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# A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF GENDER, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA

by

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ABSTRACT

A Feminist Analysis of Gender, Education and Development: The Case of
South Africa

by

Theresa Ulicki

Heavily influenced by mainstream neo-liberal economic indicators,
studies of gender, education and development in the South have focussed
primarily on girls' and women's lack of equal access to education relative to that
of boys and men and the socio-economic returns nations can expect from
women's schooling. Little attention has been paid to the processes by which
women's education is shaped and the context within which girls and women
experience their primary and secondary education. Despite the rhetoric of
gender equality, policy-makers, researchers and states have failed to address the
gendered nature of students' formal education experience and the existence of
gender inequalities in education which persist as part of a far broader societal
pattern of female subordination. The relationship between patriarchy, power
and girls' and women's subordination is ignored.

The education reform initiatives proposed in South Africa's *White Paper
on Education and Training* (1995) fall within this dominant, neo-liberal, equal
opportunity approach. Although these initiatives may help girls and women
meet their practical gender needs, they will not assist them to realise any
strategic gender needs. They will not achieve an anti-sexist education system.
Working from a gender and development (GAD), anti-sexist framework, this
study maintains that education programmes need to be judged on how well they
challenge the ideological beliefs that impede not only girls' and women's access
to education, but their educational experiences as well. Black South African
girls' equal access to primary and secondary education should not mislead
individuals to conclude that gender inequalities in education do not exist. South
African schools are not neutral and do discriminate along gender lines. This
thesis shifts the focus on gender and education in South Africa away from how
many girls/women are in school, how much education they get, and the
economic benefits of their education for South Africa to an alternative analysis
which examines what, how and for what girls/women learn within an education
system which offers representations and cultural values which ignore gender
inequalities and the oppression South African girls/women face.

Submitted: October 15, 1997

# A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF GENDER, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## <u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u>

# ACRONYMS

ANC - African National Congress

ANCWL - African National Congress Women's League

BRAC - Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee

CACE - Centre for Adult and Continuing Education

COSAS - Council of South African Students

CSVR - Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

DET - Department of Education and Training

DRSD - Dispute Resolution Systems Design

FAWE - Forum for African Women Educationalists

GAD - Gender and development

GDOL - Gender division of labour

GNU - Government of National Unity

INSET - In-service education for teachers

NCPS - National Crime Prevention Strategy

NEPI - National Education Policy Investigation

NGO - Non-governmental organisation

NICD - National Institute of Curriculum Development

NQF - National Qualifications Framework

PRESET - Pre-service education for teachers

RDP - Reconstruction and Development Programme

SALDRU - South African Labour and Development Research Unit

SAP - Structural Adjustment Programmes

SAPS - South African Police Services

SASCO - South African Students' Congress

SHEP - Sexual Harassment Education Project

SIDA - Swedish International Development Authority

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

WAD - Women and development

WID - Women in development

WNC - Women's National Coalition

# Introduction

Studies of gender, education and development in the South have focussed primarily on girls' and women's lack of access to education relative to that of boys and men and the economic and social returns countries can expect from women's schooling. Little attention has been paid to the educational experience of girls and women, let alone to the relationship between education, patriarchy, power and women's subordination. Given that education is a major transmitter of societies' prevailing norms and values, these issues have received significantly less attention than they merit. This thesis seeks to challenge the dominant neo-liberal analysis of gender and education which focusses on the discourse of equal opportunity and gender-neutral education. I argue that despite (or because of) the rhetoric of gender equality, policy-makers, researchers and states have failed to address the gendered nature of students' formal education experience and the existence of gender inequalities in education which persist as part of a far broader societal pattern of female subordination. This argument is facilitated by examining the case of gender and education for black students in South Africa, past and present.

This study draws on both pedagogical and feminist conceptual frameworks. The pedagogical framework pays attention to factors such as the school environment, the content of curriculum and teacher training. Schools

play a central role in socialising boys and girls. The content of curriculum is crucial since it affects students' individual and collective identities, attitudes and actions. Teachers' attitudes and actions play important roles in the transmission of societies' biases and ideologies; teacher training, therefore, must play a central role in the equitable transformation of education systems.

The feminist framework this thesis advances combines a gender and development (GAD) theoretical perspective with anti-sexist educational strategies. This framework recognises the institutionalised basis of male power and privilege and proposes actions to correct gender discrimination and oppression in education. While a liberal feminist, women in development (WID) perspective argues for equal representation of girls and boys/women and men at all levels of education and equal participation of girls in maths and sciences, a GAD, anti-sexist framework establishes that the issues surrounding gender and education go beyond access. Education programmes need to be judged on how well they challenge the ideological beliefs that impede not only girls' and women's participation in education, but their educational experiences as well. Building on the adult literacy and basic education[1] work of Nelly Stromquist (1995, 1994, 1992 and 1990), who emphasises the importance of not undertheorising gender relations and of moving women's education from the role of satisfying basic needs to the role of developing critical awareness and

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[1] Primarily in Latin America.

mobilising women, this thesis will incorporate her principles to examine the primary and secondary education experiences of girls in South Africa. This feminist framework requires the exploration of often overlooked issues in education such as sexual violence and harassment in schools, teachers' gender biases, the repercussions of the patriarchal school environment on female students and women teachers, and women's employment prospects.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the gender implications of education reform in South Africa on black female primary and secondary school students. I chose to concentrate on primary and secondary students specifically because much attention has been focussed on issues of gender inequities in tertiary education and adult education. South African college and university students have organised against the discrimination they face and have been vocal about issues such as sexual harassment and violence. Secondary and primary students, however, are doubly marginalised because they are female and children/youth. The discrimination and oppression they face as female students is rarely discussed beyond issues of access, subject choice and stereotyping in textbooks, a condition which in itself imposed restrictions on this thesis since I have relied primarily on recent journal articles, government documents and newspapers. A further limitation on my study is that South African statistics fail to reveal the reality of the majority of South African women. Statistics are rarely disaggregated by gender and those that are usually do not

take racial differences into account. Additionally, official statistics prior to 1994 excluded the 'independent homelands', where a large percentage of black women live. Lastly, these statistics are deficient because they reflect only official systems not the informal structures upon which many black South Africans rely[2].

Extending Desiree Daniels' (1995) critique of the *White Paper on Education and Training*, which concentrates on the impact of this document and its proposals for adult women (learners and teachers) in education, and Kate Truscott's (1994) study on gender and education during apartheid South Africa, this thesis focusses on the significance of South Africa's proposed education reform for primary and secondary school girls.

My interest in undertaking this study results from my teaching experience at an all-girls secondary school in Lesotho. This experience brought to my attention the complicity of the education system in the discrimination against and oppression of girls and women in society. The liberation of South Africa and the subsequent proposed changes to the education system present an exciting window of opportunity for educators to radically transform the system to become an equitable and empowering experience for all learners - male and female. Given the history of South Africa, it is understandable that the emphasis has been on racial inequalities; however, gender issues must also be adequately addressed. This thesis seeks to provide a framework which ensures that gender

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[2] For instance, statistics on infant or under-5 mortality only reflect official hospital records, while many children are treated by traditional healers.

issues are not subsumed by racial considerations. It is crucial that South Africa adopt an anti-sexist as well as anti-racist stance on education reform.

The first chapter of this thesis establishes the theoretical and conceptual framework. It examines the evolution of education and development theories and the liberal, radical and socialist feminist analyses of gender, education and development. It also explores the current predominant policy and research approach of major donors and development agencies - particularly the World Bank. These institutions assert that education for girls and women, regardless of its content or form of organisation, has a positive socio-economic impact on women and nations. This neo-liberal perspective is heavily influenced by economic indicators and focusses on the discourse of equal opportunity and gender-neutral education. This thesis maintains that there is little or no correlation between access to education and quality of education. The neo-liberal perspective unquestioningly accepts traditional gender relations and gender ideologies in society and fails to realise that education reflects and promotes these gendered identities, often to the detriment of female students. Without a GAD, anti-sexist approach to education, prevalent gender biases and ideologies in education systems and societies remain.

Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of apartheid South Africa's Bantu Education system. It examines the extent to which this system, and its accompanying gender ideologies, affected and continue to affect the educational

experiences of South Africa's black female students. In addition to inadequate facilities and high student:teacher ratios associated with black education in general, female students confront specific gender discrimination including a gendered curriculum and teaching practices, sexual harassment and violence in schools and unequal employment opportunities upon completing their education.

The final chapter evaluates South Africa's *White Paper on Education and Training* from a GAD, anti-sexist framework and concludes that the government exhibits a well-intentioned but ill-conceived commitment to gender equity in primary and secondary education and is influenced by a neo-liberal perspective which concentrates on extending and equalising education opportunities for all. The *White Paper on Education and Training* overlooks the systemic and ideological nature of gender discrimination and oppression in the South African education system and society. Lastly, the thesis recommends a number of strategies to promote an anti-sexist education system.

## Chapter 1

## Gender, Education and Development: Towards a Theoretical Framework

### 1.1 Introduction

Education has been almost universally valued as the key to human progress. One of the first gender issues to be acknowledged by many development policy makers was the importance of educating girls. In recent years, the World Bank and the United Nations group of agencies have linked increased education for girls and women with significant gains in national economies and social well-being. Girls' education is often perceived as directly contributing to: lower fertility; increased contraceptive use; later age of marriage; reduced infant and child mortality; improved nutrition and family health; higher female participation in formal wage labour; higher female earnings, and increased national development as measured by gross national product (see for instance King, 1991, 22; Summers, 1994; UNICEF, 1992). However, in studies of gender[3] and education in the developing South, little attention has been paid to the processes by which the content and context of women's education is shaped,

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[3] The concept of gender is often misunderstood or misinterpreted - it is frequently identified solely with women. Gender is an analytical concept used to assess the various forms of social inequality between male and female segments of any society. One's gender is an identity constructed by the society and culture within which one lives; it is not a biological characteristic of a person. Because it is a social construction, it varies across cultures and through time - it is not static. Although the focus may be on the female or male population, gender analysis deals with the dynamics of social interaction between women and men, boys and girls. Strategies which focus solely on women (or men) simultaneously direct attention away from the broader social, economic and cultural factors which create the conditions of women's inequality in education.

and how girls and women experience educational messages and processes on a daily basis. Given the recognition of education as a major transmitter of consolidated values and norms in society, these issues regarding women and education have received significantly less attention than they merit. Aside from a few studies dealing with sexual stereotypes in textbooks (see, for instance Malenzapa, 1994; Tembo, 1984 and Obura, 1986, 1991)[4], the primary focus of the literature has been on the returns from girls' and women's education to the economy and society, as well as females' lack of access to education relative to that of males. Consequently, the formal education experience of women in Africa has not been researched in a comprehensive manner.

Education plays a key role in the process of social reproduction and control. It conveys the traditional messages about women's reproductive functions in the household and community, and productive functions in 'feminine' occupations. Schools, at all levels, are vehicles for perpetuating society's stereotyped or limited views of women and men, girls and boys:

> ... educational systems are usually microcosms of the gender systems of the societies in which they operate. The function of formal education to instill appropriate behaviour and cultural norms, consciously or unconsciously, includes gender-specific messages. (Ker Conway and Bourque, 1993, 1)

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[4] These studies have shown that girls and women are misrepresented, marginalised, and undervalued in texts.

The education system can also be a vehicle for change, and can develop and promote new attitudes and behaviours. Unfortunately, gender equity and the eradication of gender discrimination is rarely one of the goals of educational change. Although women's enrollment rates have been growing and their access to educational institutions has expanded around the world, the gender gap in education has not greatly narrowed and neither women's full nor equal participation has been achieved. In Africa, only Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland have equal or higher proportions of females from pre-school to the tertiary levels of education (Schmittroth, 1991). Furthermore, inequality of access is most severe in contexts where general enrollment is lower.

In the absence of formal barriers to women's participation in education, there are psychological and social barriers which contribute to their low enrollment and which limit their educational and occupational achievements. For example, girls are subject to gender bias in curriculum, teachers' attitudes and school organisation, as well as patriarchal gender ideologies; fall pregnant and suffer from subsequent expulsion from school; are targets of sexual violence both within the school system and society at large, and tend to have heavier domestic workloads than boys. These factors all contribute to quantitative and qualitative gender gaps in education.

Despite the rhetoric of equal opportunity, policy makers, researchers and states have failed to address the gendered nature of students' formal educational

experience. The existence of gender inequalities in education persist as a result of unchallenged social norms which dictate the social roles of women and men.

