basic information on legislation, policies and procedures in the social work field; collect and provide information for the performance of statutory functions by the social worker including:

- Implementation of the recommended interventions
- Produce and maintain records and data of interventions processes and outcomes.
- Conduct promotion, prevention, protection, rehabilitation, outreach and empowerment initiatives in the social work field.

I am supposed to keep abreast with new developments in the social work and social services field as part of continuing personal development in the field. This means that I have to read publications in order to ensure that I incorporate new developments into my role. Because of the changes in the legislature, my role is to monitor and study the social services legal and policy framework continuously. I attend meetings, workshops, symposia, conferences and any other relevant developmental activities, in order to be cognisant of the latest development in the relevant field. Overall, I perform basic administrative support functions in support of social workers as required of the job – provide examples updating case notes, filing and setting up appointments.

My Role in Social Development Programs

The department of social development has programmes that are as follows:

- Child care and Protection services
- HIV and Aid
- Victim Empowerment programme
- Services to Older Persons
- Services to People with Disabilities
- Social Relief of Distress
- Care and support services to families
- Under each programme I have key functions to perform

Last year in the beginning of June 2013 until to date, I requested to assist the NPO Unit on processing of claim forms in the area office where I perform the following duties.

A. Receiving of claims:

- 118 NGOs submitting claims within the first four working day of the month
- Responsible to check authenticity, budget and correctness
- Reconciliation of expenditure and receipts/invoices
- Reconciliation of register with the number of children approved
- Verify and confirm elements of under spending
- Capture all 118 claims on the system (MIS)
- Submit for manual recommendation and approval (signature) by the management
- Submission of claims at the provincial office for the processing of payment

B. Ensure all newly funded NGOs are registered on BAS system:

- Assisted newly funded NPOs on completing application forms with relevant documents
- Opening of each file with all the relevant documents (NPO certificate; banking details; exemption letter; correct Facility number)

C. Submission of files at the provincial office:

- All files must have facility names and numbers outside
- Every file has NPO representative's contact details

D. Capturing of beneficiaries on MIS:

- Make sure that all the relevant documents are in a file

E. Printing and distribution of monthly claims:

- On a monthly basis, I print claims from MIS and distribute them to the service offices

F. Signing and submission of service agreements:

- Ensure that all NPOs information is captured and scanned on facility module
- Ensure that NPO budget allocated are captured and approved on system
- Ensure that all documents are signed

All this effort makes it easy for everyone, including the supervisor, to understand what is happening in the file without asking. Therefore, I ensure that my files are in place and updated.

Caseload

On a daily basis, I attend to at least 50 clients that visit the office. Indeed, I deal with different people every day – this is the joyous part of my job. The people, the relationships built on tasks that are as mundane as opening an intake, or a new case file. I visit funded projects including non profit organizations to conduct monitoring, attend meetings, and workshops. When working with a large client case load, one has to develop strategies to manage the high volume. For instance, I have developed reminding cards for foster care files to know when review dates are due. I tend to outline my work plan for the year, then do my weekly plans to meet due dates. Time management becomes an important part of the job.

My Everyday Experience as a Social Auxiliary Worker

No two days are the same in my position. The following is a step-by-step account of a typical day in my work as a social auxiliary worker in social services. This is actually a composite of days to give the reader an understanding of what I do.

Working in Adelaide is not easy – let me give you a brief overview of where I am coming from, in my home in Alice, to Adelaide. I am coming from a rural area where people still have respect. People are independent and still believe in development and education. People in Alice still maintain their principles and still keep Ubuntu. For example, in my location there are no foster homes or children's homes; people still believe that every child deserves to have a home and they can raise children without any social support from the government. They believe in doing things themselves instead of relying on interventions from the government.

