Critical Reflections on Teacher Education in South Africa

Labby Ramrathan · Suriamurthee Maistry ·
Sylvan Blignaut

Critical Reflections on Teacher Education in South Africa

Labby Ramrathan
Suriamurthee Maistry • Sylvan Blignaut
Editors

Critical Reflections on Teacher Education in South Africa

palgrave
macmillan

Editors
Labby Ramrathan
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban, South Africa

Suriamurthee Maistry
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban, South Africa

Sylvan Blignaut
Nelson Mandela University
Gqeberha, South Africa

Paper in this product is recyclable.

Preface

This edited book focuses on curriculum scholars' critical reflections on teacher education (TE) within South Africa with the view to offering insights into critical considerations for TE within the South African context given, amongst others, the socio-economic, transformational, social and environmental justice and decolonisation challenges that the country and potentially the globe faces. Much of the literature on teacher education takes on a policy and practice focus to the exclusion of deep and fundamental curriculum questions, raised by Spenser (1884) on what is teacher education for, for whom, where and who decides. Contextual realities and particularities, socio-economic challenges and opportunities, global migrations, global influences and curriculum concerns feature tangentially in Teacher Education policies and practices, limiting teacher education to a parochiality. The effect is low levels of mobility and a restrictive curriculum, ultimately rendering teachers to the status of curriculum receivers and technicians within the school system. Within South Africa, the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualification (MRTEQ) (Department of Higher Education, 2015) forms the official policy that informs teacher education curriculum and certification to become a teacher. While six knowledge fields, ranging from foundational knowledge to contextual knowledge, including practical training, are the core curriculum requirements within this policy framework, there has been on-going critique of newly qualified teachers emerging through the MRTEQ framework. Media statements, like poor quality of teachers being produced by higher education institutions, reverberate across the media and political spaces in response to poor outcomes of school education.

These on-going critiques draw stark attention to teacher education offered through the higher education system in South Africa. The raising of critical and complicated (Pinar, 2010) questions forms the basis of this edited book as part of the critical reflections as both teacher educators and as curriculum scholars in order to provide insights on a deeper understanding of teacher education beyond a set of parochial policy prescribed modules/courses that one needs to take to become a professional teacher.

In the opening chapter of the book, Labby Ramrathan presents an overview of teacher education from a fragmented and racially segregated to a more inclusive teacher education framework that is presented to illuminate key insights and critique of teacher education in South Africa. The current teacher education framework is also reviewed to show that the curriculum for teacher education has not substantially changed over the last five decades. In an interesting chapter "Thinking decolonisation within teacher education: curriculum as a relational space of becoming" Shan Simmonds draws on a larger-scale qualitative empirical study conducted in 2021 in one higher education institution of South Africa and argues for the decolonising of the curriculum as a relational space of becoming as aptly portrayed by the title of the chapter. The chapter reviews the literature base covering this complex arena pointing out all the challenges and opportunities both in its discourse and practice and how the debates could be taken forward. The authors referred to lament the fact that decolonisation remains at "abstract and rhetoric levels". She draws on various literature sources but particularly on a study by Jansen and Walters (2022) entitled "The decolonisation of knowledge: radical ideas and the shaping of institutions in South Africa and beyond". The ten propositions advanced by Jansen and Walters (2022) are interesting, but decolonisation might be more complex, protracted and even messy. The research participants in the study allude to this complexity as one of them observes: "the decolonization thing will probably just end up as a slogan". Another research participant continues "I do not think decolonising is a destination. I don't think we are going to get to a point where there is a decolonized university … So it's an ongoing project". This sums up the complex nature of decolonisation as a project as poignantly outlined in another South African study covering four higher education institutions in South Africa in 2020 by Le Grange, et al. titled "Decolonising the university curriculum or decolonial-washing". The main finding of this study was that decolonisation of the curriculum remained at a rhetorical level.

This chapter invokes the writing of Lange (2017) on "riverspeaking towards kinship ethics" and extends the decolonial project beyond abstract theory that is rooted in "anthropocentrism and individualistic egocentrism so that a relational space of becoming that is fluid, generative and ecological can be potentiated". Relations as envisaged here thus embrace a post humanist perspective that acknowledges the human as well as the non-human world and relations that are reciprocal. Suriamurthee Maistry, in his chapter, engages with teacher education as contoured by the prescripts of national policy, such as MRTEQ (Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education), which he argues, struggles to effectively respond to the multiple exigencies that present in the Anthropocene. His chapter invokes "dysconsciousness" (King, 1991) to address the question of the multiple manifestations of the lack of consciousness in the teacher education project in South Africa. He argues that the titular question of the book, namely, what is education for has changed over time, from having a distinct hierarchical segregationist intention under apartheid, to a national socio-economic rescue agenda.