This chapter seeks to challenge the dominant liberal feminist analysis of gender and education which focusses on the discourse of equal opportunity and is governed by mainstream economic indicators. This perspective regards the equal education of women as the fundamental element in the development equation; indeed, it is considered one of the most important instruments for effecting social, economic and political change in society. Unfortunately, what this perspective rarely acknowledges is that the formal education system has also been an institution which has successfully perpetuated the myth of women's inferiority. This chapter argues that, contrary to the rhetoric of such analyses, even those few Southern countries which do have equal access to education for women and men have failed to produce an egalitarian society or to enhance the welfare of the majority - especially women. The chapter is divided into three parts. Part I briefly examines the evolution of the dominant education and development theories. The second part considers the three traditional approaches to feminist analyses of education - liberal, radical and socialist. These feminist perspectives have generated different understandings of the causes of women's oppression in society and of the reasons why inequalities exist between girls and boys in schools. Drawing on these perspectives, the reader is then introduced to equal opportunity and anti-sexist strategies in

education to challenge inequalities in gender and education. This section concludes with a brief overview of the "women in development" (WID), "women and development" (WAD) and "gender and development" (GAD) perspectives within international development thought. The final section critiques the mainstream policy and research approach to gender, education and development, as supported by major donors and development agencies - particularly the World Bank - and argues that working from a gender and development theoretical base, emphasis needs to be placed on an anti-sexist education which seeks to address girls' and women's strategic as well as their practical gender needs.[5]

## 1.2 An Overview of Education and Development: 1960s to 1990s

### The 1960s and Human Capital Theory

"...the educators were mesmerised by the economists use of funny numbers".
(Dore, 1976, 84)

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[5] Practical gender needs (PGNs) are the needs women identify within their socially constructed roles and the existing gender division of labour. These needs arise directly out of women's subordinate position in society and are often identified as such basic needs as food, water, health, and shelter. Emphasising PGNs as 'women's needs', despite the fact that these are the needs of all people not just women, makes it more difficult to recognise and work towards the strategic gender needs of women. Strategic gender needs (SGNs) seek an alternative and more equal organisation of society in terms of the gender division of labour, power and control or resources. These needs vary from culture to culture, but may include removal of institutionalised forms of discrimination such as land ownership rights or access to credit, and women's control over fertility. This approach seeks to improve the position, not merely the condition, of girls and women in society and is, therefore, a transformative approach.

In order to provide a context within which gender, education and development thought has evolved, this section presents a brief history since the 1960s of the various perspectives of the role of education in development. There is an extensive international literature on education in Southern nations. In the 1960s, this literature was very optimistic about the role of education in national development. The newly dependent African states, for instance, entered the 'first development decade' with a strong belief in the formal schooling system as an agent of change, as a provider of human resources, and as the fundamental key to sustained economic growth. Inkeles and Holsinger (1974) perceived education to be "the most powerful factor in making men [sic] modern" (2). Education was seen as a panacea for virtually all the problems confronting less developed nations. As a result, the 1960s and 1970s were a period of unprecedented educational growth in Africa, Asia and Latin America as countries allocated large portions of their budgets to education.

Economist and development planners believed that high economic growth was the most effective means of achieving 'development' in the South. They assumed that gains from economic growth would 'trickle down' to the poor masses and, therefore, equalise opportunities between social classes, raise wages and/or lower prices, raise demand for labour, and increase labour's productivity. Through this process, the problems of relative and absolute poverty in less developed nations would be resolved.

Economists 'discovered' education and saw it as an investment in the creation of human resources and rapid economic growth. The duty of education was primarily to provide the number of workers and the type of skills required by the various economic sectors. This school of thought, referred to as 'human capital theory', was "based firmly on economic criteria and on the perceived role of education in generating economic development. Little attention was given at this time to the education process itself" (Hindson, 1992, 154). Among the best known contemporary interpretations of human capital theory were those advanced by Theodore Schultz (1968), Frederick Harbison (1973) and Mark Blaug (1968). Fundamental to human capital theory is the argument that both nations and individuals would benefit from investment in educational resources since investment of this kind would increase skills and improve productivity. This, in turn, would contribute to economic development and generate wealth. According to Schultz (1961) "education was not to be viewed simply as a form of consumption but rather as a productive investment... [for] an educated population provides the type of labour force necessary for industrial development and economic growth" (in Fagerlind and Saha, 1989, 19). Furthermore, it was believed that human capital investment would secure a more equal society by ensuring that all sectors of society had an opportunity to acquire an education, which had traditionally been appropriated by privileged elites:

> A vigorous and sustained policy of investment in education would enhance social justice and effectively ameliorate the condition of impoverished groups, or

> perhaps contribute directly to the eradication of poverty altogether. Deprivation, unemployment, underemployment and low status could all be countered as long as the poor were given unlimited access to educational resources of good quality. (Nasson in Hartshorn, 1992, 114)

During this time, Southern countries engaged in an impressive expansion of their formal education systems increasing the number of students in all levels of formal schooling. However, this expansion produced greater inequality within nations as the middle and upper classes had greater access to the higher levels of education and were able to maintain and improve their children's educational advantage. Furthermore, a rapid increase in secondary and tertiary level graduates resulted in large numbers of educated unemployed who could not be absorbed into the workforces of these countries. By 1970, in Africa alone, the combined unemployment and underemployment rate was 38%, and the vast majority of these individuals were under 25 years of age (Bacchus, 1981, 217). In the end, more education simply resulted in the replacement of less educated labour by the more highly educated. The number of jobs did not grow as rapidly as the number of graduates and created an increase in unemployment of both the educated and uneducated. Nevertheless, the demand for education continued to grow since employment prospects were still enhanced through education.

While economists embraced human capital theory, sociologists adopted a similar position within the framework of modernisation theory. As human capital theorists

emphasised that education promoted greater productivity and work efficiency, modernisation theorists asserted that "education, and particularly schooling, was perhaps the most important agent for transforming a traditional society into a modern one... [because] schooling has a modernizing effect on the ways that people think, and consequently the ways they behave" (Fagerlind and Saha, 1989, 52). Further, like human capital theorists, modernisation theorists focussed on the level of the individual to explain different degrees of economic growth and 'development'. This school of thought focussed on how education transformed the individual. Inkeles and Smith argued that "exposure to 'modernizing' institutions (schools, factories, and the mass media) inculcates 'modern' values and attitudes, such as the openess to new ideas [and] independence from traditional authority... the compounding effects of this process are crucial. The greater the number of people who are exposed to modernizing institutions such as schools, the greater the level of 'individual modernity' attained by the population. Once a critical segment of population changes in this way, the pace of societal modernization and economic development quickens" (in Benavot, 1989, 16). Neither the social structure of nations nor the international system were taken into account. "[R]ather than advocating structural change to promote development [both schools of thought] advocate individual change" (Fagerlind and Saha, 1989, 49).

Together, the human capital and modernisation theories presented a compelling vision to developing nations and were the justification for massive spending on

education in the 1960s and 1970s. They also had considerable influence over the education and development policies formulated by international organisations such as the World Bank and UNICEF, as well as bilateral agencies. In many ways, as will be shown later in this chapter, these theories continue to sway education and development theory and policy making.

## Pessimism and the Challenge

"Why do we confuse development with economic growth?"
(Seers, 1979, 9)

The optimism of the 1960s was replaced by disillusionment and pessimism in the 1970s. As studies began to reveal the extent of mass poverty in the South and the increase in inequality that accompanied growth in many poor countries, more people began to question the dominant policies and theories concerning development. A normative, people-centred perspective emerged in development analysis as theorists such as Dudley Seers concluded that economic growth alone was not sufficient to achieve a reduction in inequality, unemployment and the lack of provision of basic needs. As human capital theory began to be questioned, so did the link between education and development. Researchers determined that there was little evidence to suggest that increased schooling resulted in increased earnings and productivity or acted as a panacea for poverty (see for instance Curle, 1973; Moncada, 1981; Hurst, 1982). Massive educational investment in Western-style

schools in less-developed countries was not leading to sustained economic growth, the goal of universal primary education had not been reached and the escalating costs of trying to maintain burgeoning educational systems became impossible for most less-developed countries to manage. Gaps still existed between the rich and poor and, in many cases, were being exacerbated despite (or because of) education (Curle, 1973). In fact, during this period, the distribution of income had become increasingly unequal. Indeed, despite relatively equal educational distribution and some economic growth, Latin American countries such as Brazil and Mexico experienced increasing inequalities in income distribution (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985, 269 and Levin, 1981, 87). Paul Hurst (1981) concluded that the contribution of education to development "except in unusual circumstances... is easily exaggerated and its role in social transformation usually insignificant" (121). Michael Todaro (1981, 312) and Martin Carnoy (1982, 73) suggested that the education systems of most developing nations were increasing inequalities because it was particularly the children from middle and upper class urban families who had access to education, especially secondary and tertiary education. Furthermore, the number of people living in poverty increased as did the number of educated among the unemployed (Bacchus, 1992, 105). Carnoy observed in *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (1974) that:

> [J]ust as the poor begin to get higher levels of schooling, the relative value in the labour market of those levels falls. Even when the society invests more in schooling for the poor, therefore, the labour market values that schooling less than before the poor were getting it. So income distribution does not improve in a capitalist society as the

average level of schooling increases or as the distribution of schooling becomes more equal. (364)

In *Growing Up Modern*, Bruce Fuller (1991) argued that political elites use schools to manipulate communities:

> The school often fails to provide children with even basic literacy, offering no real chance for achieving higher status. But the state, collaborating with local elites, signals the provision of opportunity and equity. In turn, this process enhances the legitimacy and authority of traditional local leaders who now align themselves with the central state. (21)

Neo-Marxist theory, which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, provided the greatest challenge to human capital theorists. A common theme found in the various neo-Marxist perspectives is the emphasis that education is not a neutral force: "It is a product of, and is conditioned by, the capitalist political economy of which it is an integral cultural component. As such, the form, content, and distribution of education mirror the distribution of power and authority in an unequal and hierarchical class society" (Nasson, 1990, 95).

Among the more influential Marxist educational theorists of the 1970s were Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis. Writing about the United States, but expressing a view that is equally applicable in the less developed South, Bowles and Gintis (1976) maintained that education could not be regarded in isolation from the unequal economic, political and social structures of society. The roots of inequality lay outside education and the failure to confront the structural dimensions of

inequality prevented the realisation of equitable goals, thus reproducing a class-based society (123). They concluded that education in capitalist societies generated, rather than reduced, inequalities. Theorists, such as Paulo Freire, also believed that state educational practices both legitimated and perpetuated the status quo of unequal power structures in society. Freire (1972) called for a "pedagogy of the oppressed" which challenged structures of oppression and domination. The value of education, it was argued, should go beyond merely preparing a population for employment. Freire advocated an education which led to personal liberation, political mobilisation and social transformation by raising people's awareness of the relationships of domination and submission which exist at personal, community, national and international levels.

According to dependency theory, underdevelopment was the result of exploitation of the less-developed nations (the periphery) by the capitalist West (the centre). The essence of the development called for by this school of thought was 'self-reliance' or 'development without dependency'. Carnoy and other dependency theorists were unequivocal in their stance that the promotion of schooling as a major strategy for human capital formation in poor societies made little sense without a prior attempt to transform the economic structures of societies first. Carnoy stated that "an economic structure able to absorb all the educated is not possible under conditions of national dependency" (Carnoy in Zachariah, 1985, 18). While such critics did not deny that education did contribute to human

productivity, a basic criticism of human capital theory was that success was measured solely by increased access to economic wealth - that is, increased income. Although some incomes did increase in developing nations, growth did not 'trickle down' to the poorer segments of societies as predicted by human capital and modernisation theorists. As a result, the role of formal education in the 'development' of nations came to be seriously questioned. It was within this context that Carnoy's (1974) concept of 'education as cultural imperialism' was established as an explanation of how education contributed to the dependency and underdevelopment of less-developed countries. The Western model of education had been implemented in the independent nations of the South partly because it had been imposed by colonial powers and partly because national leaders and the new emerging elite were products of such a system and had faith in its ultimate value. Despite massive increases in educational expenditure, the type of education provided remained virtually unchanged. This resulted in "the continued influence on developing countries of ...[Western] theories of development and how education [contributed] to the development process" (Bacchus, 1992, 104), which influenced educational policies and development strategies. Thus, the formal education process in the former colonies served both the indigenous elites and the West.

The findings of studies in the 1970s revealed that a more equal distribution of education, at any level, could not be expected to generate notable changes in the structures of economic, political and social inequalities. Education did not bring

about the kind of national development that was anticipated and the 'development' which was occurring did not bring about an improvement in the quality of life. Indeed, educational systems seemed mainly to perpetuate social and economic inequalities. Development strategists were called upon to recognise the fact that "education cannot be viewed as a simple passport to rising earnings for groups at the bottom of the ladder of class and inequality" (Nasson, 1990, 103).