Adelaide is a semi-rural area; there a mix of cultures as people came to Adelaide to work as farm workers. Adelaide whilst surrounded by wealthy, mostly white farms, has extreme poverty, high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, high unemployment and substance abuse, to identify a few prevalent problems. Because of eroded self-sufficiency, Adelaide people are dependent on social grants as their source of income. I have also noticed that the more mortality there is, the higher the number of orphans and vulnerable children there are, and the foster care case load increases. The further people are dislocated from their communities and have limited abilities for self-sufficiency, the more their systems of support are eroding, so that people feel pressured to say, "I will raise my grandchild with or without any social assistance." In these cases, extreme poverty, a lack of capabilities to decide one's life means children are being used as a source of income. In these circumstances, there is no love or care about the child, they are just keeping the child or children for income.

5:30 a.m. I wake up to get ready for my commute on a taxi to Adelaide. My commute to work is 80km per day and there is no public transportation. We rely on private vehicles used as taxis. Before I leave for work I have to take care of my children, make sure that they are ready for school and assist them with getting their transportation to school. I wait by the roadside for a taxi that is going to take me to town so that I can get a lift to Adelaide. The transportation to Adelaide is scarce, and sometimes lifts are difficult to find, especially during school holidays because most people who travel to Adelaide are school teachers.

7:30 a.m. I take a taxi to work. On my arrival at about 8:45, the first thing I do is to go straight to the waiting room where I greet clients as some of them visit the office as early as 7:00 a.m. I ask them to my office one by one to conduct a screening, refer those that are seeking social workers for further help, and assist those that are coming for the little things that can be solved within the screening area. This is my everyday life at work, every day when I arrive in my office.

11:00 a.m. The number of clients decreases, so I follow-up on previous cases or conduct home visits to gather information per the social workers' request. As a preventative measure, sometimes I would go and look for hot spots where I would find small boys abusing drugs and conduct awareness so as to educate them about the dangers of substance use.

Sometimes I revisit files to check review dates and remind clients and social workers about their reviews in order to avoid lapsed cases or any back log.

12:45 p.m. It's lunch time until 1:30 p.m. but what I have noticed about the social development workers in my working area is that they don't have lunch; we have lunch while we are busy working.

1:30 p.m. I go back to the office to do admin work, open new files, capture on Orphans Vulnerable Children database and forward the information to the Child Care Control Unit and HIV and AIDS units. I also refer files to the social workers per area of operation.

4:30 p.m. Time to go home.

5:00 or 5:30 p.m. On my arrival home, I help my children with school work while at the same time preparing food for supper.

Concluding Remarks: What would I do differently?

I am a relationship builder by nature. The critical aspects of my current job are care, passion and commitment to work alongside my community to dismantle oppressions. That passion for change is what keeps me going, as I continuously have had to self-educate throughout my whole work life. Ask critical questions about how can we engage social work and make a difference? I learn with the people that I work with most of the time. I interact with diverse groups of people and this has increased my relationship building skills and my continued love to help people change their own lives. My aspirations are to obtain a social work degree and make social work relevant to the environment I live. I know that I am part of the solution for the people who come for help in the social development office. I have enjoyed working on community awareness campaigns. One critical campaign is collaboration with health care clinics to share information about HIV/AIDS. Another area of support has been building community support groups for people who are living and/or caring for someone with HIV/AIDS.

In Xhosa we have a saying: "The past is something that had happened and the future is one which we are going to make happen" – the only thing we can learn from the past is the mistakes, so that we don't continue to make the same mistakes. The past gives us lessons and the future gives us opportunities for change. I prefer to stay positive. I want to make my future better by utilizing my present. Indeed South Africa inherited injustices of apartheid, but it is up to us now to empower ourselves and depend on our abilities to chart our futures. I feel most accomplished

when I work to encourage people to believe in themselves so that they can arise above their situations by starting to make small differences. Part of the change comes with developing a mental attitude of doing your own things. My role in my community has been to cultivate this mental attitude of not waiting for help but starting up something, and believing that one will get help along the way to achieve what they want (i.e. not wait for things to happen to them, but make things happen), as that mentality will create opportunities that will help our country. Building social work approaches that are based in experience is what I desire for my work. This will not only require a change in how we practice social work, but a change in knowledge systems about social problems such as knowing that not all problems emanate with the individual. Until this is realized, the approaches to social work we currently pursue tend to begin and end with the individual. Further, the values and model of science in which the profession is based needs to change to consider indigenous knowledge and experience. These changes will in turn change how we broadly practice social work.