The chapter by Sylvan Blignaut "An autoethnographic account of why an 'ethics of care matters' aligns with the focus of this edited book as it raises deep and fundamental questions about education and teacher education which to a large extent has foregrounded the cognitive dimension at the cost of, or the negligence of the social-emotional in teacher education programmes. The introduction sets the scene for the chapter and discusses the tension between education as a vehicle for social transformation and mobility and its reproduction function(s) as pointed out by Marxist scholars. The limits and possibilities of education thus are clearly portrayed. Although this book is about teacher education in South Africa the author cites international examples of policy pronouncements to contextualise the chapter historically and socially. His coverage of the term "quality" is perceptive as it is encapsulated in much broader debates then is conventionally the case. The author alludes to the failure of Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Knowledge and how that vision has not been realised in education.

By drawing on his own extensive life experiences as a schoolteacher and teacher educator of four decades the author enriches the discussion by citing personal examples of how caring relationships with students enhance the educational/teaching encounter and argues for teacher education programmes that incorporate the social-emotional dimension and thus promotes a more holistic and balanced approach in teacher education. An

emphasis on balance is well illustrated in the chapter where the author elaborates on the contested and variegated purposes of education and how teacher education should adequately take account of these broader purposes. The author then makes a second move in the chapter by juxtaposing the literature on caring with a post humanist critique and simultaneously alerting the reader to the fact that we live in a post-anthropocentric era. An emphasis on caring relationships in education and teacher education is apposite in a fractured and troubled world that is presently characterised by multiple existential crises. Overall, the chapter captures the complexities in education and the type of critical dispositions required of student teachers and teachers in the twenty-first century.

Chris Reddy foregrounds the questions on whether teachers are being educated for a knowledge-based global society, or whether teacher education in its current form is an outmoded relic from a long-departed industrial era (Odell & Klecka, 2011). In his chapter he uses the idea of "education debt" developed by Ladson-Billings (2006) (discussed later) as a framework for reviewing teacher education programmes at an institution in South Africa to provide a reflective view on the shifts and changes in teacher education that were presented as innovation in policy and practice. Anja Visser introduces a new perspective for teachers to pay attention to. She explores the critical role of teacher education in addressing human trafficking, a significant social justice challenge in South Africa. An overview of the multifaceted nature of trafficking is provided, and its historical roots, current manifestations and challenges involved in recognising it are addressed. The importance of understanding trafficking through the lived experiences and stories of victims is emphasised. In the context of rapid advancement of technology, Zayd Waghid and Marinus van Wyk, in their chapter examine the intensified digital gap and its effects on equitable access to education, in addition to its psychological implications for students' resilience. Their chapter uncovers shortcomings in the preparedness of technology and the level of emotional support within ERT in South Africa. This indicates the need to restructure teacher education in order to prioritise the development of technological knowledge and the resilience of students.

In their enterprising chapter "'The person behind the student': Learning from early career teachers' entanglements with the initial teacher education curriculum" Daisy Pillay and Inbanathan Naicker delve into the intricacies of how preservice teachers navigate their journeys into becoming teachers and learning to teach. Utilising an arts-based research process

of collective poetic inquiry and dialogue they set themselves the following research question: "What are we learning from early career teachers' lived experiences about the initial teacher education curriculum as a productive space for negotiating the personal in the teacher and teaching? The two authors ponder how they could go about in preparing student teachers for school life and work in the unequal South African schooling contexts. They draw on three relevant debates in the literature on teacher education to locate their study, namely student biography and teacher education, the disconnect between university learning and teaching practice, and student teachers being reflective practitioners. One of these themes, namely the disconnect between university learning and teaching practice is an enduring and perennial issue in teacher education that has attracted researchers' attention over the years and one that has not been successfully traversed.