## The 1990s: New Definitions of Education and Development? World Bank Dominance

While a fierce theoretical debate concerning the linkages between education and development raged during the 1960s to early 1980s, this divergence subsided in the later 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, by this time a wide range of donor agencies showed a striking commonality in orientation, approach and priorities (Samoff, 1993, 187). The emergence, in the 1980s, of the World Bank as the largest single source of external financing for education projects and research in developing countries has resulted in the domination of its education and development framework. The World Bank has continued to assume powerful connections between education and "development".[6] Despite incorporating a development discourse[7] which seemingly

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[6] One notable change, however, is that the Bank now emphasises basic education as the number one priority for government spending while minimising the relative importance of higher education, vocational training and non-formal education. During the late 1970s, total Bank lending for vocational education exceeded that for primary and secondary education combined (Bennell, 1995, 14). This is no longer the case.

[7] This discussion uses terms like 'human development', 'endogenous development', 'development with a human face' , 'sustainable development', 'gender equity' and 'participatory development'.

indicates a new sensitivity to the social and political factors affecting development, and focussing on improving the quality of life of the poorest sectors of the population while reducing the emphasis on economic growth, the World Bank remains firmly entrenched in its economic neo-liberal development framework. While it has assimilated this new development discourse into its policy documents, it is clear that the education and development agenda of the World Bank has not changed since the 1960s nor has the influence of human capital theory diminished. As Paul Bennell notes, "Most of the policy issues and priorities that so preoccupied the authors of the Bank's... Education Sector Policy Paper in 1970, 1974 and 1980 are revisited and reaffirmed in [the 1995 Review]" (1995, 1). Still working within the modernisation paradigm, the primary concern of the World Bank is to spread the economic development of less-developed countries by improving the efficiency of the education systems of these countries. Clearly, economic development remains a normative reference point for World Bank education policies. The 1995 Education Policy Review *Priorities and Strategies for Education* states:

> Investment in education leads to the accumulation of human capital, which is key for sustained economic growth and increasing incomes. Education ...also contributes to poverty reduction by increasing the productivity of the poor's labour, by reducing fertility and improving health, and by equipping people to participate fully in the economy". (World Bank, 1995, 19)

Despite the fact that its financial contribution represents only 0.5% of developing countries' total spending on the education sector (World Bank, 1995, 14), it accounts for more than one quarter of all aid to education in developing countries (World Bank, 1995, 14) and self-admittedly, sways the lending of most other major donors (Bennell, 1995, 1). Thus the World Bank remains influential in setting the educational agendas of less-developed countries even though its overall vision of education in the South has remained virtually unchanged during the last three decades[8].

The World Bank's influence on the education policies of the South is not solely due to its direct financial expenditure, but also to the sheer comprehensiveness of its analyses of less-developed nations' education systems. It has great capacity to conduct, commission, summarise and disseminate studies. So pervasive and powerful are the Bank's works, that "it is difficult to hear the local voices at all" (King, 1991, xv). While there are those who criticise the assumptions of the World Bank with respect to education and development, the extensiveness and "accessibility of the agency agendas, and the incorporation of [World Bank analyses by] many Northern academics... makes it difficult to elaborate with as much

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[8] During the 1980s, less than 10% of all multilateral and bilateral aid went to education (Stromquist, 1994, 17). It is estimated that international aid for all basic needs, which includes education, currently totals approximately US$4 billion a year, which is "less than half as much as the aid-giving nations spend each year on sports shoes" (Grant, 1993 in Stromquist, 1994, 18). Despite the current emphasis on a more sensitive development process, there continues to be an uneven provision of international assistance that relies more on foreign policy and economic and historical ties than on actual need: "the richest 40% of the developing world's population receives twice as much aid per head as the poorest 40%, and... the nations which account for two-thirds of the world's child deaths receive only one quarter of the world's aid" (Stromquist, 1994, 36).

thoroughness as the agency an interpretation of education... in the developing world that is distinctive and different from the dominant aid perspective" (King, 1991, xvi). Further, the important work carried out by many NGOs and researchers, both in the North and South, whose interpretations may conflict with the World Bank's, is often ignored since the World Bank is not predisposed to assimiliate findings which contradict its overall vision and policies. As such, there is little known or easily available research on education and development outside the World Bank's prevailing neo-liberal framework.

It is clear that the World Bank has both overwhelming financial influence and a hegemonic position relating to the discourse of development and education. This said, it is essential to remember the the World Bank is a bank - a bank influenced by neo-liberal economists and human capital theory. As such, it has a somewhat myopic view of education in the developing world. Its key concerns are "costs, inputs, outputs and benefits... The processes of teaching and learning that transform inputs to outputs,... lie outside the scope of what is examined" (Lauglo, 1996, 231) and are deemed unimportant.

The influence of the argument that there is a correlation between expansionist education strategies and a reduction in income disparities has been immense. As we have seen, this proposition was embraced in the 1950s and 1960s and despite arguments against its equalising potential since the 1970s, the

literature in human capital theory is still growing. In the 1990s, the neo-liberal literature has come to embrace the principle that equal access to education will have equalising effects on gender disparities.

## 1.3 Feminist Analyses of Gender and Education

This section provides a broad overview of the various contemporary Western feminist frameworks and their implications for the analysis of gender and education. While feminist theorising on formal education is as multifaceted as feminist theorising on any other issue, essentially two strategies have developed for combatting sexism in education: an equal opportunity approach and an anti-sexist approach. Lastly, I return to the issue of development and provide a brief overview of the WID, WAD and GAD perspectives.

### Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism is the most widely accepted of all feminisms. Its arguments and proposals have been incorporated into government, donor and development agency policies because they merely extend to girls and women a system that is already in place for men rather than challenge the status quo. Liberal feminists assert that women should have the same rights and

opportunities as men to determine their social, political and economic roles; therefore, the conceptual foundation for liberal feminist education scholarship is that of 'equal opportunity'. Within this framework, 'equal' means the same (Byrne in Acker, 1987, 423). That is, equality in education for girls and women is accomplished by merely extending to them men's education with all its commensurate benefits. It is assumed that if women are admitted to men's education and treated exactly the same as men, all the problems of gender inequality in education will be solved. The basic structure of the education system and its 'modernising' and gendering influences go unquestioned. As Weiner (1994) notes, "[l]iberal feminists... assume that equality for women can be achieved by democratic reforms, without the need for revolutionary changes in economic, political or cultural life" (54).

Sexual stereotyping is a second major concern of liberal feminists. Strategies for educational change emanating from this perspective are largely aimed at changing the attitudes of teachers and students and include gender neutral teaching materials, persuading girls to take non-traditional subjects such as science and math, and 'assertiveness training' for female teachers (Weiner, 1986, 269).

Within the context of the developing South, the liberal feminist perspective is heavily influenced by neo-liberal human capital theory. It assumes that as the modernisation process proceeds, educational and occupational

opportunities will expand and women's status will improve. The assertion is made that education and training enhance individual human capital; therefore, investment in education and training is roughly the same as investment in capital goods (Ollenburger and Moore, 1991, 105). Education is assumed to bring a substantial return to the individual through income enhancement and to society by training the necessary skilled workers. Proponents of this perspective conclude that "if a group suffers inequality in an economic sector, the solution is to increase the human capital of group members through increased educational achievements" (Ollenburger and Moore, 1991, 105). Thus, liberal feminists maintain that limited access for women to education and certain occupational fields can have far-reaching negative effects on the development of a country. The education of girls and women is generally considered an investment with higher economic returns than that of boys and men (Mannathoko, 1992, 74).

Feminists of other persuasions have criticised the basic assumptions upon which the liberal framework rests. Arguing that the liberal feminist focus on equality of opportunity is incompatible with feminist principles, O'Brien points out that:

> [A]s feminism is committed to equality of condition rather than to equality of opportunity with its radically unequal reward system, many feminists... believe that liberalism is not ultimately consistent with feminism. Despite the lip-service to women's rights and the quite concrete gains... which liberalism has grudgingly given to women, it remains fundamentally patriarchal in theory and practice. (O'Brien, 1986, 95)

Further, inclusive strategies which attempt, in the liberal tradition of equality, merely to extend men's education to women, while constructing women as the 'other' within a deficit model, have serious consequences for women. They require women to adapt to the values, structures and systems created by men. In education, when girls do not adapt, it is considered the girls' 'failure', not the failure of the system (Foster, 1992, 60). Such strategies and research which focus solely on women, simultaneously direct attention away from the broader social, economic and cultural factors which create the conditions of women's inequality in education.

Liberal feminism is charged with regarding labour market processes and capitalism uncritically. It is accused of ignoring the impact of patriarchy, power and the systemic subordination of women by men, as well as the effects of racism and classism. Further, liberal feminism does not adequately challenge the underlying causes of inequalities between women and men and, therefore, perpetuates the status quo. As Wolpe (1978) writes, liberal feminism "does not in any way tell us how the system of [gender] inequality is itself produced... That is to say, since it does not deal with the conditions of existence of the inequality, it can only concern itself with a redistribution of actors while retaining an unequal system" (307).

Liberal feminism is further criticised for regarding the state as an essentially benevolent institution that will both design and implement legislation

to ensure women's equal access to education and other social and economic arenas (Stromquist, 1990, 143). Nevertheless, the liberal feminist framework has been extremely important in documenting the biases and distortions in texts and the sexism that underlies practices such as course and career counselling for girls and boys (Weiler, 1985, 27). Further, liberal feminist aims to remove discriminatory practices and policies and to encourage women into management positions and non-traditional fields of study and employment are, of course, considered desirable by feminists of all persuasions. Unfortunately, however, liberal feminists regard a more equitable distribution of the sexes within the current social formation as an end in itself.

Because its main focus has been on reducing unequal access to education and little attention has been paid to issues of the type of education received, gendered power relations and the patriarchal system, this approach suffers from obvious limitations. Nevertheless, liberal feminism has had the greatest impact on formal education strategies in the North and South.

Radical Feminism

The radical feminist approach emerged as an alternative to liberal feminism in response to the latter's perceived limitations. While liberal feminism emphasises equal educational opportunities, radical feminism challenges the

quantity, the quality and the structure of education being offered women. Radical feminists denounce liberal feminism for incorporating women into inherently inequitable hierarchies. While liberal feminists believe in the benevolent or neutral state, radical feminists perceive the state as a key agent in the perpetuation of women's subordination. The emphasis the state puts on the family as the core unit of society identifies women as mothers and housekeepers and confines them to the private realm (Stromquist, 1990, 145). Radical feminists want to see a fundamental change in the social structure, one that will eliminate male dominance and patriarchal structures. The concept of patriarchy is critical to the radical feminist perspective. Patriarchy is described as the historical domination of men over women.

> Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression... are extensions of male supremacy... All men have oppressed women.
> (Redstockings Manifesto in Weiner, 1994, 55)

The "universal oppression of women" is, unmistakably, another aspect of radical feminist thought.

Radical feminists are concerned with the male bias of school knowledge (both the formal and hidden dimensions of curricula), and the sexual politics of the classroom, staffroom and the schooling process. Spender (1983) argues that what we "know" is deficient, for it is the record of decisions and activities of

men, by men, and it is presented in the guise of *human* knowledge. Women's contributions have been ignored and disparaged.

> While males control education there is no direct means for women to pass on their understandings. What women know frequently dies with them, until feminists periodically rediscover them and their writing and attempt to reconstruct women's heritage and tradition. (Spender, 1983, 18)

This affects the way women (and men) conceptualise themselves and their world, and thus, has implications for gender power relations in society in general, as well as for curriculum and female teachers' and students' access to power within education, specifically. Sexual politics within schools is illustrated in such well known issues as teachers' attention being unequally divided between the sexes to the advantage of boys and the perceived benefits of single-sex schooling for girls (see, for instance, Acker, 1994).

The oppression of female students and teachers by male students and teachers is another concern of radical feminists. Accounts of belittling treatment and sexual harassment of female students are all too common both in the developing South and the overdeveloped North.[9] By exposing these disturbing practices, Weiner (1986) points out that radical feminists legitimated discussions of sexual abuse in schools, a topic which had previously been taboo.

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[9] See for instance Mahony, 1985; Jones, 1985; Graham-Brown, 1991; Truscott, 1994; Sebakwane, 1994; and *New York Times*, 1992.

Radical feminism encourages a girl-centred approach to education. This approach involves: the revision of curricula and texts with the development of girl-centred knowledge; changes in pedagogy intended to develop non-hierarchical, less competitive, more participatory teaching methods; the establishment of single-sex schools; and the provision of schools which are physically safe for girls and women (Acker, 1993, 157).

Critics charge that radical feminist analyses, with their generalisations about all women and all men, ignore divisions which intersect gender such as race, class, ethnicity and age (Acker, 1994, 52). Radical feminism is further criticised because of the difficulty of implementing its goals. Surely introducing an equal opportunities policy is more immediately realisable than developing woman-centred knowledge, making educational institutions safe for women or ending patriarchy.