References

South African Government Gazette, 02/02/1996

About the Author: Nenekazi Melody Gxashe, Social Development Auxiliary Officer, University of Fort Hare; 2018 Bachelor of Social Work Candidate, P.O. Box 796 Fort Beaufort, 5720 South Africa; (nenekazi@gmail.com; (27) (072) 473-4268).

Capabilities/Abilities as a Way to Social Justice for Southern Africa

Thandi S. Tshabangu-Soko

Abstract: Thandi S. Tshabangu-Soko discusses social justice efforts to address hunger and poverty in Zimbabwe from 1990-2000. Ms. Tshabangu-Soko notes that there may be many different approaches to social justice, such as a utilitarian approach or a redistributive approach. Tshabangu-Soko applies Sen's (1983) capabilities/abilities framework for explaining the government of Zimbabwe's efforts to address social justice issues during the time she is employed as a Drought Relief Officer in Zimbabwe. Also she calls on her experience as a project manager for Plan International, a non-governmental organization, during this same time period (1990-2000). As Zimbabwe was struggling to adapt to the demands of being an independent country, it faced obstacles including hunger, food shortages and financial issues. The government instilled some work for food programs while some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provided food without work requirements. The government and Plan International both had different philosophies and approaches to helping those affected by the drought and food shortages, yet both aimed to empower Zimbabwean people. Tshabangu-Soko notes that her work as a social worker during this time period was essential to linking the work of government and non governmental agencies in addressing the needs Zimbabwe's citizens. Helping people to use their own capabilities and abilities is an essential part of social work. This narrative offers the unique experience of Ms. Tshabangu-Soko as she worked for two very different agencies that were working towards the same goal in Zimbabwe from 1990-2000.

Social justice is a term that has been given various definitions. As a social construct, some scholars define social justice from a utilitarian approach, the notion that any action should be judged by its consequences (Mill, 2007, pg.9). One example is if villagers are displaced to pave way for a dam, the rightness or wrongness of that action should be judged by whether the villagers' happiness is increased or decreased. Others approach social justice from a redistributive approach, the claim that every person has an equal right to basic liberties, that opportunities should be open to all without discrimination, and that any inequality should be to the greatest benefit of the least-advantaged in our society (Rawls, 2001, pg.42). In this social justice approach, Rawls suggests that liberty is paramount, followed by equality, and lastly consideration for the least-advantaged. In the above example of displaced villagers, Rawls would advocate that they be at liberty to choose for or against the dam, they be treated equally during the displacement process and that special attention be given to the least-advantaged among them. Sen (1993, p. 271) sees social justice within the lens of capabilities/abilities, concerned with ". . . evaluating a person's capability in terms of his or her actual ability to achieve various valuable functioning's as a part of living." This approach differs from Mill's (2007) utilitarian approach and from Rawls's (2001) non-utilitarian approach, in that it looks at the potential within a person to achieve human "functioning" (Sen, 1993, p. 227). With the varied definitions of justice, the implementation of policies and programs in social development become a challenge.

Within the prevailing conservative approach, people who are poor are perceived as not useful people at all, they are supposed to die out. Their circumstances are perceived to be a result of their depraved conduct. Therefore, instead of contributing meaningfully to society, they become a public charge and are blamed for all social problems. Alexander (2008) notes that historically, poverty and famines have been thought to be a consequence of lack of food production and problems of supply of food in the region (pg.55). However, Sen (1983) in his seminal work *Poverty and Famines* argues that while food production and supply is critical, famines are due to loss of capabilities/abilities purchasing power by a population.

Using Sen's capabilities approach to social justice, I explore how the Zimbabwean government introduced Economic Structural Adjustment Programs (ELAP) on recommendations from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These had adverse impact on the Zimbabwean economy. In the late 90s, land reform and drought caused food shortages and had a negative impact on the economy and involvement with the Democratic Republic of Congo cost the country more money. As purchasing power eroded, many sold their

livestock to make ends meet. The government later introduced a one trillion dollar currency note. When the economy collapsed, the Zimbabwean currency lost its value and in the process, many Zimbabwean's ability to purchase goods was eroded. Many companies closed businesses because of inflation which led to rampant unemployment. Due to runaway inflation, those in rural areas were adversely affected when they could not purchase agricultural inputs.