Extracting meaning from the student teachers' poems and their biographies the authors are aware of the value of prior knowledge that student teachers bring to the classroom and that they are not blank slates but rich tapestries of knowledge that teacher educators could usefully draw from to enrich the teacher education curriculum. The authors accentuate the importance of uncovering student teachers' voices in the complex entanglement of the personal, professional and the complex educational experience. As Daisy Pillay and Inbanathan Naicker explain: "From a material, practice-based understanding of teacher education, our pedagogy can lead to reimagining and recreating deeply ingrained limiting beliefs and reinventing new and multiple perspectives to frame early career teachers' actions in the classroom." An arts-based research approach is well placed in interrogating student teachers' perspectives and understandings through student biographies and reflections in uncovering insights that are not always easily accessible through traditional research methods.

Lucky Maluleke, Ntandokamenzi Dlamini and Walters Doh Nubia contend in their chapter that policy does not capture the essence of teacher education in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, thereby exacerbating the plight of TVET teacher education. They reflect on teacher education in the TVET sector within the parameters of curriculum dilemma and to ponder what teacher education is for. They show the extent to which teacher education in TVET is being misconceived or misplaced as a priority for economic growth and sustainability underpins our dilemma. Insights include the discord between social justice and economic growth in education and training, and how this influences teacher education.

In the final chapter of the book, an attempt is made to synthesise the key issues emerging from each of the chapters of this edited collection of works on teacher education in South Africa. Contextualising these emerging issues, Labby Ramrathan attempts to engage with the question of "What is teacher education for?" Drawing from past experiences and on-going scholarship on teacher education, longstanding key concerns are highlighted. These include, amongst others, conceptions of teacher education, mis-match between subject specialisation and being under-prepared for place-based teaching. The chapter then proceeds to synthesise key issues raised across the chapters in this edited collection of works that necessitates a critical and complicated conversation on teacher education.

Durban, South Africa	Labby Ramrathan
Durban, South Africa	Suriamurthee Maistry
Gqeberha, South Africa	Sylvan Blignaut

References

Department of Higher Education and Training. (2011). Minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, *553*(34467).

Jansen, J., & Walters, C. (2022). *The decolonisation of knowledge: Radical ideas and the shaping of intuitions in South Africa and beyond*. Cambridge University Press.

King, J. E. (1991). Dysconscious Racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers. *The Journal of Negro Education, 60*, 133–146.

Ladson Billings G (2016). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in US schools. *Educational Researcher, 35*(7).

Lange, E.A. (2017). RiverSpeaking: The spiraling of transformative and restorative learning toward kinship ethics. In P. B. Corcoran, J. P. Weakland, & A. E. J. Wals (Eds.), *Envisioning futures for environmental and sustainability education* (pp. 33–44). Wageningen Academic Publishers.

Le Grange, L., Du Preez, P., Ramrathan, L., Blignaut, S. (2020). Decolonising the university curriculum or decolonial-washing? *Journal of Education*, Issue 80, 25–48. https://doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i80a02

Odell & Klecka (2011). Quality teaching and teacher education: A kaleidoscope of notions. *Journal of Teacher Education, 62*(4). doi:10.1177/0022487111409551

Pinar, W. F. (Ed.). (2010). *Curriculum studies in South Africa: Intellectual histories, present circumstances*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Spencer, H. (1884). *What knowledge is of most worth*. John B. Alden.

CONTENTS

Notes on Contributors

Sylvan Blignaut is a professor in the Department of Postgraduate Studies in the Faculty of Education at Nelson Mandela University. He was the Director of the School of Educational Research and Engagement in the Faculty of Education during 2016–2018. He is a C-2 rated researcher with the National Research Foundation in South Africa. His research interests centre on curriculum policy and theory, educational change, teacher epistemologies and decolonisation of higher education. During 2010–2011 he was a Fulbright Postdoctoral fellow in the USA, at the University of Washington in Seattle, where he focused on social justice issues in the curriculum. He has lectured a course work M Ed degree in Curriculum Policy, Development and Management at centres across Southern Africa. Sylvan has published extensively in national and international journals and has also supervised many PhD and M Ed students to completion.

Ntandokamenzi Dlamini is an academic in the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies, College of Education at the University of South Africa (UNISA). She teaches subjects such as Teaching Methods, Educational Technology, and Educational Assessment. Her current research interest is in curriculum studies and curriculum innovation where she has published on pedagogic improvement, technology in education and gender education.