## Socialist Feminism

According to Wolpe (1988), the socialist feminist perspective on education is concerned with examining the degree to which education and schooling have been effective in producing and reproducing gender and class inequalities. Education is regarded as one of the terrains within which gender as well as class struggles are played out and in which patterns of social domination are

produced and sustained. Women are indoctrinated to accept the sexual division of labour that assigns them motherhood and domestic roles (Stromquist, 1990, 146). A socialist feminist approach connects schooling to the class structure and the economic system of capitalism and states that educational outcome will differ by social class and gender. Within the context of the South, this is illustrated by the fact that many poor, lower class students cannot afford to go to school because they cannot afford school fees, books, uniforms, transportation, etc.

Socialist feminists believe that the state is not neutral towards women and that state educational policies reflect dominant gender ideologies and welcome the incorporation of women into education to meet the needs of capitalist production and dominant class interests. Consequently, as Stromquist (1995) argues, educational policies implemented by the state do not challenge the existing framework:

> States are reluctant to engage in possible challenges to the traditional power structures; therefore, most state policies on gender address their practical needs - those related to the current roles women play within society. (434)

To explain the existence and persistence of gender inequalities in access to and duration of schooling, socialist feminists argue that 1) the large number of illiterate women in the world can be attributed to women's double role as reproducers of children and guardians of the family; 2) the time of low-income women is generally taken by domestic and poorly remunerated work - these

women, therefore, are not available for schooling, especially in societies where the economy relies heavily on subsistence production; 3) the fact that women have lower levels of education than men is understood in terms of women's devalued role as workers, which concentrates women in only a few occupational positions - often in the informal sector of the economy which requires either no education or low levels of education (Stromquist, 1990, 146-148).

Cognizant of the fact that more women all over the world are gaining access to education (albeit slowly), the socialist feminist perspective argues that this is due to the fact that labour market has become less predicated on physical strength and requires more educated workers. Yet, this will not end the gender-based division of labour. "Global-assembly line" goods require "nimble fingers" and obedient workers - qualities which employers attribute to women.

Since women's greater participation in the labour force need not take place under conditions of gender equality, socialist feminists do not anticipate that increased industrialisation and new technologies will contribute to an end in the gender-based division of labour. Moreover, equal access to schooling, in and of itself, does not result in positive changes in gendered power relationships within either the education system or society. While women's access to education may equal with men's, inequalities in curriculum, field of study selection, gendered power relations within the education system, and pedagogy will continue to preserve men's advantage in the economic and social realms.

Thus, without the transformation of the system of education, socialist feminists believe that women will continue to be discriminated against.

## Equal Opportunities and Anti-Sexist Approaches to Education

While liberal, radical and socialist feminisms are the most common categories of feminist thought identified, they are rarely rigidly adhered to by educationalists. Policy formulators and other educationalists have two different approaches to draw upon. Gaby Weiner (1986) refers to these two approaches to gender and education as equal opportunity (gender-neutral) and anti-sexist (girl-centred), respectively. Weiner argues that the first is "interested principally in helping girls to take their rightful places both in the school system and the workplace" despite patriarchal obstacles, and the second calls for "challenging and changing the existing educational [and social] system so that [girls and women] can take up their rightful places in the future" (266). While the former approach identifies educational inequality as a problem of access, the latter approach regards the under-representation and under-achievement of girls in schools as part of a far broader societal pattern of female subordination. Drawing primarily on the ideas of liberal feminists, the equal opportunity approach seeks to equalise access and redistribute the rewards of education. As

with liberal feminism, this perspective fails "to address the relationship between patriarchy, power and women's subordination" (Weiner, 1985, 9), yet is the dominant approach of gender and education policies and initiatives. The anti-sexist approach incorporates radical and socialist feminisms as well as lesbian and black feminisms. It calls for the transformation of the patriarchal and ethnocentric nature of the education system and challenges prevalent gender biases and ideologies in society. Since the anti-sexist approach to education has been adopted by feminists from a variety of political affiliations, there have been disagreements with regards to focus and strategy within the approach; however, a fundamental desire to transform the education and social systems rather than merely work within these systems advocating equal opportunities has drawn these rather disparate groups together (Weiner and Arnot, 1987, 357).

The differences between the two approaches becomes evident when one examines the ideological roots from which these approaches have come and the strategies chosen to challenge sexist education. The two frameworks are summarised in Table 1 and discussed below.

Table 1

| Equal opportunity/Girl friendly/ Gender Neutral/Reformist | Anti-sexist/Feminist/ Transformational |
|---|---|
| Persuading girls into science and technology | Recognising the importance of girl-centred study to motivate and inspire girls - for example, 'herstory' and girl-centred science |
| Providing a compulsory common core of subjects, to include 'hard' sciences for girls and humanities for boys | Providing girls with skills and knowledge to challenge the male system in the workplace and home |
| | Combining anti-sexist and anti-racist strategies |
| Analysing sexism in textbooks and all other resources | Changing the nature of schooling: replacing competitiveness and authoritarianism with cooperation, egalitarianism and community |
| Reviewing school organisation - for example, discipline and uniforms | Giving girls a sense of solidarity with members of their sex and, therefore, greater confidence and motivation |
| Producing in-service courses and policy guidelines | Widening girls' horizons while at the same time not denigrating the lives and work of the mothers, female friends and women in the community |
| Establishing mixed-sex working groups to develop and monitor school policy | Exploring the relationship between sexuality, women's oppression and sexual harassment in school and the workplace |
| Equalising female representation at all levels of school | Addressing issues of heterosexuality and homophobia |
| | Establishing girls' support groups |
| Creating posts for equal opportunities | Decision-making through wide consultation and collective working |

Source: Adapted from Weiner and Arnot, 1987, 356 and Weiner, 1990, 39.

Most current educational models are based on the premises that girls and boys have similar abilities to learn when they enter school, that they should be given the same or equal opportunities to learn and that the result will be equal educational outcomes for all children. Since males and females are considered

the same for educational purposes, it follows that all learners should be given the same curricular choices, instructional treatments, courses of study, and the same attention by teachers, principals and counsellors. However, in reality, girls and boys are treated equally neither within the education system nor in society. "...[E]ducational systems are usually microcosms of the gender systems of the societies in which they operate. The function of formal education to instill appropriate behaviour and cultural norms, consciously or unconsciously, includes gender-specific messages" (Ker Conway and Bourque, 1993, 1). Thus, schools are vehicles for perpetuating stereotyped or limited views of women and men, boys and girls. However, education systems can be vehicles for change, and can develop and promote new attitudes and behaviours. Unfortunately, gender equity is rarely one of the goals of school systems.

Proponents of equal opportunities believe that if equal access is provided, sex-role stereotypes are eliminated in curricular materials, and teachers and other educationalists treat girls and boys the same, the educational experiences of both will be successful. This perspective utilises traditional numerical and quantitative indicators such as access, enrollment and performance and advocates affirmative action policies. As can be seen by Table 1, equal opportunity initiatives encourage girls to go into science and technical subjects, critique curricular materials for sexism and monitor school practices for gender stereotyping and discrimination. However, as Manicom (1992) points out, "such

initiatives have less to do with transforming and challenging intertwined relations of race, class, and gender, and more to do with women assuming power positions similar to those of men" (369).

An anti-sexist, girl-centred approach expands its considerations to examine whether or not education has contributed in any way to alleviating the basic constraints which hinder girls and women in society. Thus, this approach emphasises the transformative potential of education. An anti-sexist approach to education creates new woman/girl-affirming understandings of society and the world. It leads girls and women to an awareness of their oppressions and creates a desire to change society. As part of this educational process, girls and women gain the confidence and knowledge to act both individually and collectively. Commenting on anti-sexist approaches to schooling, Adrienne Rich asks:

> What does a women [sic] need to know? Does she not, as a self conscious self-defining human being, need a knowledge of her own history, her much politicised biology, an awareness of the creative work of women of the past, the skills and crafts and techniques and powers exercised by women in different times and cultures, a knowledge of women's rebellions and organised movements against our oppression and how they have been routed or diminished. Without such knowledge women live and have lived without a context, vulnerable to the projects of male fantasy, male prescriptions for us, estranged from our own experience because our education has not reflected or echoed it. I would suggest that not biology, but ignorance of ourselves, has been the key to our powerlessness. (in Weiner, 1986, 269)

Traditionally, women are not meant to think analytically about society, to question the existing order, and to consider how things could be different; however, anti-sexist education is grounded in a vision of social change and demands such reflection. "It makes gender an issue in all classrooms in order to validate the experience of students, to bring it into consciousness and to challenge it... by extension, an anti-sexist strategy takes up race, class and sexual orientation, which interrelate in complex patterns with gender" (Briskin, 1990 in Manicom, 1992, 370).

While an equal opportunity approach has been successful in putting gender issues in education on the forum for discussion, has resulted in greater access to education for girls in all parts of the world, and has increased opportunities for girls (and to a lesser extent, boys) to choose non-traditional subjects, it has made very little impact on girls' everyday experiences in school or in society's perception of gender and gender relations. Further, this approach has had little influence in transforming the ways educationalists, researchers, governments and donor agencies perceive the issues of gender and education and gender ideologies. Critics of the predominant educational paradigm charge this is because the male experience of education has been arbitrarily assumed the "norm" (UNESCO, 1995, 66). For example, while studies in both the overdeveloped North and the developing South concentrate on girls' apparent "deficiency" in science, few investigate the fact that girls perform better than

boys in reading[10]. We must question why it is that so much research has been carried out on the basic education of female students in developing countries, while, in general, the differences between girls and boys in performance tend to be less marked in the younger years.

Supporters of anti-sexist educational approaches see the issue of girls' access to schooling and certain subject areas as being merely part of the entire issue of girls' educational experiences and place girls at the centre of the classroom in order to challenge the dominance of male experience (Weiner, 1986). Thus, while liberal, equal opportunity approaches regard girls as the "problem" in schooling and fail to address the relationship between patriarchy, power and women's subordination, anti-sexist supporters place it at the centre of their thinking.

The political respectability of equal opportunity and affirmative action initiatives often give policy makers a sense of having done their duty while the structural factors continue to reproduce inequalities. Elliot and Kelly (1982) argue that "[a]fter actively discriminatory policies have set inequalities in motion, sex-neutral policies are sufficient to maintain established patterns. Thus, the educational gap continues..." (336). This view is supported by Bowles and Gintis (1976):

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[10] An International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement (IEA) revealed that female pupils at the junior-secondary level demonstrated higher proficiencies in reading skills in 28 of 31 countries (23 industrialised and 8 developing countries).. See B. Fuller, H. Hua, and C. Snyder (1994), and W. Elley (1992)..

> ... a more equal school system will not create a more equal society simply through equalizing the distribution of human resources. Egalitarian school reform must be explicitly political: its aim must be to undermine the capacity of the system to perpetuate inequality... equality is not a question of subcultural values, nor is it a biological issue, nor is it a narrowly economic issue... reforms in education must seek to disable the myths which make inequality appear beneficial, just or unavoidable.                     (249)

This type of analysis leads some proponents of an anti-sexist approach to argue that there is no point in providing equal opportunities in schools if gender-biased structures in schools and other societal institutions (i.e. the family, workplace, etc.) remain unchallenged. The main concern of the anti-sexist approach is to uncover the extent of female oppression "in order to explore ways of *empowering* girls and women" (Weiner and Arnot, 1987, 358[emphasis in the original]). However, these two perspectives are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Despite the fact that the two positions point to two different theoretical bases, many teachers and educationalists use strategies from both perspectives. Educationalists who consider themselves advocates of anti-sexist education and want to be agents of change may use equal opportunities strategies as a starting point for broader issues (Weiner and Arnot, 1987, 356-360).

While one should applaud the achievements gained as a result of equal opportunity advocates, this is not where the struggle should end. "To liberalise access to an inadequate system might be acceptable in the short term, but for

more permanent change, a major restructuring of social institutions, including schools, is needed" (Weiler, 1986, 270). This can only be accomplished through a strategy which takes into consideration women's strategic gender interests as well as our practical gender needs and challenges existing structures and gender relations.

Feminist Approaches to Development

There is no single feminist approach to theorising or formulating policy about women in development. Research has varied according to "women in development" (WID), "women and development" (WAD) and "gender and development" (GAD) perspectives. The WID approach is the earliest approach and emerged from liberal feminism and the modernisation model of development. WID emphasises the transfer of knowledge and technical assistance and concentrates solely on women, not on relations between women and men. The WID approach does not see classism, sexism and racism as inherent in the development model. While women may not benefit as much as men do from development, proponents of WID view the system as good. They accept the existing social structures and hierarchies (including the gender division of labour[GDOL]) and seek to work within them, not transform them. The central assumption of WID is that women's position and gender relations

will improve with economic development and women's integration into the development process (and, by extension, the education system). The relationships through which inequalities are perpetuated are not taken into consideration. Because WID works within existing structures rather than against them and is, therefore, more palatable to both development agencies and governments, it is still the dominant approach to women and development.

