From HSRC **Press**

Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media: Selected seminar papers

Edited by Adrian Hadland, Eric Louw, Simphiwe Sesanti & Herman Wasserman

Interrogating contemporary theory, the authors of this volume shed new light on how identities are constructed through the media, and provide case studies that illustrate the complex process of identity renegotiation taking place currently in post-apartheid South Africa. Collectively, the contributors represent some of South Africa's finest media analysts pooling skills to grapple with one of the country's most vexing issues: who are we?

2008 / 416pp / 978-0-7969-2202-1 / R 180.00 / Soft cover

Racial Redress & Citizenship in South Africa

Edited by Kristina Bentley & Adam Habib

South Africa's democratic experiment has a central political dilemma: how to advance redress and address historical injustices while building a single national identity. This issue lies at the heart of many heated economic, skills and social cohesion debates. While Government opted for racially defined redress, many critics recommend class as a more appropriate organising principle. From a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, the authors of this volume explore the issues within four broad themes: the economy, education, sport and the civil service. Addressing the scholarly community, civil society and government, each author brings their own unique perspectives to this crucial question.

2008 / 336pp / 978-0-7969-2189-5 / R180.00 / Soft cover

Resource Intensity, Knowledge and Development: Insights from Africa and South America

Edited by Jo Lorentzen

For a long time economists have warned that abundant natural resources are bad for economic development because their exploitation generally leads to unsustainable policies which negatively impact on the poor. But more recently the so-called resource curse has been revisited as empirically incorrect, and largely useless for development policy. This volume contributes to this debate by focusing on the technological trajectories of firms and research teams in resource-intensive primary sectors of Brazil, Costa Rica, Peru, and South Africa. Delivering theoretical insight with practical examples, the chapters make compelling reading for both scholars and development practitioners.

2008 / 272pp / 978-0-7969-2213-7 / R 240.00 / Soft cover

Teacher Education and Institutional Change in South Africa

Glenda Kruss

This monograph investigates the specific experiences of institutional change in eleven diverse university contexts and explores the complex, multiple impacts of these experiences on the conditions for initial teacher education. Ultimately, the study highlights the challenges that lie ahead if the system is to produce the right number and right kind of teachers for South Africa. It provides in-depth and rigorous research that is essential to those working within the higher education sector, policy-makers, and within initial teacher education.

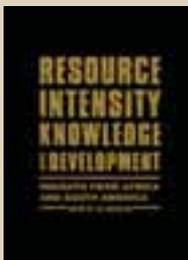2008 / 248pp / 978-0-7969-2221-2 / R175.00 / Soft cover

Women's Property Rights, HIV and AIDS & Domestic Violence: Research Findings from Two Districts in South Africa and Uganda

Edited by Hema Swaminathan, Cherryl Walker & Margaret A. Rugadya

To better understand the role of tenure security in protecting against, and mitigating the effects of HIV/AIDS and violence, this book explores these linkages in Amajuba, South Africa and Iganga, Uganda. Results from the qualitative study revealed that property ownership, while not easily linked to women's ability to prevent HIV infection, can nonetheless mitigate the impact of AIDS, and enhance a woman's ability to leave a violent situation. A resource for policy-makers, donors, NGO workers and academics, these findings will inform the current land reform efforts, as well as HIV/AIDS and domestic violence policy in both countries, in Africa and beyond.
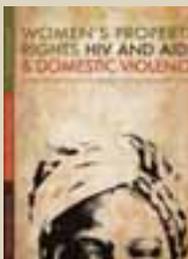
2008 / 184pp / 978-0-7969-2223-6 / R 110.00 / Soft cover

Racial redress in schools
Case studies of five Gauteng schools

contents

Message
from the CEO

HSRC Policy briefs a celebration of human rights and dignity

In this, the 40th year of existence of the HSRC, it is clear that the organisation has grown from one of social control and social engineering to an organisation premised on human rights and human dignity. It is therefore fitting to celebrate the massive policy overhaul in all areas of public and private life.

In this vein, the Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) at the HSRC, established in 2006 with funding from the Department of Science and Technology, introduced the first three in a series of policy briefs at the end of April. These briefs fulfil a unique place in the South African policy sphere, namely that of bridging the gap between research, policy and practice.

And it's not difficult to see why: Researchers are more attuned to policy imperatives, whereas policy makers are more attuned to research evidence.

The unit undertakes secondary data analysis and impact assessments and initiates policy dialogues, after which policy recommendations are made.

The policy briefs are targeted at time-constrained policy makers, policy activist or business executives, summarising the results of relevant research. The primary objective is to provide policy-relevant research information in a concise and digestible format.

The first three policy briefs cover the critical areas of the high drop-out rates at university level; answer the question of whether social grants create a dependency culture in South Africa; and address the issue of fear of crime in South Africa (more on page 9).

PAU's view is bifocal: Firstly, it looks at the broader policy issues such as policy successes, policy failures, policy coherence, policy gaps and policy paralysis. Secondly it investigates conditions, opportunities, credibility, and choices confronting the citizens of this country.

It tries to understand our society's responses to the major challenges it faces, such as poverty, unemployment, health and sanitation, and food security. It works in the context of a non-partisan organisation, committed to the HSRC motto, 'social science that makes a difference'.

PAU will produce 12 policy briefs per year, linked to the various clusters of government's policy priorities.

In a democratic society like ours, scientists also play a role in the policy formulation process by generating evidence from research and turning it into policy options, thus facilitating policy development. PAU is playing this role in a proactive manner. The series of colloquia that were held on topics such as social policy and the developmental state; policy and practice in HIV and AIDS in Africa; National Health Insurance; and education and poverty, all point to the critical role that scientists play in bringing together key stakeholders to examine the evidence necessary for policy formulation and programme development.

News**Roundup**

The 3rd South African **HIV survey** pushed into the field

The 3rd South African National HIV, Behaviour and Health Survey, which was launched at the end of May, aims to reach the largest number of people since its inception in 2002, namely 28 000 in 15 randomly selected households.

The fieldwork for the survey, undertaken by a consortium of research institutions led by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), will be completed over a period of about 4-5 months. The study aims to find out the levels of HIV infection in South Africa, and to learn what South Africans know, believe and feel about HIV/AIDS.

Says Dr Olive Shisana, CEO of the HSRC: 'This survey is a key instrument in our understanding the extent of the disease and reach of HIV prevention messages in our country. If we cannot reliably ascertain the extent of the disease in the country, we cannot plan accordingly. We need reliable figures so that a host of health and social interventions in response to HIV in the public, private and NGO sectors, can be targeted and implemented accurately.'

The survey involves asking participants to be pricked on a fingertip or heel (in the case of babies) using a small pin known as a lancet, which will yield a few drops of blood that will be collected on special paper. Those aged 12 years and older will also answer questions about their health and sexual behaviour. Participation is voluntary and all participants will remain completely anonymous.

The point is not to give participants their results, but rather to gain a clearer understanding of the extent of HIV/AIDS in South Africa and people's responses to the epidemic.

Over the last few weeks, some high profile people have lent their support to this important study to promote participation in the survey.

In Pretoria, actress Hlubi Mboya, in Johannesburg Gareth Cliff of 5fm Radio, and in Cape Town Olympic swimmer Natalie du Toit all gave blood samples in support of the survey. They all joined in the call for South Africans who are approached by researchers, to participate in the study.

Information from this survey will inform policy makers about the HIV/AIDS situation in our country. It will also help to inform HIV prevention campaigns and contribute to the expansion of services for people and families infected and affected by AIDS and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Isidingo actress Hlubi Mboya stoically looks the other way while nurse Zamandlovu takes a blood sample. Mboya, who plays HIV-positive Nandipha in the soapie, said her dream is 'to see an AIDS-free generation'.

Olympic swimmer Natalie du Toit is not at all fazed when sister Shamima Mooiden takes a blood sample.

Queen **honours** HSRC research fellow

Professor Michael Noble, a research fellow at the HSRC's Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) research programme.

Queen Elizabeth II of England has honoured Professor Michael Noble, a research fellow at the HSRC's Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) research programme by making him a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of his research on poverty and deprivation.

Prof. Noble, a South African citizen, is based at the Social Policy, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of Oxford and is a director of both the Centre for Analysis of South African Social Policy (CASASP) and of the Social Disadvantage Research Centre.

He has worked as a social welfare lawyer in a community work/welfare rights project and has been an advisor to the UK Government on small area indicators of poverty and deprivation. He is currently working with the South African government's Department of Social Development (DSD) to develop the evidence base for pro-poor policy. His major research interests are in the areas of poverty and social exclusion and income maintenance policy.

Professor Noble has produced ward-level provincial indices of multiple deprivation in South Africa together with the HSRC and Statistics South Africa. He has also recently produced a municipality-level South African index of multiple deprivation for children together with the HSRC. A collaborative project is now under way to take this work forward, both in terms of drawing from more recent data sources and producing the measures of relative deprivation at a smaller area level.

HSRC Policy Briefs
summarise relevant
research for decision
makers

South Africa's university graduation rate of 15% is one of the lowest in the world. A Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) study, led by Moeketsi Letseka, shows that higher education also reflects broader inequalities, with the graduation rate for white students more than double that of black students. Black students are generally under-represented at universities, a demographic reality that promises to reproduce racial inequalities well into the future.

This study, conducted among seven South African universities, has lead to the first three *HSRC Policy Briefs*, or policy recommendations. The launch of the policy briefs took place on 25 April in Johannesburg.

The series of policy briefs aim to provide in a concise and digestible format, policy relevant research information which has been refined through a consultative process of policy dialogues. The HSRC's Policy Analysis Unit will produce 12 policy briefs per year, linked to government's policy priorities (various clusters).

The policy brief on *High university drop-out rates*: a threat to South Africa's future recommends broader steps to tackle poverty and inequality to address these disparities in higher education. The authors also recommend a voucher system to support lower-income students (read the article in *HSRC Review*, Volume 5, No. 3, September 2007).

The second policy brief, *Age of hope or anxiety? Dynamics of the fear of crime in South Africa,* (read the article on page 9) says the fear of crime has the effect of reducing the sense of trust and cohesion within communities. It limits people's mobility and hastens retreat from public spaces. One of the findings is that urban dwellers, living in informal settlements, are the most concerned about crime.

In the third policy brief, titled *No sign of a dependency culture in South Africa*, (read the article in the *HSRC Review*, Volume 5, No. 4, November 2007) the authors say in recent years, a worrying notion has begun to infiltrate public opinion on social security in South Africa, particularly with regard to the future of social grants. This notion suggests that social grants foster dependency and discourage people from working.

But a survey has shown that there is no evidence of a dependency culture. In fact, both unemployed South Africans and the recipients of social grants have a positive attitude towards work. The study, conducted by Michale Noble and Phakama Ntshongwana, recommends a general support for extending the social security system to support the unemployed.

Download all three policy briefs from the HSRC website, or order hard copies from info@hsrc.ac.za.

NEW @ HSRC

Professor Suzanne Leclerc-Madlala, a medical anthropologist, has been appointed as chief research specialist in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health (SAHA) research programme. Before joining the HSRC in March 2008, she was professor and head of Anthropology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Dr Rendani Ladzani, a nutritionist, has been appointed as a post-doctoral fellow and senior research manager in the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and Health (SAHA)research programme. She was previously acting research director and research training officer at the Research Directorate, University of South Africa.

Mr Martin Fox, formerly a director of Finances at the HSRC, has been appointed as executive director of Support Services.

Ms Thuliswa Nazo has joined SAHA as a project manager. She previously worked as a deputy director responsible for donor fund management in the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in Cape Town.

Adv Simi Gugwini took up the position as head of Risk and Compliance in the Support Services unit at the HSRC. Before joining the HSRC she was a manager at Risk Compliance at the South African Post Office in Pretoria.

Grant for Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators

Dr Olive Shisana (CEO, HSRC), Professor Adebayo Olukoshi (executive secretary, CODESRIA) and Dr Shamil Jeppie (co-editor), line up to sign the first hand-bound copies of the publication, The Meaning of Timbuktu, co-published by HSRC Press and CODESRIA. The copies were sent to President Thabo Mbeki, former President Konare of Mali and Minister Pallo Jordan, minister of Arts and Culture, who funded the book with the Ministry in the Presidency.

The National Research Foundation today announced the award of a grant to the HSRC Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) in the framework of the South Africa-Argentina Science and Technology Bilateral Agreement. This follows HSRC participation as the contact point for the Social Sciences and Humanities in a Ministerial level visit to Buenos Aires last July.

CeSTII is South Africa's resource for the production of indicators on research and development, and innovation, and recently published the detailed report on the 2005/06 official R&D Survey.