Suriamurthee Maistry is a curriculum scholar. He currently leads a project titled "*Higher Education Curriculum and Pedagogic Responsiveness in*

the Context of Innovative Artificial Intelligence (AI)". He has previously led the following major research initiatives. The first of these is "*The South African Textbook Research Project*" that looks at ideological discourses in school textbooks. The second is the "*Higher Education Pedagogy Project*"—a series of case studies of curriculum and pedagogy in selected university Economic and Business Sciences programmes. His third research project titled "*Decolonising Postgraduate Supervision: Towards a Pedagogy of Ethical Care*" focuses on supervision practices in the College of Humanities at UKZN in the context of decolonisation debates. He is also a co-investigator in two projects titled "*Pre-service Teachers as Agents of Change: About Deliberative Encounters and a Pedagogy of Discomfort in a Teacher Education Programme*" and "*Enabling Threshold Concept Development in Undergraduate Economics Students Using Mother Tongue Video Material*". He has successfully graduated 25 doctoral students and has over 60 peer-reviewed publications to date. He has served as guest editor for special editions in leading education journals in South Africa.

Lucky Maluleke is a *Careership* scholar in the Faculty of Education at Nelson Mandela University. He teaches subjects such as Vocational Pedagogy, Curriculum Studies, and Social Change. His current research interest is in (applied research that focuses on) career development, career decision making and continuing and continuous professional development of lecturers in technical and vocational education and training.

Inbanathan Naicker is Associate Professor in Educational Leadership at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and a National Research Foundation (South Africa) rated researcher. His research interests include leadership and context, leadership identities and self-reflexive methodologies in educational leadership research. Through international collaborations, he is building scholarships on arts-based research methods.

Walters Doh Nubia is interested in research on curriculum studies in which he is focused on curriculum development and evaluation across disciplines. He is also interested in research on higher education, postgraduate education and quality assurance especially as it relates to the broader society. For this reason, his research brings into conversation issues of social justice, decolonisation and discourse in education research. He is currently the head of the postgraduate studies department, faculty of education at Nelson Mandela University.

Daisy Pillay is a professor in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her scholarship is in *teacher identity and teachers' lives* within the broader field of teacher development studies. Her scholarship in arts-based research has opened up rich pathways for transdisciplinary work and transglobal connections in the aesthetic–ethic entanglements of self and its moral imperative.

Labby Ramrathan is a professor at the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and an NRF rated researcher. He is currently the editor of the *Journal of Education*, co-editor of the Springer series on Key Thinkers in Education and general editor of the Alternation African Scholarship Book series. His areas of scholarship include curriculum studies, teacher development and higher education. He has published extensively in both national and international publications with seven edited books published and more than 60 journal articles and book chapters published in accredited publications. He has supervised to completion more than 100 postgraduate students, including 40 at the PhD level. He served in several leadership positions within Education Faculty/School and has engaged in several institutional, national and international research projects.

Chris Reddy is Emeritus Professor in Curriculum Studies in the faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University. His research interests include Curriculum Studies, Environmental/Science Education and Teacher Education. He has published regularly in all these areas and publications include journal articles, book chapters, edited collections and popular articles in professional journals. He lectures on postgraduate programmes and serves as a senior research degree (MEd &PhD) supervisor in the department.

Shan Simmonds is Professor of Curriculum Studies and a member of the Edu-HRight Research Unit (Education and Human Rights in Diversity) at the North-West University. She is an NRF-rated researcher in curriculum studies, higher education and social justice who publishes actively. Research leadership positions include editor of the journal *Transformation in Higher Education*, deputy president on the executive committee of the South African Education Research Association and on publication committee of the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies. She is also the South African representative for the Women in Higher Education Management (WHEM) Network.

Marinus Daniel van Wyk is Computer Applications Technology Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. His research interests are Educational Technology, Curriculum Studies, Teacher Professional Development, 4iR, Education 4.0 and Qualitative Research.

Anja Visser is a researcher and senior lecturer in Curriculum Studies at North-West University (NWU). She is an Education and Human Rights in Diversity Research Unit member. She contributed to the education field, particularly in curriculum studies, human trafficking and human rights education. She achieved her PhD in Curriculum Development Innovation and Evaluation in 2018. She received the best SAERA Doctoral Thesis Award as well as the Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary. She has contributed to peer-reviewed journal articles, with her work published in respected journals like the *South African Journal of Higher Education* and the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods.* She has actively participated in and presented at various national and international conferences, showcasing her research findings and contributing to the broader discourse in her areas of expertise. As a postgraduate supervisor and co-supervisor at NWU, she guided numerous students through their research journeys, helping to shape the next generation of educational researchers. She also serves as a peer reviewer for several academic journals, further contributing to the quality and rigour of research in her field. Her current research interests include human rights education, social justice and trafficking in persons.