The WAD approach emerged as a response to the limitations of modernisation theory and WID. It is based on dependency and radical feminist theories and views women as oppressed by national and international patriarchal structures. WAD seeks to separate from the international economic system which it regards as exploitative. WAD emphasises the need for small, women-only projects which stress a participatory approach. WAD does not consider gender relations in its analyses, although it does recognise that poor men are also victims of the development process and oppressive international structures.

GAD is based on socialist feminism and the theorising of Southern women. Rather than focussing solely on women, as the other two approaches do, GAD examines relations between women and men and how these can be transformed. "It goes beyond the questions of male prejudice and preconceptions, highlighted in the early WID work, to [look] at the institutionalized basis of male power and privilege. It also goes beyond looking

at male power and privilege within the domestic domain of families and households, to [uncover] its operation with purportedly neutral institutions" (Kabeer, 1994, xii). GAD takes into consideration the cultural attitudes and historical influences which contribute to the social construction of gender roles and the subordination of women. Central to a GAD analysis is the GDOL within which women and men are almost always allocated different duties and women's work is less valued and often invisible. Working from a base of practical gender needs, the GAD approach seeks to address women's strategic gender needs to confront gendered oppression and transform gender relations. While the terminology of gender and gender relations has been widely adopted by development agencies and researchers, the GAD approach is rarely adopted by donors in the planning and implementation of development projects and programmes because of the necessary structural changes and power shifts.

## 1.4 Gender, Education and Development: Discourse and Policies

This section examines the mainstream policy and research approach to gender and education in developing countries[11] supported by the World Bank

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[11] While this paper focusses on gender and education in the South, one must bear in mind that the situation of women in the North reflects, to different degrees, similar patterns. Contrary to the rhetoric of equality, industrialised nations are still predominately patriarchal in nature and the stereotyping of gender roles in education and employment persists.

and other major donors. Arguing from a GAD perspective and advocating anti-sexist strategies, I will challenge the dominant liberal feminist analysis of gender and education which focusses solely on the discourse of equal opportunity and gender-neutral education. I will demonstrate that the mainstream equal opportunity approach fails to address the relationship between education, patriarchy, power and women's subordination. Education and development initiatives with a gender focus have tended to erroneously assume that women's education results in, amongst other socio-economic benefits, decreased infant mortality rates, decreased under-five mortality rates, decreased fertility rates and increased contraceptive use. Moreover, the exceptions to this apparently straightforward equation are generally ignored. Despite (or because of) the rhetoric of equal opportunity, policy makers, researchers and states have failed to adequately address the gendered nature of students' formal education experience and the existence of gender inequalities in education which persist as a part of a far broader societal pattern of female subordination. These inequalities create a hostile learning environment for female students. Because access is seen as the most crucial problem, there is an absence of well-thought strategies to move women's education from "the role of satisfaction of basic needs to the role of developing critical awareness and to mobilizing women" (Stromquist, 1994, 5). This absence of strategies persists despite the fact that development agencies are producing more sophisticated conceptualisations of

the role of gender in development and the importance of gender relations and gender ideologies. This section will look at teachers' attitudes and behaviour, sexual violence, and curriculum and teaching materials - all of which contribute to such an environment, yet are not adequately addressed in mainstream literature. In order to support my arguments in this section, I will draw on the examples of South Africa and Lesotho, although the case of South Africa will be discussed more thoroughly in the chapters which follow.

## Access Is Not Enough: Education and Social and Economic Well-being

Faith in the neo-liberal development framework has resulted in a great deal of attention being paid to girls' access to education by development organisations, researchers and states. Projects operate within conventional frameworks and aim to: provide appropriate schooling facilities closer to girls, make it affordable for parents to send girls to schools, and design systems that accommodate the needs of rural girls (Haq, 1995, 8-9). The priority given by donor agencies to the issue of access is reflected in the following statements made by various donor agency officials to Nelly Stromquist during interviews for her 1994 study:

> The priority is really to bring girls to school.

> Gender stereotyping is not a universal problem. It exists only in some regions.

> The Bank does not get into the level of detail of
> curriculum. We are so far removed from these issues.
> (pp. 75-76)

Unquestionably, the problem of access is a serious one. UNESCO figures

show that in 1990 of an estimated 300 million children who did not have access

to primary or secondary schooling, 200 million were girls (UNESCO in

Stromquist, 1995, 440). To address this problem, most often developing

countries have increased the number of schools with the assumption that both

boys and girls will benefit equally. This assumption is erroneous. These

measures fail to look at education in a holistic manner and recognise that it

operates within a cultural and socio-political context and, therefore, perpetuates

prevalent gender ideologies. Efforts, such as those listed above, avoid the

transformative initiatives demanded by the GAD theoretical framework and

anti-sexist strategies. Stromquist (1995) argues that equal opportunity efforts pay

more attention to the short-term, material needs of women (i.e. practical gender

needs), as opposed to countering the ideological forces that operate against

women such as notions of femininity and masculinity transmitted by the schools

(strategic gender needs). As she notes, "this emphasis is easy to understand

given the immediacy of the material problems, but it is incomplete and perhaps

misguided when examined from a long-term perspective, the blind spot is

theoretical and tactical in nature"(445). Equal opportunity policies often give

decision makers a sense of having done their duty while structural factors

continue to reproduce inequality. Structural change is crucial in order to build a new model for education.

Economic and liberal feminist theories have generally failed to acknowledge the ideological nature of education and the importance of schools in reinforcing social values and gender representations. As a result, it is very possible for women to attain literacy and even high levels of education without increasing their gender consciousness. Stromquist (1995) further argues that "it is precisely this feature of current schooling - education without gender awareness - that encourages states to concede greater levels of education for girls" (446). This type of schooling does not threaten the status quo by addressing gender power relations in society, while at the same time women make greater contributions to the economy.

In a recent World Bank survey analysis of women's education in developing countries, King and Hill (1993) support the argument that there is a high correlation between the gender gap in education in the developing countries and other indicators of poverty, such as low contraceptive use, high infant mortality rates, high fertility rates and GNP per capita. The perceived link between women's education and these indicators has led to rationalising the need to educate girls on the grounds of its supposed impact on future children - "educate a woman and you educate a nation". Girls' education is also promoted as a means of population control. This is made apparent by the slogan of the

1986 World Bank poverty report: "education is the best contraceptive". Equating girls and women with motherhood means that "not only are women primarily considered in terms of reproductive activities, but childhood is so thoroughly gendered that 'the girl child' is regarded as an incipient women, and thus a future mother" (Burman, 1995, 29). This raises the question of whether or not girls and women should be educated simply so that they can educate further generations? Do girls and women not deserve a fulfilling and empowering education in their own right? Within this context, how can the World Bank perceive of the possibility of gender neutral or non-sexist education, especially when its own discourse regards the "girl child" not as a child at all but, rather, as a future mother?

While the World Bank has perhaps espoused these views more forcefully than other agencies, UNICEF, at times, falls into the same trap as the World Bank by limiting itself to an essentially economic approach rather than constructing a theoretical understanding of how women's inferior condition emerges and is maintained in society. In an attempt to counter the low status of girls and women, one UNICEF document casts its arguments in disturbingly economistic terms: *The Girl Child: An Investment in the Future*[12]. Stromquist (1994) argues that, as a result, their (i.e. the World Bank, UNICEF and other leading donor agencies) "proposals tend to border on the naive. They recommend actions such as

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[12] Even the use of the term 'girl child' reveals the gender-specificity of the supposedly gender neutral 'child' of international aid and development discourse.

'building the political will to reallocate budget', 'improving teacher quality'... as if there were no societal constraints to their achievement"(55).

The expected pattern of a clear correlation between high levels of women's education and low levels of infant mortality, high rates of contraceptive use and low fertility rates does not always exist[13]. The literacy rate amongst women in Lesotho is nearly three times that of the sub-Saharan African average, female enrollment in tertiary education is more than twice the average, and women form the majority at all levels of education (Schmittroth, 1991, 150). Similarly, black South African women have had equal, if not greater, access to education as black South African men and their literacy rates are nearly twice the sub-Saharan average (UNICEF, 1996, 86 and 98; Central Statistical Service, 1995). Yet despite the high rates of education and the lack of a gender gap in both Lesotho and South Africa, neither conform to the perceived trend. As Table 2 reveals, when compared to the average of nations categorised as developing countries by UNICEF[14], the data on Lesotho and South Africa indicate relatively high levels of women's education with simultaneously high levels of infant mortality, fertility[15] and population growth, as well as poorer than average rates

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[13] Email correspondence with Elaine Unterhalter strongly influenced the following section.
[14] UNICEF categorises countries as either 'in transition', 'industrialised', 'developing' or 'least developed'. Both Lesotho and South Africa are found in the 'developing' category, making the comparison reasonable.
[15] 49% of all live births are to mothers under the age of 20 (ANCWL, 1993, 53) - girls of school going age. A study of black teenage mothers in Durban by Eleanor Preston-Whyte and Maria Zondi (1989) suggests that this figure may even be anywhere from 60% to as high as 80% (48).

of contraceptive use and GNP per capita annual growth rate (Patel, 1993;

ANCWL, 1993; Sadie, 1995, 181).[16]

Table 2

| Indicators[17] | Lesotho | South Africa | Developing Countries' Average |
|---|---|---|---|
| Girls' Primary School Enrollment Ratio (%)[18] | 116 | 109 | 90 |
| Girls' Secondary School Enrollment Ratio (%) | 33 | 77 | 31 |
| Infant Mortality Rate | 107 | 80 | 68 |
| Contraceptive Use (%) | 23 | 50 | 54 |
| Fertility Rate | 4.7 | 4.6 | 3.6 |
| Population Growth Rate | 2.6 | 2.46 | 2.1 |
| GNP Growth Rate (per capita) | -0.5 | -0.2 | 3.6 |

Sources: UNICEF (1995) *State of the World's Children 1995.* New York: Oxford University Press; ANC Women's League (1993) *Status of South African Women: A Sourcebook in Tables and Graphs, the Reasons for Change.* Johannesburg: ANC; South African Institute of Race Relations (1994) *Race Relations Survey 1993/1994.* Johannesburg: SAIRR.

The mainstream gender and education literature also maintains that the

education of girls and women enhances labour market productivity and income

growth in addition to having beneficial effects on social well-being:

> Rising levels of education improve women's productivity in the home which in turn can increase family health, child survival, and investment in children's human capital. Education clearly imparts social benefits experienced beyond the individual family. The benefits range from fostering economic growth, to extending the average life expectancy in the population, to improving the function of political processes.          (King and Hill, 1995, 22-23)

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[16] A more detailed analysis of Lesotho examining maternal mortality rates, under-5 mortality rates, percentage of required daily calorie intake, etc. further highlights this pattern. In the case of South Africa, additional explication is much more problematic since statistics disaggregated by both sex and race are not easily obtainable.

[17] All figures for Lesotho and Developing Countries' Average are for 1993

[18] These enrollment ratios indicate the total number of children enrolled in a schooling level regardless of whether or not they belong in the relevant age group for that level. The figure is expressed as a percentage of the total number of children in the relevant age group for that level.

Summers (1994) draws on the research provided in the King and Hill text for his World Bank publication *Investing in All the People* and concludes that investment in girls' education "may well be the highest return investment available in the developing world" (4). However, Paul Bennell (1995) argues that the rates of return to education claimed by the World Bank are misleading and "that educational investments are far from being so universally profitable" (3). He calls into question the Bank's conclusions about the overall social profitability of educational investments and cites natural ability and socio-economic background as two variables which are not taken into account.