The grant will enable CeSTII to co-operate with Centro REDES in Buenos Aires to carry out a comparative study of the South African and Argentine systems of innovation over three years. Centro REDES carries out research on innovation, and is also one of the main hubs of the Latin American network for science and technology indicators (RICYT).

Grant holder Professor Michael Kahn, HSRC executive director, expressed his delight at the award. 'This project will allow our two countries to build closer links in the measurement and economics of innovation, with special attention being given to the automotive sectors of the two countries. There are many similarities between our country systems of innovation. Deeper analysis concerning issues such as brain drain and brain gain are of special interest to both partners,' Kahn said.

Traditional **male circumcision** remains a dangerous business

Male circumcision using traditional methods is a dangerous, even life-threatening, rite of passage. In presumably the first study to test the feasibility of an intervention for safe traditional circumcision among the Xhosa in the Eastern Cape, **Karl Peltzer** *et al* found weak support for encouraging this practice.

Circumcisions carried out under non-clinical conditions have significant risks of serious adverse events, including death. Among the Xhosa in South Africa, an unsterilised, unwashed blade may be used on a dozen or more initiates in a single session. Initiates are also significantly dehydrated during their two-week period of seclusion in the belief that this reduces weeping of the wound. And after-care may be in the hands of a traditional attendant with no basic medical training.

The combination of dehydration and septicaemia can result in acute renal failure, gangrene, tetanus or even death. The Eastern Cape provincial Department of Health recorded 2 262 hospital admissions, 115 deaths and 208 genital amputations for circumcisions between 2001 and 2006.

To address this, traditional surgeons are now required by law to be officially recognised and registered with the provincial department of health. The Eastern Cape Legislature promulgated a law, the Application of Health Standards in Traditional Circumcision Act No. 6 of 2001, which regulates traditional male circumcision.

Approach to the intervention study

In this study, traditional surgeons and nurses registered with the health department were trained over five days on ten modules, including safe circumcision, infection control, anatomy, post-operative care, detection, early management of complications and sexual health education. Initiates from initiation schools of the trained surgeons and nurses were examined and interviewed on the second, fourth, seventh and fourteenth day after circumcision.

Traditional surgeons were provided with a tool box, containing surgical blades (scalpels), scalpel handles, latex hand gloves, sterilisation instruments and paper towel rolls. Traditional nurses also received a tool box containing latex hand gloves, sterilisation instruments, and paper towel rolls.

The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the ethics committee of the HSRC, and the provincial health department, the district health office and traditional authorities in the study areas approved the study

As for the initiates, all agreed to participate in the study. They were first informed about the study when undergoing medical examinations for circumcision. On the second day after circumcision the designated medical officer, the clinical research nurse, and an HSRC researcher visited the initiation school to introduce the study and to get individual formal consent from the initiates to undergo physical examinations and to do an interview with the research nurse and HSRC researchers.

Results show high rates of complication

Of the 192 initiates examined on the fourteenth day after circumcision by a trained clinical nurse, the rates of complications were high: 40 (20.8%) had mild delayed wound healing, 31 (16.2%) had mild wound infections, 22 (10.5%) had mild pain and 20 (10.4%) had insufficient skin removed. Whereas most traditional surgeons and nurses wore gloves during the operation and care, they did not use the recommended circumcision instrument.

Seven days after the circumcision, initiates were asked about the circumcision procedures. Most,(85%) indicated that the traditional surgeon had been wearing gloves when performing the procedure, and two-thirds (69%) of the traditional nurses wore gloves when caring. Further, 53% of the initiates reported that they had been circumcised with an *assegai* (spear) and 47% indicated that they had been circumcised with a surgical blade or knife.

Expectations about traditional male circumcision

When participants were asked about their perceptions about traditional circumcision, most respondents 126 (70%) felt that they expected some complication following male circumcision; and 57.8% expected to stay in the bush for a month, 40% less than a month and 11.1% for more than a month.

Participants were asked questions relating to their body, satisfaction and the outcomes. The level of satisfaction among all participants was high; 72.9% reported that they were extremely satisfied, 18.8% reported that they were quite satisfied, and 5.6% reported their dissatisfaction with the appearance of their sex organs (see Table 1).

Sexual behaviour and HIV risk

From the interviews it is clear that the majority of initiates engage in risky sex, exposing them to HIV infection. Most initiates (88%) had sexual intercourse before circumcision. The mean age of first sex was 14.8 years, ranging from 10 to 25 years; 55% had been sexually active in the past 12 months; 29% reported that they had sexual intercourse with two partners; and 24 (15%) had sexual intercourse with three and more sex partners in their life time.

Only 38% indicated that they had used a condom with their last sexual partner, 9% were diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease in the past 12 months, 15% used alcohol in the past week and 10% indicated that they had sex under the influence of alcohol. Almost all had received AIDS training; and although most felt knowledgeable about HIV, they did not feel susceptible to HIV.

In this study delayed wound healing was found among 21% initiates 14 days post-operation. Most young men (88%) were found to be sexually active prior to circumcision and such a long period for healing could expose them to elevated risk for HIV infection through an open wound.

Table 1: Sexual behaviour and HIV risk of initiates

	N	%
Sex		
Ever sex	142	87.6
First sex with 17 years and below	111	68.5
Had sex in past 12 months	97	55.1
Number of sex partners		
1	54	33.8
2	47	29.0
3 and more	24	14.8
Condom use at last sex	64	38.1
During the past 12 months has a doctor or other health professional told you that you had a sexually disease (STD)	15	8.5
Past month alcohol use	34	19.4
Past week alcohol use	27	15.4
Sex under the influence of alcohol	19	10.9
How susceptible/at risk to get HIV		
Very susceptible	21	11.5
Susceptible	11	6.0
Neutral	40	22.0
Not susceptible	43	23.6
Not susceptible at all	67	36.8
Self-rated HIV knowledge		
Very poor	21	11.6
Poor	39	21.5
Average	45	24.9
Good	19	10.5
Very good	57	31.5
Did you previously received AIDS education	159	97.8

Training and more training

It appears that a five-day training for traditional surgeons and nurses is not sufficient and that more training is needed in the surgical procedure, the control of sepsis, post-operative wound care, recognition of complications, and when to refer patients to hospital. Further supportive training may be the most effective way to promote cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioural change.

The use of the appropriate surgical instruments and wound care needs to be emphasised by traditional leaders. In order to improve timely and appropriate monitoring of initiates by designated medical officers, initiation schools should only be established in more central and easily accessible locations.

Post-operation counselling with initiates should include HIV risk reduction, reproductive, HIV pre-testing and manhood counselling. Traditional surgeons and nurses need to be appropriately registered and fulfil all criteria stipulated in the male circumcision act.

Still, one should emphasise the danger of the procedure, even with an intervention of additional training. Improving the quality of male circumcision services could reduce healing times and thus reduce the risk of HIV infection in those who resume sexual activity soon after circumcision.

Counselling males not to engage in sex until they are fully healed must be included in post-operation instructions. Circumcision cannot be a stand alone procedure; it must be integrated with behavioural and reproductive health counselling in order to minimise both complications and risk of HIV infections.

Being **good** in a **bad** world: What's 'moral' for township youth?

How does growing up in a township affect your moral formation? Does it impact negatively or positively? Are township youth more or less moral than their middle-class counterparts? These were the key questions that led **Sharlene Swartz** to conduct her doctoral research on the moral lives of South Africa's township youth.

Over 15 months, 37 young people, aged between 15 and 19 who live in the Langa-Khayelitsha corridor of Cape Town, spoke openly and in a sophisticated way of their understanding of morality.

They exhibited conventional values in areas such as substance use, violence and crime, while questioning conservative values around sex, money and respect. Despite self-identifying much of their *behaviour* as 'wrong', young people locate themselves as overwhelmingly 'good' while positioning others as either protected 'mommy's babies', 'right ones', '*skollies*' or '*kasi* boy/girl'.

Skollies and mommy's babies

'Mommy's babies' isolated themselves from the social environment and spent most of their time with immediate family members, did not drink or use drugs, were sometimes involved in church, and were in school and off the streets.

'Right ones' were exposed to township youth culture, participated judiciously, and intentionally deflected its 'wrong' elements. Some drank and had experimented with various substances, but never enough to 'overdose' or detract from their goals of a job, house, car and being able to take care of younger siblings and mothers. They were in school, focused on the future, off the streets at night

and slept at home. They successfully deflected the prevailing youth culture, without being 'uncool'.

In contrast *kasi* boys or girls 'overdosed' on alcohol, parties, and *dagga*. Girls become pregnant as part of the 'fashion' and boys had multiple girlfriends so no-one could call you *isiShumane* (a shoemaker) for having none, or only one partner. These youth were sometimes involved in petty theft, especially of cell phones, and got involved in violence 'without thinking' and 'over small things'. They were in and out of school, on the streets at night and seldom home. They both absorbed the prevailing youth culture and tried regularly to reform their ways.

Skolllies or gangsters were the group who were least supervised, were generally out of school, ruled the streets at night and frequently were away from home. While some were involved in formal gangs, many were involved in selling drugs, in car hijacking and housebreaking. They used alcohol copiously, and were also users of dagga, Mandrax and *tik*.

Mothers, younger siblings, friends and romantic partners

Besides these categorisations of self and others, these young people spoke highly of their mothers, younger siblings, friends and romantic partners – as providing the motivation to be 'right ones'.

Mothers' examples of hard work and unconditional love made young people want to succeed and 'stay out of trouble'. They feel obliged to be 'role models' to younger siblings. Friends encourage young people to stay in school, and romantic partners frequently inspire them to 'become a better person'. Xolile commented that his girlfriend tells him if he 'takes a wrong step' and 'we sit down and talk about it'. These influences are frequently overlooked (especially mothers and younger siblings) or disparaged as sources of peer pressure (friends), and sources of premature or unsafe sexual practices (romantic partners).

Encouraging young people to be protective and caring towards mothers, role models to younger siblings, 'right' friends to each other and to nurture values that arise out of close relationships (such as selflessness and a desire to be a better person for their partners) presents an unexplored opportunity for moral education that builds on young people's understandings of positive influences in their lives.

Work as a moral driver

While these young people seldom blamed their external environment for their behaviour, they clearly portrayed the link between employment, success, and moral goodness. For these township youth completing school and securing a job was the key to leaving behind substance use and crime, and to providing a better life for mothers and younger siblings.

When young people were asked why a picture[1] of people working was a 'good' moral influence, the most commonly cited answers explained the connection between work as a deterrent to crime. Nonkiza[2] tells me 'if people cannot buy things themselves, they are stealing other people's things', while Andiswa explains why she took a photograph of a 17 year-old young man selling sweets and chips at the train station saying 'he's selling to people – to try and make some money. And *instead of doing crime, he just did something else'*.

In addition to pictures of work in progress, a number of young people took pictures of friends or older siblings, not to describe *them* as moral influences, but to point to the fact that they were *working* as positive moral influences. Xolile photographed a friend outside a tavern holding a knife and drinking brandy, and said '[This is] my friend Kgomotso. He's a good influence *because he work'*. Xolile's picture highlights the magnitude of importance that work assumes in the lives of these young people, as a source of moral rightness, in spite of other moral questions which, for instance, holding a knife and drinking alcohol may present.

Poseletso summed up young people's association between morality and work most profoundly when she concludes that 'education should be free… so that [young people] can study and then – *become good people when they have got their own jobs'* instead of 'end up staying in the street – doing all those things'.

The impact of poverty on morality

The study also showed that these township youth frequently fail to reflect, yet given caring adult intervention, they do so with enthusiasm. Sadly, in impoverished contexts, adult supervision, both at home and at school is in short supply.

Furthermore, poverty results in a multitude of physical and psychological sequelae[3], many of which make it difficult to make moral judgements and act on them.

This opens up the problematic question about whether poor youth are more or less moral than their middle-class counterparts. The answer depends largely on what is meant by 'being moral'. If by moral we mean *doing* the good, then the answer is yes – *some* poor youth are less moral than their middle-class counterparts. But if by moral we mean *knowing* the good, *desiring* the good, and having a *moral self identity*, then the answer is a resounding no. The poor youth in this study possessed all three of these latter facets of morality, but seemed to lack the resources (not all, but the majority) to act on their beliefs. These *physical, mental and emotional resources* need to form a further focus for moral education programmes.

Conclusion

South African township youth inhabit a world fraught with horror, violence, crime and substance abuse, but they also have a remarkable sense of right and wrong, a fact frequently ignored by the official quest for 'moral regeneration'. Most of these youth are good people who live unsupervised and live non-reflective lives. Of course, many do bad things, which given the availability and pervasiveness of alcohol and *drugs*, become entrenched. But showcasing young people's efforts to be 'good' despite living in 'a bad world', and making an effort to deal with the consequences of poverty, should form an alternative agenda for nurturing young people's moral formation in schools and communities.