Zayd Waghid is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) in South Africa. He is the co-author of five books, *Educational Technology and Pedagogic Encounters: Democratic Education in Potentiality*, *Rupturing African Philosophy of Teaching and Learning: Ubuntu Justice and Education*, *Cosmopolitan Education and Inclusion: The Self and Others in Deliberation*, *Conversations on Higher Teaching and Learning: A Renewed Focus on Critical Praxis* and *Towards an Ubuntu University: African Higher Education Reimagined.* His current research interests are in critical pedagogy, social justice education and educational technology within the context of teacher education.

LIST OF TABLES

The State of Teacher Education in South Africa

Labby Ramrathan 🆔

Introduction

The 2021 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) results were released in May 2023, indicating that 81% of South Africa's grade 4 learners were not able to read with comprehension, including in their home languages. While COVID-19 formed part of the blame discourse on this extremely poor learning outcomes, school infrastructure and the quality of teaching and learning contributed to this dismal performance out of the school education system. Fleisch (2023) alluded to this concern about the quality of teaching, suggesting that interventions are needed to help teachers teach better. Hoadley (2018) argues that helping teachers teach better, as suggested by Fleisch (2023), may be a futile exercise. She blames this on the two-school education system with glaring racial disparities, wherein 80% of schools are serving that majority of Black

L. Ramrathan (✉)
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa
e-mail: ramrathanp@ukzn.ac.za

learners and from which weak outcomes are produced, with the PIRLS 2021 offering an example of such weak outcomes of public schooling.

Apple (2016) also contends that education is a site of conflicts on matters of curriculum, teaching and learning, what counts as evidence and who should raise critical questions on or about education. He (Apple, 2016) says that education is as contentious now as it has always been. Similar concerns were consistently raised about the quality of teachers decades ago (Samuel, 2002; Sayed, 2002), despite policy interventions in terms of teacher development from one becoming a teacher to one actually being a teacher. In fact, whenever there are public outcries over issues related to school education, teachers have emerged as a cause of concern. Similar sentiments are also expressed across the globe (see Apple, 2016; Canales & Maldonado, 2018; Lo, 2021).

In this chapter I present a historical account of teacher education within South Africa to illuminate the concerns raised by and about teachers and the policy interventions that have unfolded over the decades of transforming the education systems. I argue that, based on literary and experiential evidence, teacher education, in its broad conceptualization, is made more complex by the global, national and situational demands on basic and higher education and, as such, will continue to be at best tentative and, at worst, futile to the immediate and future needs of a country within a highly dynamic and rapid pace of change (Marope, 2017) characteristic of the twenty-first century.

Teacher education is generally future-oriented as it seeks to develop teachers for the future and seldom responds to the immediate needs of an education system. Yet many of the criticisms which teachers face are in responses to the dismal present-day performance of the schooling system, most notable through its learner performances and the social and economic challenges that the country faces which, inadvertently, is blamed on the schooling system. Policies informing teacher education take a substantial period of time to conceptualize, develop and legitimate through structural processes, including institutional process of design, development, approvals, registrations and accreditations. This means that any policy that is conceptualized for changing teacher education would take up to a decade or more to implement. Graduates emerging from new policy prescripts only enter the school system approximately a decade and a half later. Over this period nothing remains static, including curriculum changes, school changes, demands on schooling and political decisions, rendering any policy of teacher education out of sync with the contextual

and prevailing conditions of schooling. My personal involvement, both in the contribution towards policy formulation and in the curriculum design of teacher curriculum for the institutions in which I have worked, also attest to the substantive lag in policy responses and the lack of agility to prevailing contextual realities. Hence, while this chapter offers a historical policy perspective on teacher education in South Africa, I am mindful that there are contextual demands on teachers and the school education system that cannot be met by any existing teacher education policy.

This chapter will, therefore, present a landscape of transformation within South Africa to contextualize the changing teacher education policy framework. The changing policy framework informing teacher education is then presented, and the chapter concludes with a critique of teacher education from a curriculum studies perspective.

Teacher Education and the Quality of School Education: What Are Scholars and the Public Saying?