While the prevailing perspective clearly sees women's education as an important factor in sustainable economic growth, the beneficiaries of this economic growth are not considered. Bellew and King (1993) suggest that education for women and girls, regardless of its content or form of organisation, will be the engine out of poverty and that women in particular will reap the benefits (285). The literature stresses that educated women are more likely to engage in paid employment and contribute to the household income, which leads to increased status. It is assumed that, as a result, these women also have more influence in political and economic decision-making. This is rarely the case. This notion was challenged as early as 1981 by Beneria and Sen who argued that in light of the broader structures and processes of inequality, the idea that women's subordinate status could be ameliorated by education and training was

the same as 'treating cancer with a bandaid'. As well as forming the majority at all levels of education, Basotho women also represent 52% of the paid labour force. Yet, despite their superior education and greater numbers in formal employment, the vast majority of women are found in lower grade positions and are much less likely to be promoted than men (Ministry of Planning, 1991, 158). In South Africa only 36.4% of the paid and registered work force are women, and approximately three quarters of these are employed in four sectors: service, agriculture, clerical and sales, and teaching and nursing. The majority of these women are employed in domestic work and on farms - two of the worst paid and most vulnerable sectors (Schreiner, 1994, 298). Furthermore, promotion of black women occurs far less than that of black men (Schreiner, 1994, 300). Elaine Unterhalter (n.d.) argues that in South Africa:

> Powerful forces tend to keep working class women, irrespective of their education, in certain low paying sectors of manufacture. Middle class women, however, (both black and white) have long had access to certain professions like teaching and nursing, but are disproportionately represented in the lowest paid grades. (3)

In the case of South Africa it is easy for proponents of the prevailing neo-liberal perspective to attribute the inconsistencies to the legacy of an oppressive apartheid state. Central to the dominant framework is the vision of a benign state committed to providing education, health and employment for the population[19]. As Unterhalter (1995) notes, this vision "is quite at odds with a

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[19] Which in itself is a problematic assumption.

malevolent state (such as under apartheid) that systematically curtails access to housing and health care for a substantial sector of the population in order to promote well being for a minority" (6). However, this is not the situation in Lesotho. The shortcomings in the prevailing framework lie in the fact that it looks at women's education from a narrow economic perspective. Research from this perspective (see Summers, 1994; King and Hill, 1993 and 1995; Herz, et al., 1991; and Subbaroa and Raney, 1993) presents the benefits of girls' education largely in functional terms - as being 'useful' to society, economically and socially - rather than concerning itself with the content and context of girls' (and boys') education. While this type of an approach may be appropriate for economic analyses, education is clearly not just a technical input. The focus of research on gender, development and education must shift from how the education of girls and women affects economies and families to how education affects girls' and women's lives.

## Gender and the Learning Environment

Educational institutions play an important role in society. Potentially they are powerful agents of change; however, the literature on gender and education in Africa indicates that schools reflect and promote societies' inequitable gender ideologies. Teachers often project these biases and create hostile learning

environments by exhibiting negative attitudes regarding the academic capabilities of female students and by not countering - or by being the perpetrators of - sexual violence and/or harassment in educational institutions. Teaching material and methodologies may also reinforce a biased view of women.

While even the current form of education has resulted in some mobilisation of women (particularly at the tertiary level[20]) and an increased sense of self-esteem, it is clear that the persistence of patriarchal ideologies and social systems imposes constraints on the education system as a vehicle for women's empowerment and liberation. The relation between education and gender inequality is as contradictory as education's relation to social class and race inequalities: schools both reinforce subordination and create new possibilities for liberation. "Schools are sites of pervasive gender socialization, but they offer girls a chance to use their brains and develop their skills... sometimes spurring students to think beyond the ideological limits laid out for them" (Wrigley, 1992, vii). While the past thirty years have witnessed a remarkable expansion in African women's access to education, the inherent gender biases have not been addressed and inequalities continue to be perpetuated.

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[20] It is important to bear in mind that the vast majority of female students do not reach the tertiary level of schooling.

<u>Teachers</u>

Perhaps the most significant factor in the retention and academic achievement of female students is the teacher. Teachers' attitudes and behaviour towards their students are a reflection of broader societal biases and gender ideologies. Very little is known about gender dynamics in classrooms in Africa and other developing areas. Research from the North demonstrates that teachers behave differently towards boys and girls and reinforce stereotypes which entrench female passivity and have the effect of lowering the performance of female students (see, for instance, Spender and Sarah, 1980). What little evidence there is from sub-Saharan Africa indicates that both male and female teachers believe that boys are academically superior to girls (Brock and Cammish, 1991, 31; Mbilinyi, 1991). As a result, teachers pay more attention to boys and sometimes even give them preferential treatment when, for example, distributing scarce learning materials such as books (Graham-Browne, 1991, 71). A study in South Africa revealed that when girls asked teachers to explain something, teachers frequently told boys to help the girls. As a result, female students felt that girls' opinions were not taken as seriously as the opinions of boys (Truscott, 1994, 48).

The overwhelming presence of men in positions of authority and the high occupational and academic expectation that teachers often have for boys convey the message that gender does indeed make a difference and that this social

marker is to be accepted as a given. "Gender values and stereotypes are usually internalized in the beliefs, attitudes, and daily behaviours of teachers, who are simply not aware of them and participate in their reproduction, blind in the face of the obvious" (Bonder, 1992, 237).

Increasingly, development programmes are focussing on providing teacher training; unfortunately, few of these efforts incorporate gender issues. Generally, training focusses on enabling teachers to implement the old curriculum more 'efficiently and effectively' (Stromquist, 1994, 74). Indeed in the 1996 World Bank document *Girls and Schools in Sub-Saharan Africa: From Analysis to Action*, the range of interventions discussed does not entail anti-sexist teacher training (or even gender-sensitive training for that matter). The training (and regular follow-up retraining) of teachers in gender issues and anti-sexist teaching methodologies must play a central part in the equitable transformation of any education system. Unless studies are undertaken which observe gender dynamics in classrooms and schools, and interview students and teachers, the role of teachers in reinforcing gender stereotypes - and their potential in the transformation of gender relations - is likely to remain unexamined.

## Sexual Violence and Harassment

The issue of sexual harassment and violence against female students has been largely neglected in the mainstream gender, development and education

literature. A recent paper (1992) by the Executive Director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), entitled *The Education of Girls and Women in Africa: Issues and Concepts*, discusses ten issues which affect the education of girls in Africa, yet ignores sexual harassment and violence. Although the level of sexual harassment is difficult to quantify, a recent Africa Rights study by Rebecca Hallam (1994) states: "there is a pandemic of sexual violence and harassment in educational institutions in Africa" (5)[21]; however, an absence of channels which offer confidentiality and redress to victims reporting abuses - especially when committed by authority figures - means that most cases of sexual violence and harassment at schools go unreported. According to Hallam (1994), fear of backlash from one's family and the worry of being labelled a 'loose' girl/woman are also important factors in the lack of complaints reported. A Somali woman interviewed stated:

> [T]hey [your family] blame you instead. 'You were sent to school to learn your lessons. Why would a teacher even approach you in this way? It must be your fault.' So you keep quiet; why brand yourself when nothing will be done anyway? (Hallam, 1994, 12)

That this is a very real concern for female students and affects their educational experience is supported by a number of researchers (see Mbilinyi and Mbughuni, 1991; Morrell, 1992; Yeboah, 1993; Truscott, 1994) as well as my own experience in Lesotho. Kate Truscott (1994, 50) and Rebecca Hallam (1994,

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[21] The 1991 mass rape of 75 and death of 19 schoolgirls in Kenya brought this issue to international attention, as did the Kenyan authorities' reaction: "They meant no harm... They just wanted to rape" (New York Times, July 29)..

11) indicate that both male teachers and male students are the perpetrators of sexual violence and harassment. A study in Guinea observed that boys were physically aggressive and threatened and teased girls to silence them in the classroom (Anderson-Levitt et al., 1994 in World Bank, 1996, 35). Teachers may coerce female students into sexual relationships by threatening to fail them, by public humiliation or by rewarding them for cooperation with 'gifts' or money (Truscott, 1994, 51). Hallam's (1994) research indicates that often when female students report such incidents to school authorities very little is done: "I was only told to keep away from him [the teacher], that's all. I was so disappointed that that was all she could say"(8). In such instances, a teacher may be transferred to another school. The majority of male students accused of sexual crimes may only be suspended or expelled - if they are punished at all (Hallam, 1994, 13). A lack of serious official efforts to punish and discourage sexual violence in educational institutions underlines the institutional acceptance of such behaviour. When sexual relationships (coerced or otherwise) result in pregnancy, there is a tendency to blame the girls (Graham-Browne, 1991, 195). More often than not, pregnancy results in the girl's expulsion.

The threat of sexual violence and harassment means that girls often face an extremely hostile and uncomfortable learning environment. These acts of violence have a devastating effect on girls' educational achievement and attainment, as well as their self-perception. Considering the profound

implications, this issue certainly merits in-depth investigation and effective intervention. Female students have the right to pursue and complete their educational careers in a risk-free environment. Sexual violence in schools is not random. It is not a result of a lack of access for female students, nor is it due to their limited numbers in math and science classrooms. It grows out of social values that construct and sustain masculinity as powerful and controlling. Effective action will require substantive structural and ideological change rather than merely increasing girls' enrollment.

## Curriculum and Teaching Materials

The prevailing gender ideology is reflected in the images presented in curricula and learning materials. These images are powerful in shaping the self-perceptions of girls. Obura's (1986) study of Kenyan textbooks reveals that women and girls are nearly invisible, even in agriculture where women are the primary labourers and producers. By misrepresenting the true nature of the role African women play in their societies, girls are deprived of positive role models. Mbilinyi and Mbughuni's (1991) review of gender and education in Tanzania also supports the view that women's role in African societies is erroneously presented in learning materials and that this serves to perpetuate stereotypes and gender biases. Despite such findings, some World Bank studies express the belief that textbooks do not affect the identity or aspirations of the girls (and

boys) who are exposed to them. For instance, Bellew and King (1991) state that "[t]here is no empirical evidence *from developing countries* to support or refute the hypothesis that teachers' interactions with female students and gender bias in textbook content discourage girls' attendance or achievement" (38; emphasis mine). However, evidence from industrialised countries does indicate school content and practices diminish the expectations of girls regarding careers (see for instance Acker, 1994; Weiler, 1988; Wolpe, 1988; Arnot and Weiner, 1987).

A neo-liberal, equal opportunity perspective supports a gender neutral curriculum. A gender neutral curriculum attempts to make gender a non-issue. This results in gender being neither examined nor changed. Some countries have made steps towards developing gender neutral textbooks and curriculum by removing sexual stereotypes from school textbooks[22], but such undertakings have generally not gone beyond increasing the number and role of female *images* depicted in the books (Haq, 1995, 6-10). Changes in curriculum and teaching materials should attempt to institute an oppositional gender consciousness and create the awareness that gender relations have been socially constructed and are constraining for both women and men. Curricula should challenge gender stereotypes by depicting men as care-givers and in other 'feminine' roles. Further, it must discuss substantive issues such as sexual violence, the gender division of labour, sex education, etc. Both GAD and anti-sexist approaches

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[22]Such as Malawi, Mozambique, Bangladesh, and Kenya.

demand that girls (and women) must be offered the knowledge which "enables them to better understand their reality and perceive strategies for altering it, and in that way [education] is self-affirming and empowering" (Stromquist, 1994, 98). Stromquist (1995) argues, "if [teaching] materials are not characterized by a strong determination to alter sexual stereotypes or to produce an affirmative depiction of women, excellent opportunities for transforming gender relations through educational messages will be missed" (78).

It is also important to be aware of the fact that gender discriminatory messages implicit (or explicit) in the formal curriculum (textbooks and other teaching material) may be reinforced by messages in the "hidden curriculum". The hidden curriculum may have significant implications for educational outcome, as Karen Coffyn Biraimah's (1982) research on the coeducational secondary school experiences of Togolese girls shows. She suggests that sex differentiation is reinforced at school through authority structures, disciplinary measures, staffing and classroom interaction patterns. Clearly, changes in the content of textbooks must be accompanied by regularly scheduled in-service training programs for teachers to help them examine the attitudes, expectations and values they use and transmit when teaching girls and boys, to enable them to reflect on the consequences the images and content have upon the performance of both sexes, and to enable them to encourage all students to develop their capacities, interests and attitudes, free from gender discrimination.

Still the education projects implemented by donors such as the World Bank and SIDA tend to see education as neutral in its objectives and concentrate on equality of access and gender neutrality rather than explore and address the links between education, discrimination and societal constructs of gender.

Interventions

There are examples of World Bank and other donor agency gender focussed strategies in education. These strategies tend to emphasise physical access to schools (greater numbers of and closer schools, flexible hours), increased numbers of female teachers, and the removal of gender biases from textbooks. Another strategy which is beginning to emerge concerns raising people's level of awareness regarding the need to improve girls' education. Such social marketing efforts include girls' scholarship funds, national conferences, and community and regional level awareness campaigns - especially those aimed at parents. Unfortunately, studies reveal that such efforts may actually end up reinforcing patriarchal authority. Attempts to persuade parents (fathers) to send their daughters to school are made on the basis that "their education would make them more attractive marriage partners" and "educated women would make them good mothers, better able to educate the children and to attend to the health of their families and their communities" (Schwartz et al., 1994, 9). Thus,

arguments given in favour of educating girls are gendered. As was mentioned above, girls are regarded as future mothers and wives and it is within these roles that the benefits of education are emphasised. While these arguments, and those which emphasise the contribution educated girls and women make to national economic development, may 'sell the idea', "they do not make sense if the objective is to allow girls and women to acquire more control over their life choices" (Stromquist, 1994, 72). If such strategies are the predominant solutions to gender and education issues in the South, they only end up supporting the status quo, not challenging it. Agencies believe that by meeting girls' practical gender needs of access, strategic gender needs may be met. As one agency official described it: "[i]f today a sewing machine brings the girls, tomorrow you may not need it" (Stromquist, 1994, 79).