Hunger and deprivation are associated with food production and availability of food, but also with distribution to the economic, social and political arrangements. These can directly influence people's capabilities or abilities to acquire food and to achieve health and nourishment. For the purpose of this paper, I will discuss how capabilities/abilities were extended in the 1990s in terms of wealth, opportunities, and privileges in Zimbabwe. I adopt the redistribution of resources as the definitive lens to explain my activism and service as a social worker in Zimbabwe during the period 1990 to 2000.

Zimbabwe as a newly independent developing country was struggling to provide basic services like health, education, housing and jobs. Stakeholders involved in this endeavor included government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civic organizations. While some progress was made with education and housing, challenges still remained in the health sector, in the provision of jobs and distribution of welfare services. This paper is therefore a narrative of my service and activism while employed in Zimbabwe by the government under the then Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, and by Plan International, an international non-governmental organization, and by Bazaar Group, a local non-governmental organization. In these three organizations, I was employed as a project manager, tasked with supervising the distribution of services and resources to rural communities.

As a Drought Relief Officer:

During the 1990s, drought and food security in Zimbabwe became a big issue. Drought relief was one of the instruments used by government to ensure equal distribution of resources to the poor. I was working as a social worker in the department of social welfare at the district level, which included coordinating drought relief activities. The department of social welfare worked with local government where councilors through ward and village committees submitted lists of people who needed food (maize).

Villagers participated in food-for-work programs such as clearing land before construction of a road, bridge, dam, clinic or school building. In exchange for their service, they received a certain allocation of bags of maize, depending on the size of their family. Communities, through their leaders, would identify a need in their area. My job included assessing the feasibility of the project and the commitment of local leaders in seeing the project through. My department would often liaise with other non-governmental organizations who did not require them to work for it. For this reason, there were instances when few people would show up in our food-for-work programs, preferring instead to get maize handouts from non-governmental organizations rather than work for it. Only when these NGOs moved away from an area did we see an increase in the number of participants in our "food-for-work" projects

The Zimbabwean government's approach to the building of capabilities was to differentiate the population, so that those with means, or those that are advantaged, are continuously compensated. In rural areas with meager resources, the work for food programs were implemented. As offered by Sen (1979) "…the recognition of the fundamental diversity of human beings does, in fact, have very deep consequences, affecting not merely the utilitarian conception of social good, but others as well…" (pg. 202) In essence, the diversity of people should be considered when discussing social justice using the capabilities/abilities framework. Those who are poor would be easily satisfied by being provided with basic services like food and shelter, while those well off would probably be satisfied by having laws that protect their property rights. This could be the same community but due to class difference, the notion of social justice takes two different meanings.

The rationale of these projects was to instill in communities the capabilities/abilities for their problems and ownership of the solution process. This also encouraged communities not to expect the government or the donor community to come and repair a road damaged by rain or bridges washed away by rains. At first some communities did infer "the donor will come and fix" these problems, and often donors did. When donors left for other countries like South Africa, Zambia and Mozambique, most communities then became more active in "food-for-work" programs. The introduction of such programs motivated communities to solve problems through cooperation and through use of locally available resources.

Research confirms that drought relief programs were effective in providing poor people in Zimbabwe with relevant and timely assistance during the drought years of the 1990s (Monro, 2006). During this period there was a government commitment to get communities to be less dependent on donor support for development in their communities. It took some time for some communities to get off of donor dependency. Government could not always provide drought relief when needed, and with a weakening Zimbabwean economy, and the lack of foreign direct investment, government implemented major budget cuts and the drought relief budget was severely affected (Dhemba et al, 2002, pg 137).

The department of social welfare in Masvingo, as part of the Child Welfare Forum, coordinated the Zunde raMambo (Chief's Granary) activities in conjunction with the local leadership. In this scheme, members of the community would contribute food during harvest season, to a central granary under the supervision of the Chief in that area. This was a community practice and initiative to help and protect widows, orphans and the poor in times of famine (Dhemba et al, 2002, pg 137). I often worked with local kraal heads to ensure orphaned children got food through this initiative. This concept had a major impact in reducing hunger among poor families.