[1] As one of the research activities, young people were provided with high quality digital cameras and asked to produce a photo-essay of the right and wrong, good and bad influences in their lives.
[2] All names are pseudonyms.
[3] It has been shown that poverty results in physical manifestations of depression, despair, fatigue (from epinephrine and cortisol overload), anxiety, apathy, a struggle to delay gratification, emotional blunting, pathological conditions resulting from foetal alcohol spectrum disorders and avolition (a psychological state characterised by general lack of desire, drive, or motivation to pursue meaningful goals).

Dr Sharlene Swartz is a post-doctoral fellow in the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development research programme of the HSRC.
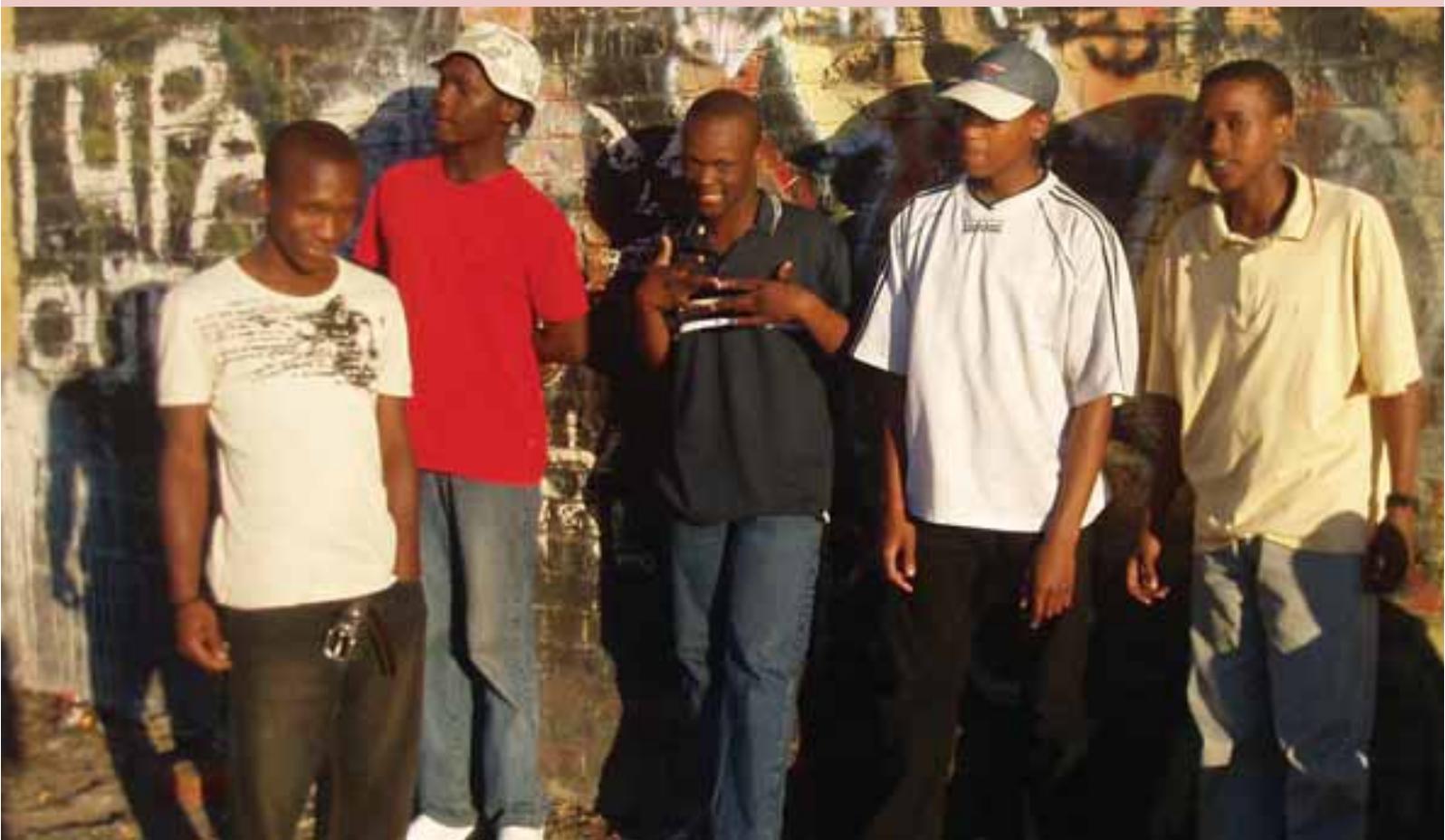
Age of hope or anxiety?
The dynamics of fear of crime in South Africa

Using SASA data and other HSRC public opinion surveys, **Ben Roberts** provides an overview of the nature of fear of crime in the country, and charts its evolution since the early 1990s.

The dynamics of fear of crime in South Africa

This article is concerned with an important and often neglected related social phenomenon, namely the *fear* of crime and not with the actual levels of victimisation in South Africa. Why is it important to focus on people's anxieties about their personal safety rather than on the hard numbers related to levels of violent and property crimes?

The answer lies in the complex and detrimental effects that fear of criminal violence imparts on quality of life at the individual, community and societal levels. These include a reliance on racial stereotypes in discussing crime, constraints on people's mobility and ability to socialise, a hastening retreat from public spaces and the proliferation of gated communities, high walls and fences and an array of private security measures.

Such anxieties may also diminish the sense of trust and cohesion within communities, as well as provide mounting appeals for the reinstatement of the death penalty and lend credibility to vigilante violence.

For many such reasons, the fear of crime has become a prominent social and political problem in international circles. In Britain, the United States and Europe, it has frequently been heralded as a public concern that is at least as pressing as crime itself. Since the 1960s, the fear of crime in its own right has been the focus of increasing attention of researchers and policymakers.

Countless studies have been conducted, with many concluding that fear continues to adversely affect the well-being of a proportion of the population.

The recognition of the harm that fear can cause to individuals and communities has led some governments to establish the reduction of the fear of crime as a social objective distinct from reducing actual crime and warranting specific government interventions.

National trends in fear of crime

HSRC attitudinal surveys since the early 1990s reveal that general perceptions of personal safety have been showing signs of improvement since the late 1990s (Fig.1). The percentage feeling personally unsafe has dropped from a high of 49% in both 1991 and 1998 to 30% in late 2007.
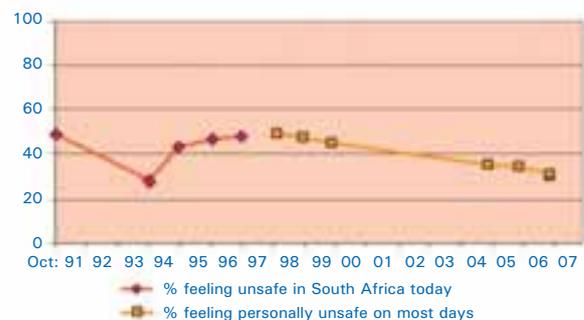

*Fig.1: Percentage of South Africans feeling personally unsafe, 1991-2007
Note: From 1991-1997, the question was phrased "How safe do you feel in South Africa today?", but since 1998 the phrasing has been "How safe or unsafe do you feel personally on most days?". The percentages reported here are a combination of those that reported they felt "unsafe" and "very unsafe*

However, the same cannot be said for feelings of neighbourhood or community safety. The 2005, 2006 and 2007 rounds of SASAS found that people are substantially more fearful of walking alone in their residential areas during the day and after dark compared to 1998 (74% in 2007 relative to 44% in 1998) (Fig.2).

Fig. 2: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area after dark, 1998-2007
Sources: Statistics South Africa (1999); Burton et al. (2004); HSRC, SASAS 2005, 2006, 2007

Of particular concern is the worsening level of fear of walking alone in one's area during the day, increasing from 15% feeling fairly or very unsafe in 2003 to 37% in 2007.

If compared to other parts of the world, South Africans emerge as significantly more fearful in relation to developed countries of Western Europe, or other African, Latin American or transition countries.

Who is more fearful?
The survey results pose critical challenges to some of the prevailing archetypal images of who the fearful in the country are, and provide further support for other national and sub-national surveys that have arrived at similar conclusions.

Firstly, over the last decade and a half, the level of fear of crime among men has virtually matched, and in a couple of instances surpassed, that of women. This finding draws attention to the feeling of vulnerability experienced by men, rather than portraying them solely as the aggressor and perpetrator. Fear of victimisation no longer has a predominantly female face.

Secondly, South African youth appear more fearful than the elderly, though the relationship is weak and inconsistent over time. This confronts the view that the decline in physical resilience associated with the process of ageing renders the elderly more fearful of crime than younger people.

Thirdly, Indian and black African respondents exhibited greater fear of crime than coloured and white respondents in 2005 and 2006 (Fig.3). Since fear levels for black South Africans improved
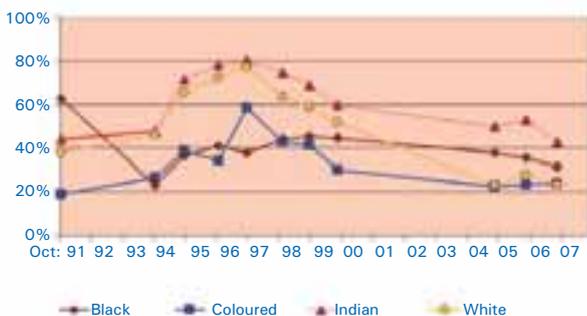

Fig. 3: Percentage of respondents feeling personally unsafe by population group, 1991-2007
Note: From 1991-1997, the question was phrased "How safe do you feel in South Africa today?", but since 1998 the phrasing has been "How safe or unsafe do you feel personally on most days?". The percentages reported here are a combination of those that reported they felt "unsafe" and "very unsafe"

at a slower rate than for white South Africans, the gap between the proportion of white and black South Africans who felt unsafe narrowed substantially in the late 1990s, and by 2005 a relative reversal of positions appears to have occurred.

The popular notion that fear of crime in the country is predominantly a 'white fear' is lamentable in that it is misleading and neglects the needs of a majority who are less able to adequately voice their concerns.

The geography of fear
The data provide support for the relationship between fear and the broader social environment. The character of the place where one resides clearly exerts an influence over perceptions of safety and fear of crime. While it was not surprising to find that people residing in rural areas tend to experience less fear of victimisation than their urban counterparts, a significant finding is that it is in the country's informal settlements that fear seems most pervasive.

Responses to fear
As for attitudinal responses to such fear, the survey enabled the examination of several indicators of the demand for public safety and satisfaction with police effectiveness in cutting crime. Concern over crime has also resulted in a situation where the demand for publicly provided protective measures such as street lighting and street policing, as well as a number of private security measures are considered critical by a majority of South Africans as essential for all to have in order to secure a decent standard of living. The fear of crime also is related to sizable erosion of confidence in the police and dissatisfaction with crime reduction efforts at the neighbourhood level.

The policy relevance of fear of crime
Despite some signs of improvement with regard to feelings of safety and security, the study has confirmed that deep-seated fears about personal and community safety continue to be shared by a sizable contingent of South Africans across the socio-economic and demographic spectrum.

Identifying, testing and evaluating strategies for reducing the fear of crime should be recognised as a priority, alongside that of reducing crime itself. While this task is likely to be rendered difficult by the social, economic and political insecurity that tends to underscore fear of crime, it is only by doing so that we can expect to dislodge the shadow of anxiety that looms over the age of hope.

Benjamin Roberts *is a Research Specialist in the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (URED) research programme at the Human Sciences Research Council.*

Not a **playing** nation

The theme of the Department of Sport and Recreation's
White Paper, '*Getting the nation to play*', is spot on.
Getting bums off the seats and onto the sport field is the
challenge South Africans face, according to he SASAS
survey, concludes **Jaré Struwig**.

The survey, conducted among 2 907 respondents 16 years and older indicates that only 8% participate on a daily basis in physical activities. This includes low-key physical activities, such as going for a walk, or going to a gymnasium. The vast majority (58%) indicated that they never take part in any form of physical activity, as table 1 illustrates.

When participation in sport is compared other forms of leisure, it is evident that South Africa is a nation of laggards. The favourite leisure time activity of the majority is listening to music, watching TV, DVDs or videos and socialising with friends. And they do this several times a week.

Reading books, getting together with relatives, or shopping for pleasure, are also popular free time activities, 'practised' several times a month. Physical activities, playing cards, attending sporting events, attending cultural events, handicrafts, spending time on the internet, or going to the movies are less popular and only carried out several times a year, or less.