Despite the emphasis on the equal education of girls and women, the World Bank's policies have been somewhat contradictory. While stressing the importance of equal access for girls, the World Bank has also imposed structural adjustment policies (SAPs), which have exacerbated the costs of such basic needs as education, health care and nutrition. Direct costs - such as school fees, uniforms, books and transport - previously paid for by many governments, must now be covered by parents. Shortfalls in household income are forcing more women to enter the paid labour market (both informal and formal). When this happens, daughters often have to take over family responsibilities at the expense

of their education. World Bank documents acknowledge that when the burden of financing education shifts to parents, it is "especially likely to work against girls' education" (World Bank, 1996, 15); yet, little has been done to alter SAP conditionalities with respect to school fee cost-sharing. Despite the emphasis on equal access to education, it is clear that the World Bank is not concerned with transforming the position of girls and women in societies. In fact, such a change may in fact be deletrious to SAPs. As a result, pressure on girls and women has correspondingly increased. As Peggy Antrobus (1989) argues:

> Far from not taking women into account [SAPs] are actually grounded in a set of assumptions - a gender ideology - that assigns certain roles and characteristics to women. Indeed, it is clear to me that both components of structural adjustment policies - those aimed at *reducing consumption* (the austerity measures reflected in government expenditures in social services) as well as those aimed at *increasing export-oriented production*... are dependent on assumptions about the roles into which most women have been socialised. (Antrobus in Burman, 1995, 25)

At the 1996 UN Conference on women at Beijing, educational topics were central in governmental speeches as one of the main strategic tools for the improvement of women's social condition. It is evident from the Platform for Action that participants realised that:

> policies that promote universal access serve to standardize the white male cultural model and to deepen the divisions between good- and poor-quality schools, between students who learn and those who fail, between those who fit into schools and those who do not... [and that] women have the right to revise and transform models, institutions and 'accepted practices'. (Bonder, 1996, 87-89)

But even this progressive document contradicts itself. On the one hand,

> women are seen as autonomous, active, social persons, with rights
> and opportunities equal to men as participants in political and
> social decisions...

while on the other hand, women are

> considered a resource for maintaining or 'improving' a family or
> social order, in their lives as mothers and wives... improving health,
> nutrition and education in the family. (Bonder, 1996, 89)

The lack of political will to eradicate gender biases in education is apparent. Policies aimed at improving girls' educational access have had little beneficial effect. Significant gender gaps in enrollment and achievement persist despite the growth in female enrollment rates and little has been done to improve the hostile learning environments females must endure. Very few countries, in the South or the North, have implemented an education system which seeks to improve the position of women in and through education. Merely extending to girls a male dominated education system does not create the necessary space for the transformation of gender ideologies and stereotypes. Judging from the available data, most education development projects have been designed and implemented in a gender-blind fashion.

## 1.5 Conclusion

For the most part, neither feminists nor development agencies have given enough attention to primary and secondary school education and its impact on girls and women in developing countries. Education has been regarded as a positive vehicle for girls and national economies; therefore, its structure is rarely challenged. Education policies and programmes reflect a liberal perspective of gender equality which assumes that access is accompanied by beneficial content and that the schooling experience has a positive impact on girls and their identity. As we have seen, this is not always the case. This ignores gender relations and gender ideologies in society and the fact that education reflects and promotes these gendered identities, often to the detriment of female students. An education which challenges the predominant gender ideologies in a society tackles both the factors which keep girls from entering the school system in the first place (parental and community attitudes, the gender division of labour, religion, etc.) and those which push them out once they are in (teachers' attitudes and behaviour, pedagogy, sexual violence, pregnancy, curriculum).

If access to education were the main hurdle for female students then girls in Lesotho, South Africa and Latin America (and in the industrialised North) would not face the gender biases and discrimination they do in education systems and societies. The focus on access means that the systemic and

ideological nature of discrimination (gender, race, and sexual orientation) is overlooked.

Why has the World Bank ignored the fact that the issues surrounding gender and education go beyond access? One reason may be the insistence on emphasising objectives that can be measures and tested. Many of the goals articulated by the GAD approach and proponents of anti-sexist education are difficult to quantify and test, while it is easy to count the number of female students in schools and in math and science classes.

Some international agencies are now beginning to realise that policies for girls and women cannot occur without structural changes. The UNICEF 1992 Policy Review progress report entitled *Achievements Made in the Implementation of the UNICEF Policy on Women in Development, Including the Situation of the Girl Child* includes the following statement:

> While culture is a crucial bond in society, it can sometimes be used
> unquestioningly to perpetuate a system of inequality against girl
> children and women merely for being born female. Therefore,
> fundamental changes are needed in the socialisation and education
> of children, both girls and boys, as well as in the complex system of
> attitudes, power and privileges that determine the allocation of
> resources and entitlements between women and men within the
> family, community and nation. (21)

According to Mbilinyi, et al. (1991), while equal opportunity education has resulted in educational policies which have further entrenched women in the status quo of oppressive gender relations,

> the priniciples of liberating or transformative education aim to raise
> peoples [sic] expectations and consciousness, their ability to engage

in critical and creative thought, and to increase their capacity to directly control the economy, the government and all other institutions. For women as well as other oppressed groups, such transformative or liberating education is a tool for empowerment. It is in womens [sic] interest to become critical of reality, to imagine the possible and to struggle to achieve transformation and equity. (1)

## Chapter 2

## Bantu Education: An Odious Legacy

### 2.1 Introduction

The development of the Bantu Education system as an instrument of separate development in a racially stratified South Africa had a significant impact on the availability and quality of educational facilities for all black people. Understanding the convergence of both racial and sexual domination in apartheid South Africa is crucial to any study of gender and education there. Schools institutionalised not only the dominant male gender role, but also the dominant racial role which imputes superiority to 'whiteness' and inferiority to 'blackness'. Education was also seen as an important agency of social control and a crucial means of maintaining class relations. The effect of this educational philosophy was to direct black[23] women primarily into domestic roles either in their own household or in white households (Cock, 1980, 288). While apartheid education oppressed all non-whites in South Africa, its most harsh effects were reserved for black women who, on the basis of their colour and gender, were on the lowest rung of the ladder of oppression. Despite this, few researchers have integrated gender into their analyses of South African education.[24] As a result,

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[19] The term black in this thesis refers to those people of African descent only and does not include 'coloureds' or Indians.

[24] For instance, neither Kallaway, 1984 , Nasson and Samuel, 1990, nor Nkomo, 1990 include contributions which attempt to integrate a gender analysis along with that of race and class. Students are examined in an ungendered fashion, resulting - for the most part - in the invisibility of female students. Even in M.M. Mboya and T.S. Mwamwenda's 1994 study "Quality

until recently, the question of gender discrimination remained subsumed under the broader issue of national liberation (Wolpe, 1994, 136; Seidman, 1993, 297)[25]. While the white patriarchal ideology of the apartheid regime was imposed upon women through Bantu Education, it was by no means the only patriarchal pressure felt by black women. Belinda Bozzoli refers to South African society as a "patchwork quilt of patriarchies", a label which reflects the diverse systems of female subordination (Bozzoli, 1983, 149). Jacklyn Cock (1993) reinforces this view: "There is no tradition of gender equality in South African society. Gender is inscribed differently in different cultures, but in all South African cultural traditions, gender roles are highly structured and unequal (29).

The purpose of this chapter is to show that while Bantu Education had a deleterious effect on all segments of the black population in South Africa[26], it had a particularly prejudicial effect on the lives of black South African girls and women, despite the fact that they had virtually equal access to primary and secondary education when compared to their male counterparts. Although this examination is limited by the paucity of gendered analyses regarding Bantu Education, it will serve to provide a historical context within which to place

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Education in South Africa", *International Journal of Educational Development* 14 (4): 385-391, students are generically referred to in the masculine (him and his) . Furthermore, except for the most recent studies, there has been virtually no gender differentiation in national statistics.

[25] Nevertheless, the national liberation struggle and its calls for equality and democracy contributed to the opening up of political space for feminist concerns regarding equality between women and men.

[26] Along with those children who attended school during the Bantu Education era, children who did not have access to education were affected by Bantu Education legislation as a result of insufficient provision.

South Africa's current education reforms. In order to facilitate this investigation, the chapter is divided into two parts. The first part briefly discusses the introduction of the formal education system to South Africa, outlines the goals and objectives of the Bantu Education system, and examines reactions of black South Africans to its imposition[27]. The second part determines the extent to which this system, and its accompanying gender ideologies, affected (and in many respects continues to affect) the educational experience of many black women.

## 2.2 Goals and Objectives of Bantu Education

Formal black education in South Africa, as in most British colonies in Africa, was introduced by missionaries and mission schools were the primary educators of black children throughout the colonial era. Indeed, prior to the advent of the Bantu Education system in 1953, of the 7,000 black schools, over 5,000 had been missionary-run (Christie and Collins, 1985, 65).[28] As a result, missionary education had a tremendous impact on the educational development of black girls and boys. Although many missionaries emphasised the importance

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[27] This is not meant to be a comprehensive investigation of Bantu Education. There are a number of excellent studies. See for instance: Pam Christie (1985) *The Right to Learn*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press; P. Kallaway (1984) *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press; I.B. Tabata (1960) *Education for Barbarism in South Africa: Bantu Education*. London: Pall Mall Press; Mokubung Nkomo (1990) *Pedagogy of Domination: Toward a Democratic Education in South Africa*. New Jersey: Africa World Press.

[28] By 1965, however, only 509 out of a total of 7222 black schools were mission schools.

of education for girls, this education was limited, for the most part, to enabling

them to become better 'wives, mothers and Christians'.

> '[T]he true education of the Native girl (at any rate) was with her
> hands, & eyes & ears, and a little of the brain', for the 'native's
> brain was insufficiently developed for overmuch brainwork... [The
> girls] could at least all learn to clean, & cook, & sew & be useful
> women when they leave school'.                    (Gaitskell, 1983, 244)

Reading and writing were regarded as unnecessary skills for black girls. In 1889,

the Abbott of Marianhill wrote:

> Instruct only the (Kaffir) boys in reading, writing and arithmetic,
> and train them to manual labour. Do not teach the girls any
> English reading and very little Kaffir... Give them as little education
> as possible. The system of cramming is too much for the intellect of
> Kaffir girls. My experience is this: the more that Kaffir girls learn in
> school, the less they are inclined to work, and the more insolent
> and dissatisfied they are.                    (Cock, 1980, 280)

Conforming to the dominant European gender ideology, the female gender role

held up for black women was equated with domesticity (see Cock, 1980, 265-306

and Gaitskell, 1983). In the Western tradition, girls were taught cooking, laundry

and dressmaking, while boys gained skills in carpentry, wagon-building,

blacksmithing, and various other manual trades. Additionally, only boys were

taught agriculture in mission schools, although in African society agriculture was

primarily women's work (Christie, 1985, 76). This gender differentiated

curriculum, which involved girls spending extensive time on European-inspired

domestic subjects, reinforced European gender role stereotypes and also

provided whites with a source of cheap domestic labour. This educational philosophy continued with the introduction of Bantu Education.

When the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, the education system became one of the principal instruments through which apartheid's racist and sexist ideology was sustained and perpetuated. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 brought black education under the centralised control of the state. The content of the syllabus, the employment of teachers and the admission of students were now subject to central authority. While whites had free access to compulsory education, which was amply funded from public resources, black education was neither free nor compulsory. The fundamental principle in the financing of Bantu Education was "the African must pay for it himself [sic]" (Troup, 1976, 26). Despite working in the lowest paid sectors of the economy, black parents were burdened with the heavy cost of education. They had an obligation to pay fees and provide books and uniforms as well as assist the school with the costs of buildings and salaries of teachers. Consequently, black education was terribly under-funded resulting in poor facilities, high pupil:teacher ratios, and under-qualified teachers for black students[29]. In *Assaulting Childhood*, Sean Jones (1993) describes one school setting:

> It catered for... one hundred children from Sub A to Standard four,
> all of whom were served by one teacher... In the absence of
> adequate funding and support, Lwandle School lacked anything
> approaching an environment conducive to learning. The building

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[29] This situation was compounded by the material poverty of many black students who were often undernourished and had to travel long distances to attend schools (Christie, 1992, 40).

in which it was situated, which consisted of only one usable room approximately four metres by seven metres in size, was in a state of chronic disrepair. There were gaping holes in the roof and walls, many of the window panes were broken or had been removed, and the floor was uncovered concrete... Although the children spent about six and a half hours at school everyday, in total they had approximately two or, at the most, two and a half hours of lessons and written oral exercises... and they spent literally hours queuing to have their work checked. (p. 165-167)

The Bantu Education Act stipulated that all black schools had to register with the government and that registration would be at the discretion of the Minister of Education. Schools which did not support the 'principles and aims' of Bantu Education - that is, to teach blacks "from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans [was] not for them [and to] contribute towards the reproduction of black labour" (Christie and Collins, 1985, 67) - were closed down. Black education, under this system, was designed to meet the regime's need for economic growth and political stability (Unterhalter, 1990, 68). The objective of Bantu Education was never to improve the educational opportunities of blacks. It was aimed at extending the mass base of schooling at the lower primary level, thus preparing black men and women for subordinate positions in the work force while adhering to apartheid's fundamental principles of social, economic and political "separate development".