As a project manager:

Plan International, a non-governmental organization, had health programs whose aim was addressing health issues. Ruger (2010) presents a theory of health and social justice, which she calls the "health capability paradigm." She submits that ". . . all people should have access to the means to avoid premature death and preventable morbidity" (pg.3). Ruger also offers a rich explanation of the essential drivers of health, such as surveillance, preventive measures, clean air, safe drinking water and nutritious food (p. 3). One health program spearheaded by PLAN International was safe delivery of babies whose goal was to reduce maternal mortality. Most rural women delivered their babies at home with the help of traditional midwives. Each community had such resources – usually older women who helped deliver babies in the community. PLAN's programs trained these traditional birth attendants (TBAs) to deliver babies safely and to check for complications during pregnancy, and if necessary, refer cases promptly to central hospitals. In the advent of HIV, TBAs started practicing safe health practices like using one razor per patient when it came to issues like cutting the umbilical cord and many other functions that needed use of a razor. These safe clinical skills contributed to better health standards and practices.

In the field of education, PLAN International built schools and clinics with villagers contributing bricks, labor and other resources necessary to put up building structures. Social justice in education is defined by Adams, Bell and Griffin (2007) as both a process and a goal. They submit that "…the goal of social justice education is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs . . . it includes a vision of society that is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure" (pg.5). Pursuant to these goals, PLAN International introduced projects that required community participation. Communities understood and embraced PLAN International's model of community participation. The community would identify people who would dig the foundation, mold bricks and provide skilled labor in these projects. On its part, PLAN International would supply cement, gravel, roofing material, windows, doors, etc. Communities would also supply water, river and pit sand to mold bricks. All projects undertaken were based on this model of dual partnership between the community and PLAN International.

Health, Education and Business development

In addition to health and education, PLAN International also sponsored business development programs. These included cattle fattening projects, where poor families were helped to buy cattle and provided with stock feed until the cattle were ready for the market. Sale proceeds were reinvested to buy more cattle and the operation cycle continued. This helped families pay school fees and buy other implements that could ease the back breaking burden of farming. Young people and women who could read were trained in sponsorship activities where a family donor, (sponsors) usually from overseas, would donate a specific amount towards a community fund which would benefit the entire community where this child lived, e.g through building a school, clinic, or water and sanitation system for that village. These cases required continuous feedback from the sponsored children and their families to maintain the donor/sponsor's continued support.

My team also engaged communities and had them identify projects they wanted and debate which ones to prioritize among many suggested. Local leadership made up of councilors at district, ward and village levels were always part of the planning committee. There was a difference among councilors, some always strived for new projects for their communities and others never had any. A lot of times, it depended on the hard work of the councilor and team. Hard working and motivated councilors always finished projects and delivered on set goals. As a result of this quick uptake of projects by some communities, development workers went to those areas first and those were the areas that became inundated with new projects and new developments. All the identified projects had to be within the mandate and focus of the donor organization.

Women's Participation

During my time as sponsorship manager, I observed that women would not participate vigorously in decision making even when the project directly affected them. While they attended these brainstorming meetings, very few spoke or were drawn out to suggest their ideas. During the 1990s drought, rivers, ponds and wells dried up and there was an urgent need to drill new boreholes and for communities to rehabilitate existing ones. PLAN International funded some boreholes in the Kwekwe District Village, committees called meetings to discuss which projects to prioritize and in the case of water programs, they chose where to site the boreholes. A few seasons later, in some areas women continued fetching water in the streams and ponds where they used to get water before the boreholes were drilled. Reasons given were that either the borehole had dried out or it broke down and no one knew how to fix it, or the borehole had been cited in a place that was not convenient for the women. One example was of a borehole cited in a place where it was tiring for the women to carry water and climb the steep path to their homes on the other side. Further probing revealed that during the planning meetings, men had chosen those problematic sites. In one particular case, a borehole had been installed near a business center where there was a store, butcher, beerhall and a bus terminus. Some women were of the view that new boreholes were planned to be at a place convenient for men as social gathering places. However, these same places were cumbersome for women who fetched water. It was downhill when going to the borehole but uphill when coming back and they slowly stopped going there and reverted to their easily reachable ponds. It was a lesson for development workers to include women's ideas and voices in crucial planning meetings. In addition, there were very few women community development workers and it took forward thinking and a courageous development worker to include women and get the men's buy in to not make decisions for services that they usually do not use, such as water. Needless to say, such poor technical decisions led to the continued use of unsafe water with its associated health risks in some areas.