Table 1: Participation in leisure time activities (%)

	Daily	Several times a week	Several times a month	Several times a year or less	Never	Total
Listen to music	59.5	21.5	6	2.4	10.6	100
Watch TV, DVD, videos	59.2	17.5	4.7	2.4	16.1	100
Get together with friends	24.4	38.3	21.7	7.5	8	100
Read books	15.5	23.1	16.8	10.8	33.8	100
Get together with relatives	2.9	21.2	33	34.3	8.6	100
Shopping for pleasure	2.4	17.5	40.4	21.8	17.9	100
Physical activities	8	15.5	12.2	6.3	58	100
Play cards or board games	4.9	15.4	10.9	7.7	61	100
Attend sporting events	1.9	7.8	19.3	14.5	56.6	100
Attend cultural events	0.3	5.5	13.8	29.8	50.6	100
Handicrafts	4.7	7.3	8.2	8.1	71.6	100
Time on internet/pc	6.8	5.8	4.4	2.5	80.4	100
Go to movies	0.7	5.3	10.6	12.6	70.8	100

What determines sport participation?

Age, gender, race, income and place of residence all play a role. Younger people are more likely to participate in sport than older people, but participation ratios are alarmingly low: the age group of 18 – 34 are three times more likely to participate in sport than the age group 35 – 54, and six times more likely than the age group 55 and older. While mobility is obviously a barrier for many older citizens, this nonetheless does not prevent them from engaging in less intensive but equally beneficial activities, such as walking. This finding supports the notion that sport is for the young and not a philosophy of lifelong healthy living.

Males are three time more likely to participate in sport than women, which fits international trends. In this study, only 30% of all women participants indicated that they take part in a sport, compared to 55% of male participants.

Racial segregation still plays a dominant role in sport participation. White South Africans are three times more likely to participate in sport than coloured people, and twice as likely as African and Indian respondents. Of particular concern is that almost three quarters (72%) of coloured respondents indicated that they never participate in any kind of physical activity, however infrequent.

The more affluent also tend to participate in sport more often than those with lower incomes. Surprisingly, it is not the lowest income earners (R0 - R500) that are less likely to participate in physical activity but rather the category of people that earn between R 501 - R3 000 per month. Participation in physical activities seems to increase dramatically once personal income levels exceed R3 001, but drop again for those that earn more than R10 000 per month.

People in urban formal areas are also more likely to participate in sport than people in urban informal areas, tribal, and especially rural areas.

Table 2: People that never participate in sport as compared to those that do participate in sport (%)

	Never participate	Participate	Total
Male	45.13	54.87	100
Female	70.23	29.77	100
Black African	59.43	40.57	100
Coloured	72.04	27.96	100
Indian or Asian	49.24	50.76	100
White	38.56	61.44	100
Urban, formal	54.59	45.41	100
Urban, informal	60.81	39.19	100
Tribal	61.64	38.36	100
Rural, formal	70.10	29.90	100
No income-R500	54.27	45.72	100
R501-R3 000	67.30	32.70	100
R3 001-R10 000	43.54	56.34	100
R10 000-R50 000 +	59.38	40.61	100

Further analysis indicates that those people who participate in physical activities are generally more active and sociable than the inactive group; they tend to watch more television, and are more active in hobbies or board games. And they tend to be happier people than their inactive counterparts.

Favoured types of sport

Asked what sport people participate in, seven sport types recorded participation figures of more than 1%.

Soccer is by far the most popular sport that people partake in and undeniably a favourite among South Africa's black majority. Only three percent of the population walked for exercise and this was the only sporting/physical activity that was maintained beyond 55 years. Table 3 shows the type of sport people watch on TV.

Table 3: Type of sport watched on TV

Sport or activity	South Africa	Men	Women	<35 years	35-54 years	55+ years
Soccer	41	53	28	49	35	24
Rugby	13	13	13	11	14	17
Cricket	7	8	7	7	8	9
Wrestling	2	1	2	2	2	1
Other						
None						
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The value of sport and its role in society was acknowledged by the respondents. About nine out of ten agreed that sport develops children's character; and just over 85% indicated that they thought that sport brings different groups and races in South Africa together, and has a role to play in creating a more racially integrated society.

Despite these positive sentiments, participation levels are low. Why is this the case? Figure 1 gives some indication, namely lack of facilities and a lack of money, particularly in urban informal, rural and tribal areas.

Figure 1: Barriers to sport participation
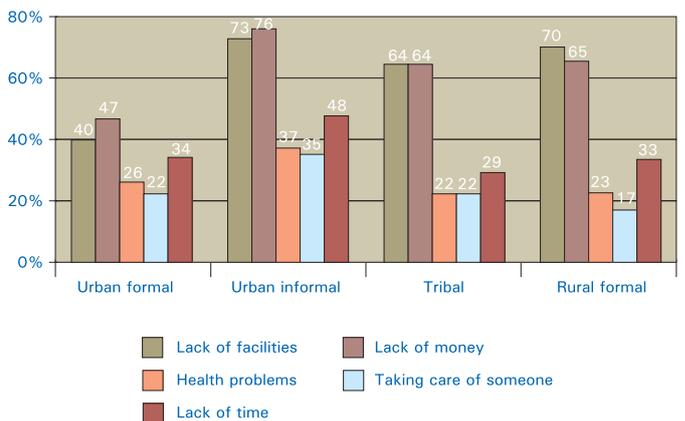
So it seems that although most sporting types do require some infrastructure and money, by shifting the emphasis from organised sport that requires financial support, to types of sport that require minimum financial outlay and infrastructure, participation may grow. By focussing on the activity, rather than the facilities or lack thereof, possibilities for participation can be fostered at school level, which is a strong motivator for continued and integrated sport participation.

***Jaré Struwig** is a chief researcher in Socio-Economic Surveys in the Knowledge Systems unit.*

Uprooting bad mathematical performance:
Pilot study into roots of problems
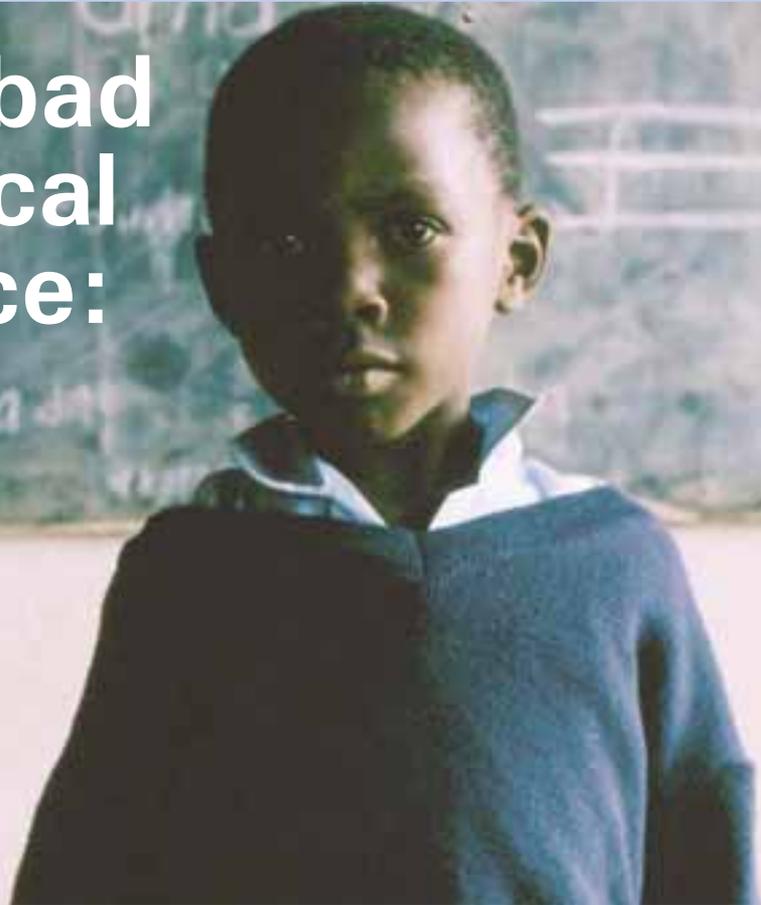
South African students score poorly in mathematics and language tests when compared with students from other African countries and when compared with what should be expected 14 years after the achievement of democracy. But **Martin Carnoy, Linda Chisholm** and **Hlengani Baloyi** believe it is critically important to go beyond simply measuring low achievement and to find ways of diagnosing learning problems with a view to enabling correction and remediation.

Some reasons for poor mathematics and language performance in schools may be evident, such as widespread agreement that the main challenge is the quality of education. Yet there is little empirical analysis that helps policy makers understand the low level of student performance in South African schools or how to improve it.

Pilot study: teachers' skills

As a first step toward unpacking the factors contributing to low levels of learning in South African schools, we engaged in a small-scale empirical pilot study that focuses on the role that teacher skills and practice play in South African students' learning within the socioeconomic and administrative conditions in those schools (and South African society more broadly). The main purpose of the pilot study was to test the instruments and assess the viability of our models.

The pilot was conducted on a sample of grade 6 mathematics lessons in 40 primary schools in Gauteng. Students, teachers and principals filled in questionnaires, students took tests at two points in the year to measure gains, and teachers' grade 6 mathematics classes were videotaped and analysed.

Students could choose to do the questionnaire and test in English, Afrikaans, or an African language. All chose English or Afrikaans. The teacher questionnaire included questions about mathematics teaching, specifically content and pedagogical content knowledge questions. Researchers provided additional notes about the general situation at the school. The information yielded is copious and the results instructive. There are a number of familiar and strikingly new findings.

What the results showed

The data revealed a primary school system characterised both by well-known low average levels of learner and teacher mathematical knowledge and by considerable inequality in the distribution of mathematical knowledge among those who teach students of lower and higher socioeconomic background.

Not surprisingly, results showed a high correlation between the average socioeconomic level of students in the school, the total mathematical content knowledge of teachers and the average student's mathematics test score in the school.

Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge emerged as a critical issue in low achievement. It refers to the application of mathematical knowledge for teaching, especially young children. Examples include the powerful explanations teachers use to develop deep understanding of concepts that are part of the curriculum, the ways in which they draw linkages with other elements of mathematics, and the questions they pose to students.

Teachers' reported level of education matters much less to student test scores and teacher content and pedagogical content knowledge than the type of teacher education institution attended– university, white, Indian, coloured or African urban or homeland college of education.

A day in a grade 6 maths class

Classes generally revolve around a considerable amount of *teacher-led presentation*, with the teacher asking the students in the class to reply individually or in chorus to questions the teacher asks while making his or her presentation. This is usually followed by *seatwork*, in which the teacher circulates, checking students' work. Sometimes this is followed or preceded by students coming to the board and doing problems at the board (classified as *recitation*); in other classes, it is followed by more individual and chorus recitation in response to questions from the teacher.

As set out in Figure 1, a typical mathematics class in Gauteng's grade 6 is about one-third teacher-led, in which the teacher talks to the class, about 25% of class time is spent by the teacher asking questions, which are answered by individual students or in chorus, and about one-third of the time is dedicated to seat work.

Much of the recitation time (individual students and student chorus responding to the teacher) is mixed in with the teacher-led talking about the subject. In the most affluent schools, more time is spent on whole-class teacher presentations and on seatwork, and less on recitation.

In the poorer classrooms, students are more likely to be seated with their desks grouped into 4 - 6 students facing each other, but when the students in such grouped situations are doing seatwork, it is almost entirely individual. That said, there are greater possibilities in a grouped situation of looking over at the other students' work, and students often do that. Actual work in groups uses only about 4% of class time. Although we could characterise typical lessons, there was large variation between lessons.

An important observation was the lack of coherence in a large percentage of the lessons. Teachers tend not to have a clear goal for the lesson. Some of the lessons started with a short mini-lesson on some topic and ended with an 'activity' related to the topic, but unrelated to the mini-lesson.

Often the teacher does a mini-lesson but does not follow up with other activities. That is a big problem – lessons do not have sufficient substance to allow learners opportunities to consolidate what has been learned.