In a recent newspaper article, Jonathan Jansen contends that our university curriculum is antiquated. His argument is that students are being trained rather than educated (*The Herald*, South Africa, 7 September 2023), a curriculum issue to which I will return later in this chapter. Jansen's sentiments are clear. Students are being trained for a limited period of time to enter into a profession that, in most cases, is highly complex, dynamic and needs more than training to be efficient. It is no different for the teaching profession, which requires broader education rather than narrow training. The school system, a public system of educating the nation, is a site where not only powerful knowledge (Young, 2013) is taught and learnt. Schooling have evolved substantially to include other aspects of modern life, such as issues of health, social, poverty, environmental, economic, political, technological advancements, transformation and global demands. The politics of learning, as Soudien and Harvey (2020) note, are rarely taken into consideration in understanding who our learners are and the kinds of education that they receive, especially the majority of learners from impoverished contexts. Yet the training of teachers is centred largely on six areas of knowledge, as evidenced in the latest Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) policy document: disciplinary knowledge, education foundations,

teaching methods, situational knowledge, workplace learning and communication (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2015). How are teachers expected to educate the children and youth of the country based on this university teacher education curriculum, yet simultaneously expected to perform roles far beyond the capabilities and expectations of a developing nation?

Teachers' poor subject and professional competence, as opined by Schäfer and Wilmot (2012), continue to pervade the public spaces as professionals, politicians and scholars critique school education for its unacceptable performance despite the substantial resources which are provided for the school education sector. Schäfer & Wilmot (2012) argue that, despite great strides having been made on the policy front, quality and quantity issues related to teachers and teacher education continue to challenge the nation's education system.

Teacher supply and demand and the employment of teachers is yet another level of concern. As with most education systems, the situation in South Africa is characterized by cycles of undersupply and oversupply. The teacher education audit (as will be explained later on in this chapter) at the dawn of democracy indicated a huge oversupply of teachers (Hofmeyer & Hall, 1995). South Africa was producing approximately 26,000 teachers per annum through its racially fragmented and ethnically controlled teacher education system of the apartheid government. Following this oversupply, rationalization, consolidations and mergers of teacher education institutions, coupled with low demand for teachers, resulted in a low supply of teachers per annum, with some institutions reporting a supply of less than 50 teachers per annum. Following the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (DHET, 2006), processes were put into place to increase the number of teachers for the school education sector. These processes included the establishment of a ring-fenced bursary scheme for teacher development, the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme, which provided service-linked bursaries for a selected number of student teachers based on teaching specializations that were regarded as being in short supply for the school education system. Currently, while there is theoretically an undersupply of teachers from the higher education sector based on attrition rates, the recruitment of newly qualified teachers is not occurring at the same rate. Various reasons for the development of this employment issue have been advanced. These included the needs of schools with the requisite teaching specialization, vacant posts not being

filled by qualified teachers as these posts are either filled by temporary staff or left vacant due to financial and other process-related constraints.

Transformation Imperatives for a Developing South Africa

There are several seminal texts on South Africa's transition into democracy and its transformation agenda with a focus on education (see Chisholm, 2019; Motala, 2011; Ogunniyi & Mushayikwa, 2015; Schäfer & Wilmot, 2012) which capture the essence of the political struggles for liberation. Accordingly, this section will not delve in the details. Rather, the key issue of transformation will be engaged with to provide a contextualization of teacher education during this period of transition. More specifically, this section will focus on the historical trajectory that teacher education has taken since democracy. Sayed (2002), and to an extent Samuel (2002), presents historical accounts of teacher education in South Africa from different perspectives as they had unfolded in the late 1990s and into the 2000s. Sayed (2002) captures teacher education for the White population group as embedded within the 1910 constitution of apartheid South Africa, following its development through a racially segregated and fragmented teacher education in the 1960s to a more inclusive teacher education policy in the early parts of a democratic South Africa. Through this journey through the changes in teacher education policy, Sayed (2002) portrays the emergence of a complex framework that was put in place to tackle the difficulties of a fragmented and racially divided teacher education in South Africa through regulation, governance, curriculum, quality assurance, and stakeholder participation in policy formulation. Samuel (2002), by contrast, captures the resistance by teachers and teacher unions that influenced policy formulation which attempted to address the negative image of teachers and teaching leading up to and beyond a new democratic dispensation in South Africa. Being exposed to critical educational theories about education in general, and teacher education in particular, Samuel (2002) captures, through a teacher education curriculum design case study, the imperatives for change to the teacher education curriculum that took cognizance of competing interests in education, including that of the world of work, emerging theoretical framings for teacher education, institutional imperatives and transformative imperatives within accountability regimes. Since the early 2000s substantive changes to teacher