In some communities, development agencies built boreholes and pumps, and had local people trained to maintain the equipment. This empowered communities who did not have to wait for donors to come and repair these pumps. This reduced the community's dependency on donor agencies.

One of the major developments in health promotion in Zimbabwe was the introduction of the Ventilated

Improved Pit (VIP) latrines adapted from Zimbabwe's Blair Research foundation. In Kwekwe, PLAN International helped communities build these pit latrines. This was a revolutionary sanitation program that reduced the number of children showing up at local clinics with diarrheal diseases, and probably reduced the number of diarrheal deaths too. Community participation in this program meant contribution of bricks and finding builders to build the latrines. PLAN on its part, donated roofing material and the wire mesh placed at the top of the ventilation pipe and health promotion training. Problems arose when many of the young men who helped in the building of these latrines found themselves proficient, and left their villages to look for employment in urban areas. Eventually communities trained women as builders and this strategy paid off as women builders did not leave their villages. They stayed as they were the fulcrum of their households and in the process built more latrines and improved sanitation ensured.

Conclusion Remarks:

This paper adopts Sen's capabilities/abilities approach to addressing problems of hunger and starvation during a period of drought in 1990s. I have shown that the Zimbabwean government and non governmental organizations differentiated the population by wealth, opportunities, and privileges and providing work for food programs for the poorer segments of the population. Within a society, it does not matter how big the size of the cake you get, as long as it satisfies your need – then justice has been served. For a developing country like Zimbabwe, social justice for the poor boils down to provision of basic services like food, health, housing and job creation. In such an environment, social workers define their victories in terms of numbers of communities that have basic health services, clean water, schools and jobs. For this reason, the provision of basic services has implications for human rights, and social and economic justice for all. Without food, shelter and health services, poor communities cannot bargain with powerful politicians. The profession of social work, in linking government and non-governmental agencies, plays a crucial role in extending empowerment and social justice for all in the 21st Century.

References

Adams, M., Bell, L. A., & Griffin, P. (2007). *Teaching for diversity and social justice.* Taylor & Francis Group: New York.

Alexander, J. M. (2008). *Capabilities and social justice: The political philosophy of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Dhemba, J., Gumbo, P., & Nyamusara, J. (2002). *Zimbabwean Journal of Social Development in Africa. Special Issue: Social Security, 17* (2): 111-156.

Mill, J. S. (2007). *Utilitarianism, liberty & representative government*. Wildside Press LLC.

Monro, L. T. (2006). Zimbabwe's drought relief programme in the 1990s: A re-assessment using nationwide household survey data. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management, Vol. 14*, No. 3, (125-141).

Rachels, J., & Rachels, S. (1986). *The elements of moral philosophy* (pp. 42-43). New York: Random House.

Rawls, J. (Ed.). (2001). *Justice as fairness: A restatement.* Harvard University Press.

Ruger, J. P. (2010). Health and social justice. Bulletin of the World Health Organization. Oxford University Press: New York. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/89/1/10-082388/en/

Sen, A. (1983). *Poverty and famines: an essay on entitlement and deprivation*. Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (1993). Capability and well-being. In Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Wen (Eds.), *The Quality of Life*

(pp. 30-53). New York: Oxford University Press.

About the Author: Thandi S Tshabangu-Soko, MPH, MS, BSW is a Doctoral Candidate in Health Professions Education at Simmons College and is a Service coordinator for immigrant/refugees in Raymond, NH (tshabang@simmons.edu; (603) 232-9078).