The other pattern observed was the lack of whole-class discussion on the activities or worksheets. The 'discussion' is often just a chorus of agreement to given answers – or the completion of comments-prompted answers, that really give no indication of whether or not learners actually were able to give the answer themselves.
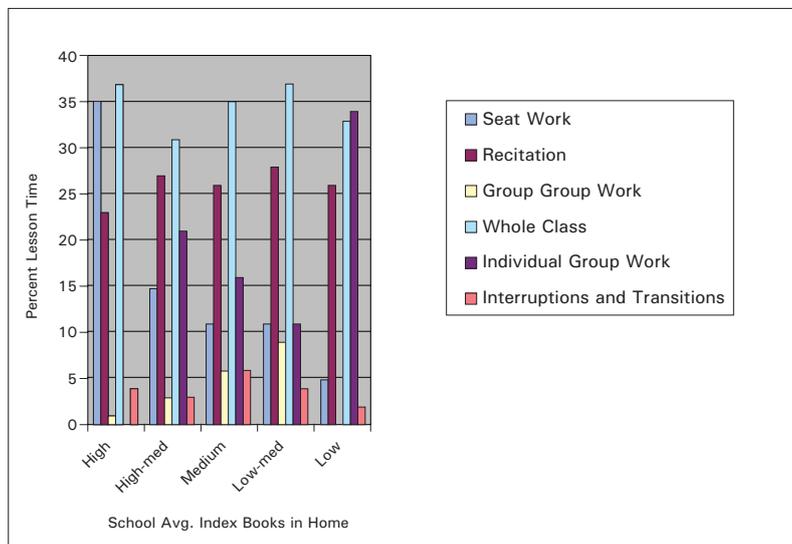
Our study tends to support empirically the claim that pedagogical content knowledge is important in improving student achievement, and that the mechanism by which this occurs is through the improved teaching of a subject by teachers who know more about the subject and how to teach it.

We cannot draw causal inferences from our results. This was a pilot study, so the empirical results, while important, are meant to provide direction for further research, but we are confident that our model goes far to explain why grade 6 students in other African countries seem to know so much more mathematics than students in South Africa.

The quality of teachers' training is probably a key variable (of why grade 6 students in other African countries seem to know so much more mathematics than students in South Africa)

We would hypothesise from this study that the quality of teachers' training is probably a key variable in this explanation, and that we should find better teacher training reflected in higher teacher-measured content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in those other countries. In further studies we would also focus more energy on measuring opportunity to learn. Opportunity to learn is undoubtedly also an important factor in explaining student learning differences.

Martin Carnoy is Vida Jacks Professor of Education and Economics at Stanford University, and Linda Chisholm is a research director in the Education, Science and Skills Development programme at the HSRC.

*This article is based on a report, Towards understanding student academic performance in South Africa: A pilot study of grade 6 mathematics lessons in Gauteng Province, by **Martin Carnoy, Linda Chisholm**, et al (HSRC).*

*The full report may downloaded for free, or ordered from **www.hsrcpress.co.za**.*

Figure 1: Time spent on lessons

Racial redress
means different things for different schools: Case studies of five Gauteng schools

Racial redress in education cannot be considered outside the historically unequal relationships between black and white, rural and urban, rich and poor. Here, the big picture from research on racial redress in education is consistent. Redress in the form of a major turnaround of inequalities has not been achieved, writes **Linda Chisholm**.

Race, linked to class and income inequality, continues to be firmly embedded in South African education. And there is an ongoing conflict within individuals in seeing others in racial terms but the self as race-less and universal.

Looking at South Africa's most urbanised, industrial province, Gauteng, provides short portraits of change from 1994 to 2006 in five public high schools, all situated in working-class areas of former white, Indian, coloured and African communities. It shows that each school has a unique story that sometimes confirms and often confounds the national picture in unexpected ways and as such gives content to the different meanings of redress in specific contexts.

In 1994 the students and staff at each school, its resource base, culture and ethos was economically and racially-defined. With the newly gained freedom of movement, new fee structures and choice in selecting schools, migration became central to the changing character of schools. Principals played an important role in charting the direction of schools and managing the changes.

Principals and teachers articulated one of three approaches to race: cultural difference, liberal humanism and equality of opportunity or radical egalitarianism. The different approaches overlapped and coexisted in the same school. 'Non-racialism' entailed 'colour-blindness', principals espoused a commitment to 'equal treatment', and acknowledgment of difference was seen as undesirable racial practice. But still, racially-based practices and strategies existed: in fact, race recognition was central to how school-based actors were reshaping school environments.

How have these public schools changed since 1994? And how do they see race and redress? These case studies show that redress takes different forms and is differently understood in each context.

Two formerly Indian and coloured schools

Both Marina High and Sweet Waters High (pseudonyms) served working-class learners in the pre-1994 period, but Marina High is located in a more affluent community than Sweet Waters, which has long been characterised by unemployment and gangsterism.

In both schools the racial composition of students and staff has changed significantly since 1994. In both, African students comprised about three quarters of the learner population in 2006, with the remaining quarter being Indian in the case of Marina, and coloured in the case of Sweet Waters.

In both schools, just over half the teachers were African. In both, the school governing bodies (SGBs) consisted of parents, representative of the learner population. The principals of both schools saw redress as granting access to previously-excluded learners. In practice, the approach was *assimilationist*, rather than *integrationist*.

Socio-economically, both schools were worse off than in 1994. In both, parents had difficulty paying the relatively low school fees. At Marina High, which drew students from a neighbouring informal settlement, the principal considered the school's poverty quintile inadequate for his needs, given the large number of poor students in the school.

Matric results had dropped in both schools: from 99% in 1994

to around 70% in 2005 at Marina High and from 77% to 70% at Sweet Waters. Students in both schools did not study further, and most became unemployed.

In these cases, despite racial redress in the form of increased access, racial redress was not accompanied by educational redress promises, namely improved life chances through improved results.

An African school

Violet Makhanya High (pseudonym) exists in an old, established and impoverished working-class area of Soweto. The school is more diverse than before, including students from rural areas of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, and from Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland. The teaching staff is drawn from outside the immediate vicinity of the school.

In 2006, unlike in 1994, the lobby was freshly painted and boasted pot plants, the Constitution, a coat of arms and the school's vision and mission. For the principal, the opportunity to speak, have a voice, communicate, and for black teachers to apply for positions in formerly white schools were all testimony of the achievement of redress. For her, redress was not about access, and had not been achieved in terms of resources, but it existed in the form of greater democracy, openness and transparency.

The matric pass rate had improved from 37% in 1994 to 60% in 2005. The majority of girls were unable to study further for financial reasons and entered various working class, mainly services jobs.

The SGB appeared to be a source of conflict rather than cohesion. Discipline was considered to be worse than before. And the local district office was experienced as interfering and authoritarian rather than as providing assistance.

Here, redress as a political achievement of the right to equality of opportunity, was considered as significant as economic improvement. It was evident in improved school results but not necessarily better opportunities in working life.

Former white schools

Two former white schools, Mackie and McCracken High Schools (pseudonyms), show two very different models of redress. Whereas Mackie High desegregated very rapidly, the conservative McCracken High did so more slowly.

> ...each school has a unique story that sometimes confirms and often confounds the national picture in unexpected ways and as such gives content to the different meanings of redress in specific contexts.

In 2006, redress had been achieved at Mackie High in terms of enrolment, governance and staffing, but not resources. White learners were no longer enrolling, and the student body was almost entirely African. They came from families living in suburbs around the school, and from townships such as Soweto and Vosloorus. A small minority hailed from Mozambique and Angola.

Of the staff, the principal and his deputy were the only remaining whites. The SGB was predominantly African. Fees were R2 800 per annum but were unaffordable for single parent families and grannies living on pensions. In the eyes of the principal the

school was essentially 'a township school in a suburb'. The school's poverty quintile ranking in comparison with its earlier history, distressed him. With limited fee income, the school was struggling to cover four additional teachers, textbooks, general maintenance, water, lights, and maintenance staff.

Redress had not been achieved for the new school entrants when judged by school performance and their future prospects. The matric pass rate dropped from 100% in 1994 to 64% in 2005, meaning that many left for the job market virtually unemployable. Truancy, drug and alcohol abuse, bullying, theft and discipline rather than racial tensions preoccupied teachers. The principal remarked on ethnic tensions between teachers and tensions between local and foreign-born students.

By contrast, in 2006 McCracken High was a large and prosperous school charging relatively high fees. The lobby sported photographs of black school achievers alongside old all-white sporting teams. The school principal was 'the first non-white principal' in the school's 100 years of existence. The staff remained largely white and 40% of the learners were African, 35% coloured and Indian and the remainder white.

For the principal, change and transformation, race and redress, colour-blindness and race consciousness coexisted. Students interacted within and across racial boundaries, and made fun of racial stereotypes. Relationships among staff were far more rigid and same-race bound. As in 1994, the school had an almost 100% matric pass rate, and many students proceeded to university to pursue a profession.

Conclusion

Racial redress comprises notions of achieving economic, political and educational equality through changing the relative balance of privilege between black and white. These case studies of working class schools in former all white, Indian, coloured and African communities in urban Gauteng show that there has been significant redress when interpreted as equality of opportunity and increased access by African learners to schools previously closed to them.

But racial redress has not translated into economic redress. The schools on the whole do what they did before: prepare their students for the working class and unemployment.

In this context, does it make sense to continue to use the formulations of 'formerly white, Indian and coloured schools'? These commonly-used, euphemistic descriptions suggest richer and better schools, but the terminology obscures the presence of poor African students in these schools and the fact that many of these schools have changed and are not what they were.

This raises questions about fixing racial identities to schools when privileged populations or people either no longer attend them, or do so in very limited numbers. It asks: is this redress? And whose interests does it serve to continue to refer to them in these terms?

The Early Years:
Building the foundation for child well-being

Compelling research evidence shows that early childhood development (ECD) services is a critical area for government intervention. Different kinds of ECD services are a key intervention in support of young children's rights to survival, development, protection and full participation in society, reports **Linda Biersteker**.

The situations of poverty enveloping most South African children do not provide good platforms for development and the education system on its own has not been able to overcome these deficits, as is evident in our poor schooling outcomes. EDC forms the foundation for success in the schooling system and has broader health and social benefits.

Since 2001 the government has made significant efforts to expand services for five-year olds in their first year of formal schooling. In 2005 the Social Sector Cluster of government produced the National Integrated Plan for ECD as its commitment to addressing the needs of children under five with a particular focus on poor and vulnerable children.

The government's concept document, called the *Massification of ECD*, signals the intention to rapidly expand these key services. Strong political commitment for this expansion has been demonstrated by increased budgetary provision and inclusion in high-profile programmes, such as the Expanded Public Works Programme, and as a current APEX priority, or special focus area announced by the President in his State of the Nation address in February 2008.

Quality of services in the early years

In support of the government priority for increasing access and quality of ECD services, the HSRC has established a special initiative, *The Early Years*. This initiative supports public policy and interventions that enable children in low-income households to achieve their human potential through adequate nutrition, health care, stable and secure family life, and opportunities to learn.

The Early Years, among other things, investigates the delivery of services for children under age five, and seeks to identify obstructions in the scaling up of the quality delivery of ECD (0-4 years) services in South Africa, and to find news ways to expand the service.

The National Integrated Plan for ECD 0 – 4 years is the point of reference for *The Early Years*. The Plan intends to better integrate the range of government programmes aimed at young children, including health and nutrition, improved care, early stimulation and learning. In the past, ECD has tended to be associated with formal day-care centres and pre-school, but the Plan also looks at supporting primary carers in their homes and providing community-level services through playgroups, clinics and parent support

A profile of children 0–5 years in South Africa

- Two-thirds of young children live in poverty

- Over a quarter are stunted

- The under-five mortality rate of 57.6 per 1 000 is the highest for all ages in SA – 40% is due to HIV/AIDS and 27% to diarrhoea, lower respiratory infections and low birth weight. These three conditions are attributable to poor living conditions

- A 28% national HIV prevalence of pregnant women attending antenatal clinics suggests that very large numbers of young children in their early years will have primary caretakers who may be struggling with the disease and its social and economic consequences

Enrolments in ECD programmes
- In 2006, 441 587 children were enrolled in Grade R classes (approximately half of the eligible population)

- Only 22.6% of 0 – 4 year olds attend an educational institution of any kind

The Early Years:
Building the foundation for child well-being

programmes. It also considered expanding and improving the quality of centre care. This will require a very different set of programmes, workers with different types of skills, and new provisioning and funding norms.

An HSRC workshop, attended by government stakeholders, HSRC researchers and international ECD experts from Africa, the Philippines, Brazil, North America and the United Kingdom, considered the implications of implementing the Plan under the current circumstances in ECD in South Africa (policy, provisioning, service targeting, monitoring and evaluation, training, governance and budgeting). The workshop also investigated how other countries implemented ECD.

Key findings are that the South African legislative and policy framework for young children is rights-based and sound. An excellent start has been made with significant increases in budget allocations for ECD subsidies and training, resulting in increased access to subsidised places and training.

Challenges in providing ECD

Most ECD training is supported by government funding, especially through the Expanded Public Works Programme. But there are a number of challenges in providing the poorest children with the service package envisaged by the Plan. These are the following:

- Higher quality of services, which implies increased access to appropriate and higher levels of training to bring the sector up to professional standards. The extremely poor wages and service conditions for most workers in the ECD sector make it difficult to attract and retain sufficiently high-quality trained staff.
- More children will have access if more services of all kinds are subsidised, including those which support primary carers in their parenting roles. This, in turn, will provide more secure jobs, provided that worker costs are factored into subsidies. Through home and community programmes, and as the sector expands, many other jobs are opening up. These changes have significant implications for budgeting, infrastructure, training and career paths.
- Supervision and monitoring is a critical element in ensuring quality of services. At provincial level, the Department of Social Development (DoSD) is responsible for building capacity at District DoSD Offices so that it may assist facilities to register and to support those who are already registered. This will require increased human resources in district offices. Many of the centres we spoke to had not received a monitoring visit for years.
- The private and non-profit sector plays a major role in building capacity of non-profit ECD services in the social sector. Taking support and supervision of ECD services to scale and quality will require strengthening of the existing responsibilities of the government with public-private partnerships, where necessary.
- International experience has shown the significant role of advocacy campaigns to inform parents, government officials and others of the importance of ECD in supporting the expanding of services.
- The introduction of new services to support primary carers to stimulate and develop young children should know which services lead to better child development and should pay regular visits to these for at least a year and involve direct work with the child as well as the caregiver.

Next steps

Based on key interventions identified in the April workshop as priorities for testing in demonstration projects and subsequent agreement with the Social Cluster, Phase 2 of the project will then implement a set of demonstration projects in representative communities to test practical approaches to addressing these institutional barriers and rolling out of a range of ECD services as outlined in the government's National Integrated Plan.

Linda Biersteker is head of research at the Early Learning Resource Unit who was contracted by the HSRC for the project, which is a collaboration between the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development programme and the Centre for Poverty, Employment and Growth at the HSRC.

Quotations emanating from research

Quality in services

'The level of insight and motivation is a problem, even with trained staff. Things deteriorate. Centres lack funding. Principals have been trained with SETA money but are not necessarily the right people for the job and there is a huge need for follow up and monitoring.' – Training provider.

'After registration government tends to neglect with follow-up checks. Even government knows that some ECD centres are only functioning to access ECD funding.' – Training provider.

'A lot of things impact on delivery. We need to look at the quality of training, who we are training, and ongoing monitoring and support.' – Government official.

'Training capacity is weak on two levels: Firstly, there is not enough, except in a few provinces. Secondly, the trainers' content knowledge is weak. There are proposals for increasing trainers' own qualification levels through learnerships to be offered for trainers – a basic degree and ECD content knowledge. This would be for government and training providers.' – Government official.

Working conditions

'Salaries of practitioners are not even putrid they're terrible …' – Government official.

'We train people and we cannot follow up on them to see where they end because they find jobs outside of ECD because they are not satisfied with their salaries. I think that government should tackle the problem of low salaries in ECD: working with children is very strenuous and one must love children in order to work with them.' — Community-based training provider.

Private ECD centres

'In this community they know if they don't pay we can't keep the children. It's so hard. If the parent starts school and then has a financial difficulty one week I will give grace but I keep it very short.' – Subsidised community preschool.

Home and community programmes

'There is an increased demand for our services without matching financial resources.' – Programme support for at-risk new mothers.

'When funding either does not arrive in time or runs out, critical skills and experiences are wasted when our workers leave to get other jobs.' – Parent programme.

Ivor Chipkin

South Africa needs **non-racialism, not Zionism**

There is a welcome conversation beginning to emerge about race and racism in South Africa. It comes, in part, after several undeniable events of white racism in the public domain which have revealed the shaky legs of South Africa's political settlement. It concerns the status of white racism in South African society.

The first was the humiliation of black staff by young white racists at the University of the Free State. The second was the publication of David Bullard's last column in the Sunday Times.

It is not uncommon today to hear the following argument: even if we accept the fact of white racism, even if we accept the fact that white racism is increasing, it remains, for all that, a distraction. The real issue in South Africa is the performance of the government and the behaviour of the political elite. In this domain, the appalling record of state failure is hardly a consequence of white racism.

Yet, this position is untenable.

Preoccupation with race and white racism

It would not be an exaggeration to say that since 1994, government responses to a diverse range of challenges from macro-economic policy to HIV/AIDS have been informed by a preoccupation with race and white racism, in particular. This was as true for the Mandela administration as it is for the Mbeki one. Both recognised that the major obstacle to national unity came from white racism.

Post-apartheid governments were faced with an awful dilemma. In the first place, apartheid was a phenomenon of mass, institutionalised white racism sustained over many decades. With human and financial capital overwhelmingly in white hands, economic development and racial redress were contingent on managing white racism.

It is tempting, if not self-serving, to see in the Mandela epoch a preparedness to let bygones be bygones and in the Mbeki one a more vengeful attitude. Both Mandela and Mbeki correctly placed the question of white racism at the centre of their politics. What distinguished their presidencies was how they set about tackling it.

Mandela sought to help whites overcome themselves as whites

Interventions like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) were opportunities for black South Africans to have their stories heard and acknowledged in the public domain. Facing up to the truth of apartheid – that it was a system of violent domination and not a well-intentioned policy of accommodating diversity – would

be a baptism of fire for whites. By recognising their personal and collective complicity in this violence, whites could resurrect their humanity and enter the new South Africa. In this way the TRC offered whites a route of salvation through truth – Mandela called the process an RDP of the soul. There were practical consequences too.

Mandela's administration offered whites an implicit deal: turn your backs on racism, embrace the values of the democratic constitution and be accepted as full members of society. This was the hope of non-racialism: that all South Africans, especially whites, could come together on the basis of egalitarian and other democratic values. Was this conception naïve?

Was it ridiculous to appeal to the humanity of whites? It certainly seemed so when PW Botha contemptuously refused to appear before the TRC. Ultimately Desmond Tutu was driven to lament the failure of white South Africans to respond to the gesture of reconciliation. Yet if whites could not escape their racism then they could not be trusted in public life.

This, I believe, is one of the key instincts of the Mbeki administration. Transformation is certainly about achieving demographic representation in the public and private sectors. Beyond that, and more importantly, it is about ending white majorities in organisational life in South Africa.

Vigorous African nationalism and Zionism

Disillusion with the prospects of non-racialism has gone together with the assertion of another kind of politics. It is important that we identify it correctly. The time of Mbeki has been associated with a vigorous *African Nationalism*. It is distinguished from the politics of non-racialism by its insistence that the post-apartheid government is a black government, where this term increasingly refers to the number of black people in government.

This has muddied the waters of what constitutes racism.

Here the analogy with Zionism is informative. Zionism positions the state of Israel as a Jewish state and rebukes criticism of it as the work of anti-Semites. What complicates matters is that anti-Semitism is a real force in the world. Yet, when Zionists reduce all criticism of the State of Israel to anti-Semitism, they blunt the struggle against it. Such a manoeuvre also serves to immunise Zionists from legitimate critique. The figure of the Self-Hating Jew is exemplary in this regard. One does not have to take seriously the Jew that criticises the State of Israel precisely because his or her motives are suspect.

There are disturbing parallels between the scenario above and the way race has come to be used during the time of Mbeki. Criticism of the government is frequently equated with criticism of black people in general and Africans in particular - even when

it comes from the Congress of South African Trade Unions or the South African Communist Party. Black people that question, or criticise the government, are frequently denounced as Coconuts – black on the outside, white on the inside.

Blackness equals loyalty to the government

What Mbeki and his supporters have introduced is a hierarchy of blackness where the measure of authenticity is, to paraphrase Christine Qunta and others, the degree to which one acts out love for and loyalty to the government. Anything else smacks of having an ulterior motive.

We can restate this argument like this:

1. The government is a black government
2. Criticism of the government is, therefore, criticism of blacks
3. Criticism is racist.

By blurring racism and critique the South African government has refused to hear legitimate criticism. Indeed, the current government has been responsible for weakening the accountability of public authorities. The results have been devastating: the hollowing-out of South Africa's democracy and an inability to come to terms with chronic state failure, whether in the areas of health or crime or electricity generation or service delivery or HIV/AIDS treatment.

Simply removing Thabo Mbeki from government will not resolve these dilemmas.

As long as skills and resources remain in white hands and as long as whites cannot be trusted not to behave as racists, then the consequences of racism in social and economic life will be real.

Reducing white dominance a developmental necessity

It is necessary to follow Mbeki's lead and pursue policies to reduce or eliminate white dominance in South African institutional life. As David Storey puts it, whites need to get used to being a minority group in South Africa. Affirmative action is not simply a matter of historical justice, therefore. It is a developmental necessity. Can this be done, however, without compromising South Africa's democracy and without further enfeebling state agencies?

Yes, but it does not simply require technical or managerial interventions. It requires a critique of African Nationalism and, in particular, the idea that a progressive government is necessarily a black government. It requires a revival of South Africa's non-racial spirit; one that measures the government not against its blackness, but against the degree to which it pursues social justice: services, jobs and safety for all.

From such a perspective whites are not simply something to overcome or tolerate. When they behave as professionals and as citizens they too contribute to the post-apartheid project. More importantly, such a perspective declassifies certain thoughts and statements as racist (if they are not based on stereotypes and if they appeal to evidence) and opens up a space for legitimate critique and discussion. In this way non-racialism creates the conditions of accountability and democracy in public life.

Professor Ivor Chipkin is a chief research specialist in the Democracy and Governance research programme.

Is there value for money in public sector delivery?

There is progress in several important areas related to improved service delivery, but a number of factors make it difficult to achieve, demonstrate and measure value for money in provincial departments. **Geci Karuri-Sebina** summarises a new study.

Batho Pele –
Putting People First
The Batho Pele White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997), says a transformed South African Public Service will be justde by its effectivenss in delivering services which meet the basic needs of all South Africans. The Batho Pele principles are: consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money.

The study assessed the *Batho Pele* principle of *value for money*, a term applied to measuring the effectiveness of the government machinery.

In line with its monitoring function, the Public Service Commission (PSC), in partnership with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), commissioned an HSRC team to evaluate government departments' implementation of, and compliance with, the value-for-money principle.

The study aimed to establish the understanding, implementation, and performance of this principle in the provincial departments responsible for five key delivery sectors of the public service: agriculture, education, health, housing, and social development. All nine provinces were included in the study.

The specific objectives of the study were to assess how the principle of value for money is understood in the public service; to evaluate the performance of departments in implementing approaches intended to improve value for money of government services and; and to formulate recommendations about how the principle of value for money could be better implemented to enhance public service delivery.

Over 100 key public servants, purposefully sampled for the study, were requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire in the period 2006/07. They were the chief financial officers (CFOs), programme managers, and officials responsible for monitoring and evaluation systems in the respective national and provincial departments. National and provincial discussion groups, and an extensive documentary analysis, completed the process.

Findings

The study found that there has been some progress in several important areas related to improved service delivery, but a number of factors make it difficult to achieve, demonstrate and measure value for money in provincial departments. These include:

- There is no common understanding of the *Batho Pele* principle of value for money among the 15 provincial departments that were assessed.
- There are inadequate systems and processes to realise value for money. For example, there is little evidence of established benchmarks of costs and other approaches to measure economy.
- Typical aspects of bureaucratic culture and modes of operation, such as autocratic and inflexible influences in planning and budgeting, affect the ability of front-line managers to innovate and get the job done.
- Although it is alleged that extensive feedback from service users is obtained through the popular *izimbizo*, they actually appear to have a low impact on policy and practice.
- Some departments find supply chain management (SCM) time-consuming and ineffective in achieving the economy principal. Although SCM has brought marked improvements in some important respects (particularly reducing corruption in procurement), a number of officials reported that inflexible or obtuse procurement procedures sometimes result in higher final costs as suppliers collude to price products and services at a higher rate for government tenders than they otherwise would.
- The systematic and rigorous collection of non-financial data for key indicators is crucial to the assessment of departmental performance. Unfortunately, the necessary rigor in the collection, assessment and presentation of data is not always achieved.

How the officials viewed themselves

An important measure used in the study for determining progress that has been achieved in delivering value for money was in the self-assessment of officials about the extent to which they felt they were satisfying the needs and preferences of their users. The majority of departments rate themselves as 'average' to 'good' in terms of the progress they have made to deliver value for money.

The Departments of Agriculture and Social Development register the lowest assessment, largely rating themselves as average (67%). The Department of Housing ranks itself the highest (67% recorded themselves as 'good' to 'excellent').

Self-rating of value for money performance (by sector)
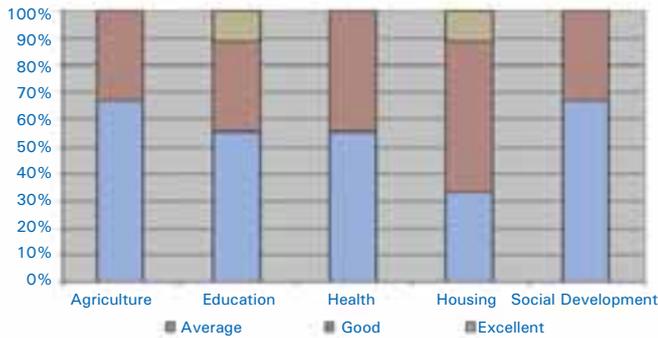
Looking at the same self-ratings by province, departments in KwaZulu Natal and in the Eastern Cape rate themselves the lowest in achieving value for money, while Gauteng, North West and Free State rate themselves relatively highly.

Self-rating of value for money performance (by province)
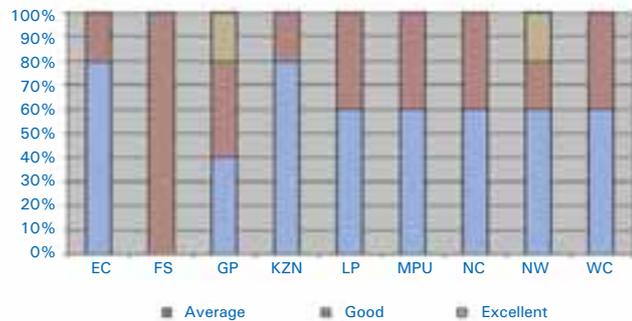
How the public viewed the departments

In comparing the self-ratings to results from the South Africa Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) 2005, it was found that public perceptions of the Department of Housing were significantly worse than the departments' perception of itself. In contrast, the study's finding that the Free State departments rate themselves quite favourably is generally supported by the attitudes reflected in SASAS.

Housing: Levels of Dissatisfaction
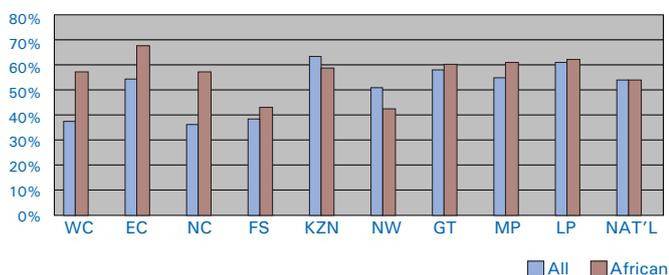
Critical issues in providing good services

In discussion with officials, the following emerged:

* Human resource constraints and shortages are a major challenge in the public service.
* It is difficult to ensure accountability due to interdependencies in service delivery, difficulty in measuring and attributing outcomes, and indiscriminate performance management processes.
* Too often in year reporting, information comes out when it is too late to be used in forward looking plans or even to address service-delivery gaps. More, better quality, and timeous information is required.
* There is too much red tape. Confusing, complicated, and inflexible procedures impede service delivery in many departments.
* Creativity and innovation are not nurtured in public sector delivery, and where there are innovations that have the potential to improve value for money and enhance service delivery, they are not disseminated or assimilated.
* There are perverse incentives for departmental officials to focus only on areas that can be easily measured and attributed to themselves so that they can report positive performance. This drives silo and mechanistic behaviour, rather than trying to make an impact through integrated and efficient service delivery.
* Departments take a long time to change their service delivery plans in response to the needs of beneficiaries.

> **Public services are not a privilege in a civilised and democratic society: they are a legitimate expectation.' Republic of South Africa. White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery (1997)**

Recommendations

The study concluded with the following recommendations:

* An appropriate and operational definition of value for money must be institutionalised in departments;
* Substantial investments must be made in improving reporting systems;
* Inter-governmental relationships and co-ordination, across all three spheres, should be addressed to ensure that roles are clear and enabling towards achieving value for money in service delivery;
* Future assessments of value for money should aim to measure value for money as a holistic oversight process rather than as an ex-post assessment;
* Departments should not only ensure that users are consulted about their needs, preferences, and service concerns, but also that they use these customer inputs as critical information towards better planning within departments and affecting service delivery improvements;
* Departments should be encouraged to describe the skills gaps in their sectors according to levels of skills, and develop practicable and innovative strategies for addressing their critical capacity challenges.

Dr Geci Karuri-Sebina is a chief research manager in the Centre for Service Delivery at the HSRC. Other members of the research team were Dr David Hemson, a director in the same Centre, and Jonathan Carter, a senior research manager in the Policy Analysis Unit.

The 'mystification of capital':
Legal title for the
low-income housing market

Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto's has argued that the effective denial of property rights to hundreds of thousands of poor people in developing economies means that their economic potential and that of their countries is largely untapped. If this 'dead capital' were legalised, it would elevate the poor out of poverty. **Udesh Pillay** explores the question of how his ideas apply to the South African housing market.
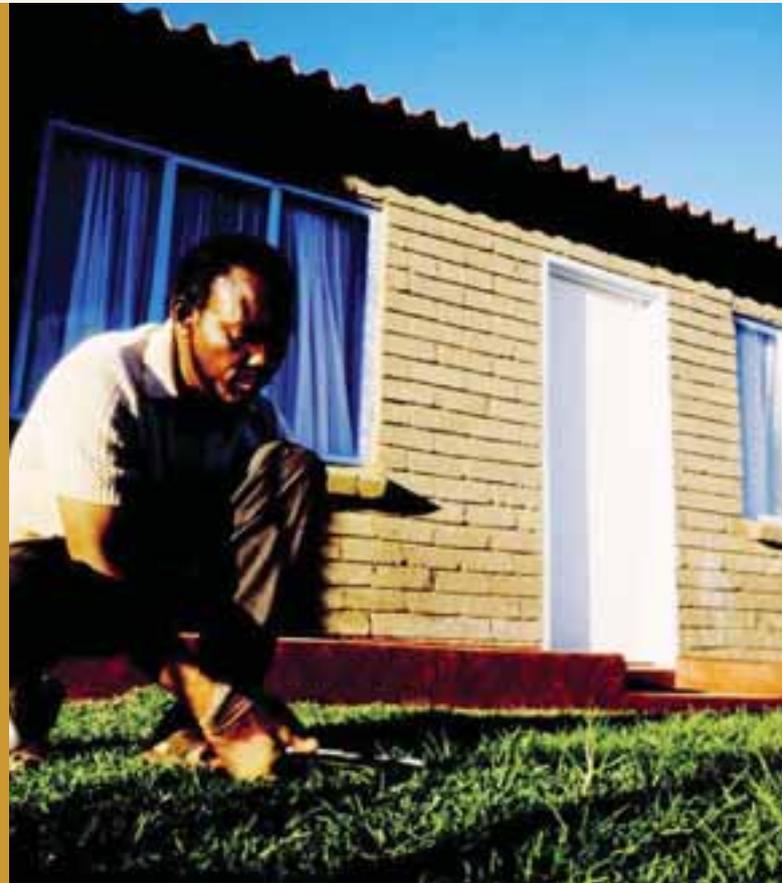
The crux of De Soto's argument revolves around why nations of the developing world are desperately impoverished, and often burdened by crippling poverty. This, according to him, is largely a function of the deficiencies in their organisation of property rights. This applies to legal institutions as well as their implication and adaptation to factual circumstances. De Soto's position is that the poor have at their disposal all of the material resources they need to secure prosperity.

What they lack is a formal, officially registered right of ownership of these assets. The absence of such legal instruments means that the assets of the poor cannot be purchased, exchanged, sold, bequeathed, lent, or transferred in any way other than within the framework of limited networks, often subjugated to parasitic local institutions of power. These assets, therefore, cannot serve as the basis for an efficient and dynamic accumulation of capital. They become, in De Soto's words, 'dead capital'. Thus the informal sector becomes what is usually called undercapitalised and as a result cannot realise its full potential.

Breaking New Ground: property as an asset for wealth creation

Breaking New Ground is the South African government's most recent attempt to outline a national housing strategy that talks more specifically to the creation of viable human settlements and removing the blockages slowing housing delivery. A key notion in the strategy is the idea that housing be used as leverage in influencing and controlling the way human settlements develop.

Released in 2004, the policy was claimed to mark a significant departure from the previous housing programme: the need to meet delivery targets is replaced by a focus on housing provision to address poverty alleviation, economic growth, improving the quality of life of the poor, creating an asset for the poor, and ultimately developing sustainable human settlements.

Housing delivery is thus more explicitly framed as a catalyst for achieving a set of broader socio-economic goals, with 'demand-negotiated' delivery in which local authorities are required to engage their communities to establish individual housing needs, and then engage with the private sector to provide a variety of housing options and amenities.

Reflecting on *Breaking New Ground*, commentators have noted a self-evident link with de Soto's ideas, in that the policy addresses a number of objectives which are economic in nature, including 'realising the value of assets' and 'reducing duality in the sector'. Property is thus seen as an asset for wealth creation and empowerment, as a means to leverage growth in the economy, and as a way of reducing duality in the housing sector by supporting the functioning of the entire residential property market.

Property rights a bridge to 'living capital'

For many rural and urban households, the lack of legal recognition of their property rights can result in insecurity of tenure and can also hamper development. Laws and policies to promote higher levels of tenure security and promote investment and development are thus required. In this sense, formalisation via integration into the existing system of private property marks a useful mechanism to ensure the poor have access to formal credit markets. De Soto's ideas therefore represent a useful starting point.

One of De Soto's key tenets is the image or metaphor of a bridge from the 'extralegal' and 'dead capital' to the 'legal' sector and 'living capital'. In the process of crossing the bridge, capital comes to life.

Scholars, however, have argued that there is no guarantee that crossing the 'extralegal'-'legal' divide will result in better fortunes for the poor and marginalised. The bridge-building process should therefore not be about absolute integration from the informal into the formal, as de Soto's argument leads us to believe, but is better illustrated as a slow and incremental process of creating something new and different that leads to eventual 'integration' out of a less than perfect status quo.

What may be specifically required in South African is to explore arrangements that help secure tenure, and access to services and livelihoods for the poor in diverse urban and rural contexts. In other words, securing tenure – not necessarily as a means of integration into formal capitalism –should be a means to development opportunities and sustainable livelihoods.

This means that more attention should be focused on the complex relationship between property rights, development, state investment and administration, including the delivery of basic infrastructure and services.

> **For many rural and urban households, the lack of legal recognition of their property rights can result in insecurity of tenure and can also hamper development.**

Legitimate social practices 'embedded' in South Africa's informal settlements and communal areas should be considered, as should the impact of the enormous inequities in property ownership inherited from the apartheid era which remain a fundamental constraint on the livelihoods of the poor. Land reform laws that seek to secure the rights of occupiers, without necessarily transferring full ownership, also need to be strengthened.

Plea for reforms in legal and social systems of land ownership

A mid-way approach may be more appropriate, then; one that recognises the necessity of bridging the 'extra legal'-'legal' divide, through 'adjusting' dominant legal frameworks to accommodate 'extra legal' property. A complete overhaul of the legal and social complexities around which notions of formal and informal property are constituted may be necessary.

This implies that both systems are reformed to integrate the 'extra legal' and the 'legal' contracts, rules and procedures to suit what people need from them. Following from such reform of the legal system, and given that the formal system is often ignored or disregarded by the poor depending on their circumstances, the idea would be to address the 'invisibility' of the poor to the authorities by creating something intermediate. A suitable starting point may be the tenure option and land registration. The overall idea would be to create something less absolute and more appropriate to people's needs.

In sum, realising the value of 'dead capital' may not be the most appropriate or prudent way of reaching South Africa's Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of a significant improvement in the life of slum dwellers by 2010. What may ultimately be required is a new debate, resulting in a set of proposals that looks at the trade-off between market access through individual title, and new arrangements for sustainable forms of tenure security. Perhaps a range of tenure reform options and arrangements along a continuum seems appropriate, provided the established frameworks of property law and administration are overhauled, and the social legitimacy of tenure arrangements is reinforced.

Indeed, Housing Minister Lindiwe Sisulu has recognised this, adopting a position that recognises that inclusionary housing policy is key to the creation of integrated communities and viable human settlements, while emphasising 'dead equity' as an important instrument in wealth creation and accumulation, especially among the poor. This is encouraging news!

Dr Udesh Pillay is executive director of the newly established Centre for Service Delivery.
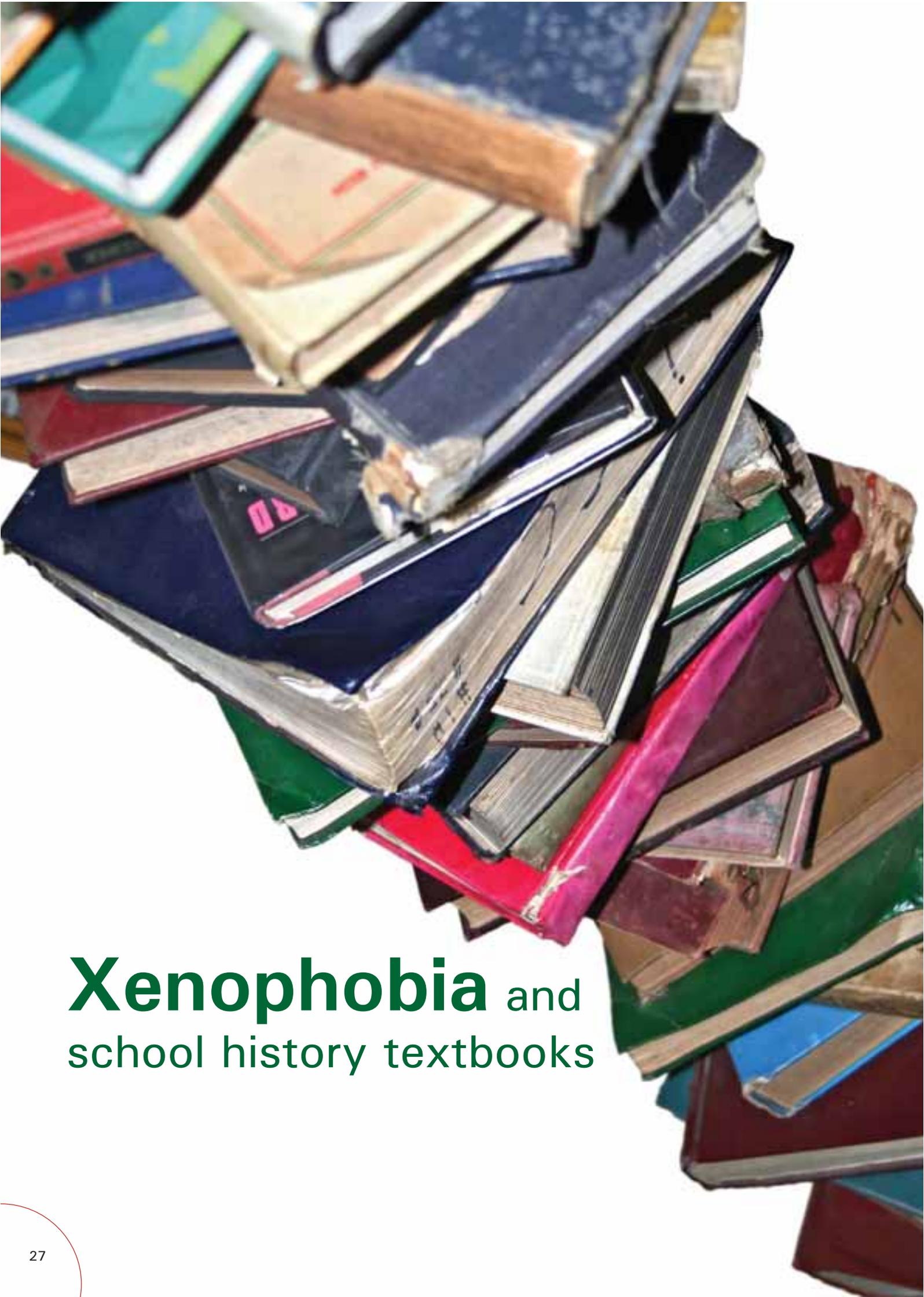
Xenophobia and
school history textbooks

> In the same week that xenophobic attacks were launched against foreigners in Gauteng, Zulu ethnic nationalists burnt history textbooks in KwaZulu-Natal. Xenophobes were characterised as 'the class of 1994.' The link between nationalism, xenophobia and how we understand our history is a close one, says **Linda Chisholm**.

Are schools, curricula and textbooks to blame for what is happening or are they part of the solution? Are the messages in our history textbooks fuelling xenophobia? If not, what can be done?

South Africa's transition to democracy at the same moment as migration patterns have begun to change raises questions about what kinds and how new forms of citizenship are being created through its public institutions. New forms of South African citizenship are officially based on recognition of the diversity of identities contained within its borders. But to what extent are distinctively cosmopolitan - as opposed to xenophobic commitment(s) - represented in these efforts?

Teachers tend to ignore textbook messages

Contemporary approaches to textbook analysis tell us that cultivating a sense of national (or international) identity is as important as the role, form and use of textbooks in actual classrooms. The message may be good, but it is useless if the book lies unopened in stockrooms or staff rooms. Teachers also do not necessarily swallow textbook messages – they often contest their interpretations or ignore them. So their education is as important as that of their charges.

The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) history curriculum and history textbooks are anti-xenophobic in intent and content. South African history is routinely situated within a broader African and world history so that South Africans see themselves as part of the African continent. The history of Great Zimbabwe is included in the curriculum as are accounts of the recruitment of migrant workers from neighbouring countries in the history and development of mining in South Africa.

But not surprisingly, new narratives primarily celebrate the emergence of the new South African nation. 'South Africans' are seen as coming from a common history of oppression and struggle against injustice and are presented as possessed of singular qualities that include internationalism, recognition of diversity and reconciliation. No matter how positive, such conceptions have both inclusive and exclusive dimensions.

Regardless of how sophisticated constructions of national identity are, the problem is that they create boundaries of who does and does not belong to the inner circle.

But not too much weight should be placed on what such new textbooks can and cannot achieve. There are too many factors against their effective use. The 'class of 1994' has probably not spent much time in class, let alone learning new history narratives and how to identify xenophobia in schools. Their education has been the education of the street and the prison, an education in turf protection, prejudice and fear.

Available evidence suggests that teachers often use old rather than new textbooks, that teachers but not students have access to these textbooks, that teachers often prefer to use worksheets drawn from selected textbooks rather than use textbooks. What this means is that student exposure to textbook narratives is limited even where schools have textbooks.

Values, xenophobia and burning of textbooks

Exposure to anti-xenophobic discourses assumes time and opportunity available for messages to be conveyed and learnt. History is one subject in a curriculum with several other learning areas. Time spent teaching this whole curriculum is on average 3.2 hours per day. Most importantly, what is taught depends on

> " Regardless of how sophisticated constructions of national identity are, the problem is that they create boundaries of who does and does not belong to the inner circle. "

the teachers who teach the curriculum, and their own values. The burning of history textbooks in KwaZulu-Natal reveals that there are teachers who not only do not subscribe to the new national discourse but are also unlikely to buy into the anti-xenophobic narratives.

Looking to schools and teachers is an important part of the solution, but for this education has to become a meaningful reality. Even if special programmes are instituted to discuss and address xenophobia, they will be meaningless if they only happen in a minority of schools. The xenophobia and book burning of this month, so reminiscent of Nazi Germany, must be a wake-up call that the values of South Africans are as important as improving their achievement in mathematics and science.

Dr Linda Chisholm, is a research director in the Education, Science and Skills Development (ESSD) programme of the Human Sciences Research Council.

*This article is based on an article to be published in the South African Historical Journal by **Linda Chisholm** titled, 'Migration, Citizenship and South African History Textbooks'.*

Reviewing the **Question**

Prof **Douglas** Wassenaar, chair of the HSRC's Ethics Committee, explains why social and human sciences need ethics committees.

A panel member of the HSRC Ethics Committee said once that, on average, only 19% of the social science research proposals referred back for further improvement by the ethics committee of a top university were resubmitted. The rest either circumvented the process, or withdrew the research. If there is such a disregard for the ethics process, why would anyone go the rather tedious route of submitting a proposal to your committee at all?

That has changed with the new SA Health Act of 2003, which came into effect in 2005. Previously, there was no nationally binding requirement that all research involving human participants had to be ethically reviewed.

Some universities had house rules, but compliance depended on the strength of the house rule and not on a national policy. Now that we have a very clear and unambiguous national policy that states that behavioural, psychological and social research is effectively illegal if it is not competently ethically reviewed, I believe there will be improvement because the system has now got teeth.

All regulations are not in place yet, for example accreditation of research ethics committees. The Act stipulates that the National Health Research Ethics Council will accredit ethics committees - formally 'license' them - but none has been accredited yet.

Institutions are increasingly aware of the consequences if research goes bad, or if they publish and editors or their peers ask, 'where's the ethical review process?' and this is not available. This will improve the rate of first submissions and the rate of resubmissions. At the HSRC resubmissions are in the region of 80%.

What are the main ethical principles, or emphasis, in social science research?

The overriding concern is to prevent harm and defend the rights of study participants. The purpose is to ensure the protection of a participant's dignity and welfare. The interest of participants should always transcend the interest of the research.

It is very important to have an independent review of any study where people are involved. Often researchers are passionate about their proposals, which may be innovative, exciting and controversial, but the question should always be: 'Can people be harmed, targeted, embarrassed by your research?'

There have to be guarantees, within the confines of the law, of protection of the anonymity and privacy of participants. The research process must include some way to establish that

participants have given informed consent for an interview or to answer a questionnaire.

> **At an HSRC conference in 2005 there was some resistance to ethics review. The point was made that some classes of research should be exempted from ethical review.**

Yes, there is some agreement that exemption should apply to studies where there is no human participation or those based on information already in the public domain. Examples would be studies based on an analysis of newspaper reports, or a study of university graduation rates by gender and race, based on information from Stats SA or published in annual university reports.

This becomes more complicated if research is based on data from personal clinical or institutional records, where individuals or institutions can be identified. We try to give clear guidance on the types of research that are exempt from review to avoid unnecessary delays.

> **Is there some objective measurement for what is ethical? What might be ethical in one culture or religion might be regarded as unethical in another.**

This is a huge question. The way ethicists deal with this is by publishing guidance documents. There are a few basic, internationally accepted guidelines: do not harm people; try to do something good; and be fair and just. From these you can deduce practical guidelines, for example informed consent and confidentiality.

But it is not possible to anticipate every type of research that comes up. For instance, what should be the guideline if a researcher wants to make videos of street children's behaviour, or wants to observe mothers and infants while breastfeeding?

This means guidelines will have to be flexible enough to give people some general principles for all these situations.

When it comes to culture, these debates become more complicated. What might apply in one country does not necessarily fit the practices of another country and some countries do not necessarily subscribe to these guidelines in full.

There is, for example, tension in the literature between community consent as opposed to individual consent. Personally I think 'community consent' is complementary to individual consent. For example, if you work in a rural area you should get the permission of the local elders to enter that area and explain what you are doing. But the elders cannot give consent on behalf of individuals involved in the study.

> **You are not only looking at the ethical part of research, but also at language and research design. Is that not overstepping your role?**

If the research design of a study is bad the project is unethical because the data will be flawed and this is an ethical issue. And if the data is published, policy makers and service providers might implement the recommendations.

There are two ways to do this: firstly, an institution could have a separate scientific committee to review proposals before they come to the research ethics committee. But even then the ethics committee may still pick up issues that were not noticed by the science committee.

It annoys researchers a bit, but I think that depends on how the feedback is delivered. At the HSRC we try to have the researchers present when we discuss their study proposal, giving them the opportunity to argue and clarify points of concern to the committee.

In relation to language, sometimes a proposal is badly written or not clear and the committee may give advice on how to improve the proposal. Typos are not the business of ethics committees, but are often regarded as evidence of carelessness or inattention to detail.

> **Researchers have deadlines to meet and the time delays in obtaining ethical approval might jeopardise the project. How do you deal with that?**

Introducing mandatory ethical review does require a culture change and social scientists will have to factor these delays into their project planning. At the HSRC we try to achieve a quick turn-around time. A while back I turned down a poorly-motivated late application because the deadline was the next week and I was leaving for Geneva, but mostly we do give a few days grace because we want to promote research and cut down on re-submissions. Two to three days are enough, usually.

If there are substantive flaws it has to come back to the whole committee, but about 80% of submissions are just referred back to the chair or chair plus one reviewer, and approved, but about 10% of resubmissions need further work.

> **There have been instances where research is funded by a development agency in another country, setting different requirements or protocols that are not practical or affordable in South Africa. How do you approach that?**

Yes, some research ethics committees have different guidelines and procedures and have to comply with different laws. South Africa itself has incredibly restrictive new laws on doing research on children which some other countries don't have. So which country's guidelines apply and which committee has the final say?

The current thinking is that the committee closest to the research site should have the final word and not the funders, which means the local ethics committee chair sometimes has to discuss issues with the chair of the other committee and explain the local setting. If they don't come to some agreement the research might not continue.

> **What do you need to be an ethicist?**

Research ethics and bioethics are intensely multidisciplinary. A research ethics committee needs expertise in nearly every field, from philosophy to religion to science, law, health sciences, sociology, psychology and research methodology. Public representatives are also important role players. Research ethics, strictly speaking, is just one small piece of the puzzle.