> The aim of education of the White child is to prepare him [sic] for his place in a dominant society while that of the Native child is to prepare him for his [sic] place in a subservient society. (Tabata, 1960, 160)

In 1954 Hendrik Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, stated:

> My department's policy is that Bantu Education should stand with
> both feet in the reserves, and have its root in the spirit and being of
> Bantu society. The Bantu must be guided to serve his [sic] own
> community in all respects. There is no place for him above the
> level of certain forms of labour... until now he has been subjected to
> a school system [30] which drew him away from his own community
> and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European
> society in which he was not allowed to graze. (Rose and Tunmer,
> 1975, 266)

The underlying principle of the Bantu Education system was "people of

different ethnic and cultural groups should have different schooling systems"

(Nkomo, 1990, 54). As a result, education for 'coloureds' and Indians was also

separate. While the education of these groups was superior to Bantu Education,

it was not designed to meet the standards of the white education system. This is

clearly revealed by an examination of per capita expenditures[31]:

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[30] I.e. missionary education.

[31] Wastage (drop-out and push-out) figures also provide us with an indication of the state of
education during this period. For example, of the 607,340 children who entered Sub A in 1968,
only 49.6% completed 4 years of schooling and reached Standard 3 in 1972. Therefore, less than
half of those who started school completed four years – the minimum requirement to be
considered literate. In 1972 only 22.6% of the students who started Sub A in 1965 passed the
Standard 6 examination and qualified to attend secondary school (Hartshorne, 1992, 39). Only
one in eight actually managed to go on to secondary school (Hartshorne, 1992, 42). Throughout
the 1970s, 1980s, and into the 1990s this situation did not greatly improve. These figures suggest
that the apartheid state was determined to ensure that the vast majority of blacks would receive a
schooling that did not equip them for anything other than unskilled manual labour (Samuel,
1990, 19). By the late 1980s, only 31% of the approximately 1.5 million black children of school-
going age living in rural white South Africa had places in primary schools and only one percent
had been accomodated in secondary schools (Holland, 1991, 32).

**Per Capita Expenditure on Education by Race**

| Table 3 | ( in rands, including capital expenditure) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Africans✢ | Coloureds | Indians | Whites |
| 1960/61* | 12 | n/a | n/a | 158 |
| 1974/75 | 39.53 | 125.53 | 170.94 | 605 |
| 1978/79 | 71.28 | 225.54 | 357.15 | 724 |
| 1982/83 | 192.34 | 593.37 | 871.87 | 1385 |
| 1987/88** | 595.39 | 1507.55 | 2014.88 | 2722 |

Source: Survey of Race Relations in Bot, 1985, 28. *Graham-Brown, 1991, 155
** Herman, 1992, 438 ✢ Referred to as blacks throughout the thesis.

Beginning in the 1970s, changes in the economy and labour market resulted in some modifications to the education system. Nevertheless, Bantu Education remained fundamentally a system based on the notions of black inferiority and subservience. "Reforms which appear[ed] to be real concessions... [were] not mere 'cosmetic' changes, but they [were] implemented in a manner that [left] the roots of inequality in South Africa untouched" (Chisholm, 1984, 388). The South African economy required a more skilled black labour force. As a result, reforms included the development of training facilities and an increase in government investment in the black school system.[32].

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[32] This is not to imply that all, or even most, black children of school going age (i.e. between seven and 16 years of age) attended school. According to official figures, there were over one million children, as of March 1987, not attending school in South Africa (and the non-independent homelands). Research conducted by the Education Policy Unit at the University of Natal concluded that more than one million children in Natal alone had not been in school in 1989 (SAIRR, 1990, lxvii). A Market Research Africa survey in 1989 indicated that nearly one-fifth of South Africans over the age of 16 had never been to school (SAIRR, 1990, lxvii). Amy Biehl (1994) reveals that in the Transkei one-third of all women over the age of five have no education at all and only 15% have some secondary education. An estimated 3 million women in South Africa are functionally illiterate (87)..

Table 4    **Expenditure on education by race (millions of rands)**[33]

|  | Africans[✣] | Coloureds | Indians | Whites | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1975 | 131 (17%) | 89 (11%) | 39 (5%) | 536 (67%) | 795 (100%) |
| 1976 | 156 | 103 | 44 | 646 | 948 |
| 1977 | 191 | 133 | 56 | 816 | 1,196 |
| 1978 | 110 | 144 | 61 | 877 | 1,192 |
| 1979 | 245* | 179 | 75 | 1,000 | 1,498 |
| 1980 | 305* (18%) | 175 (10%) | 83 (5%) | 1,116 (67%) | 1,679 (100%) |
| 1981 | 298 | 247 | 123 | 1,361 | 2,029 |
| 1982 | 557* | 294 | 155 | 1,688 | 2,695 |
| 1983 | 755* | 405 | 196 | 2,056 | 3,413 |
| 1984 | 1,224 | 451 | 225 | 2,032 | 3,932 |
| 1985 | 1,460 | 571 | 259 | 2,456 | 4,755 |
| 1987/88 | 3,400 (42%) | 1,007 (12%) | 404 (5%) | 3,320 (41%) | 8,131 (100%) |

Source: Survey of Race Relations in Graham-Brown, 1991, 157.
* Excluding 'homelands'  ✣ Referred to as blacks throughout the paper.

While expenditure on black education increased more than thirty times between 1978 and 1987/88, per capita expenditure on black students in 1987/88 remained roughly one-fifth of white students (Table 1).

Educational reforms were also the result of intense political pressure. Black dissatisfaction with inferior education exploded in June 1976. Riots in Soweto were spurred by the enforced use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in higher primary and secondary schools. Afrikaans was regarded as

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[33] These figures are particularly revealing if one bears in mind that during this time the population breakdown was approximately 70% black, 17% white, 10% coloured and 3% Indian (Davenport, 1987, 408).

the language of the oppressor. As Sindiwe Magona, a South African author who experienced Bantu Education as a student, a teacher and a parent, explained:

> Bantu Education had long been resented. But it took a government initiative to spark off the protests. Afrikaans, the second official language of South Africa, had become the third language African students had to learn. A decade after its introduction into our schools, the government decided our children were not learning it fast enough, and to remedy that it decreed that Afrikaans be used as a medium of instruction for fifty percent of the school subjects. Even for people as obtuse as policy-makers in South Africa, this step was sheer folly. How did they justify forcing pupils and students to be taught through a language they did not understand?... Afrikaans, rightly or not, was closely associated with the government and its abhorred system of apartheid. It had been hardship enough to learn the language, but to be asked to learn through it removed the last veneer of decency in Bantu Education and laid naked its agenda: the stunting of the African child. The students took to the streets, declaring the system of education designed exclusively for them as 'poison' that had to be 'abolished'. (Magona, 1992, 149-150)

On June 16, as about 20,000 black youth - boys and girls - peacefully protested the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction and Bantu Education as a whole, the police opened fire. This began countrywide unrest which, in less than ten days, left 140 dead and over 1000 people injured (Bot, 1985, 16). Protest widened beyond educational issues to incorporate the entire system of apartheid. The new wave of rebellion, school boycotts and resistance began and lasted well into the 1980s.[34]

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[34] It is important to realise that both girls and boys were involved in all phases of the Soweto uprising and the events which followed.

Although the Afrikaans language issue provided the immediate impetus for the Soweto uprising, resentment against Bantu Education had been long-standing and the protest was not confined to the rejection of Afrikaans. Blacks demanded the destruction of the whole Bantu Education edifice on the grounds that it was discriminatory and designed to "reduce us physically and mentally to hewers and drawers of water [sic]" (Brooks and Brickhill, 1980, 54). One student provided a particularly poignant summary:

> It's [Bantu Education] aimed at our suppression. It doesn't give us
> the opportunity to prove ourselves, as white education does...
> There are not proper facilities. The classes are overcrowded, there
> are no pre-school facilities like those whites have, so we start off at
> a disadvantage... There's no opportunity to question. The courses
> ignore our views of history and stress things like Bantustans which
> we reject. The whites are given an education which relates to their
> own situation - Bantu Education ignores our situation. (Brooks
> and Brickhill, 1980, 54)

The events of June 16 unleashed the discontent that had built up for so long. Throughout the entire country, including remote rural schools and the 'Bantustans', students challenged the entire concept of 'Bantu Education'. The remainder of the 1970s and the 1980s were characterised by intensified student boycotts and protests. In response, the apartheid state imposed a system of student identity cards (similar to passes), increased the presence of the military in schools (even in classrooms), refused to change the curriculum (Brittain and Minty, 1988, 107) and declared virtually all student organisations unlawful (Bot, 1985, 16). As a consequence of the severe repression following the Soweto

uprising, thousands of students streamed out of South Africa into neighbouring countries to join the guerrilla armies of the ANC (African National Congress) and PAC (Pan-Africanist Congress).

Struggles over education had become a crucial part of the broader struggle for liberation and political power. In 1978 Louis Kane-Berman pointed out that "[s]tudents are becoming far more aware of history and politics than they were several years ago... black youth was in revolt against not only specific aspects of policy, but apartheid in all its manifestations, and therefore the country's political system itself" (Kane-Berman, 1978, 56). Thus, while the 1970s had been represented by demands for equal, free and compulsory education, the slogans 'Liberation Now, Education Later' (Herman, 1992, 433) and 'People's Education for people's power' (Hofmeyr, 1987, 302)[35] belonged to the 1980s.

In the wake of the political protests of the 1970s and 1980s came the breakdown of a learning culture, especially in urban and secondary schools. In 1990 the head of the ANC's education desk stated:

> For the past fifteen years, education in this country has been disrupted, undermined and underdeveloped, and during this time the basis of learning as a social activity has been destroyed... The erosion of this in urban black communities manifests itself in many different ways, not the least of which is a rapidly increasing rate of teenage pregnancy, greater drug abuse, gang formation, etc. (Samuel in Christie, 1992, 48)

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[35] The goal of People's Education was to mobilise and empower black communities to take control of their schools.

In the 1980s, the state attempted to address the social, political and economic crisis facing South Africa. In education a national enquiry was undertaken by the Human Sciences Research Council into education provision. Some of the recommendations of this inquiry were adopted and led to the expansion of education provision for blacks (see Tables 1 and 2). This, however, was insufficient to meet the demands of students, who wanted more than concessions and reforms, they wanted the system of Bantu Education dismantled: "As long as there is Bantu Education there will be unrest. Small concessions are not solutions" (Brooks and Brickhill, 1980, 53).

## 2.3 The Impact of Bantu Education on Black Women

The advantages of women/girls acquiring an education go beyond merely the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Education can have implications for women's self-perception, social and economic position and power; however, the literature on gender and education has consistently focussed on the social and economic benefits of educating women as opposed to how education affects the lives of girls and women.

While the mandate of Bantu Education was to prepare all black students for subordinate positions in apartheid's racial and class structure, it also bolstered black and white societies' inequitable gender ideologies. However, unlike most African countries, South Africa's black primary and secondary

schools contained nearly equal numbers of boys and girls during the apartheid era[36]. Tables 5a and 5b reveal that enrollment rates for black female students remained equal with black male students from 1970 to 1990 in both primary and secondary schools[37]. These tables also illustrate a drastic decrease in the overall numbers of black students continuing from primary to secondary school. Studies indicate that 25% of students never complete primary school (SAIRR,1990, lxvii).

| Table 5a | Black Pupils at Primary School by Sex, 1970-1990 | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------|---------|
| Year | Total Pupils | No. of Girls | % Girls |
| 1970 | 2,332,952 | 1,147,898 | 49% |
| 1975 | 3,012,192 | 1,487,021 | 49% |
| 1980 | 2,715,125 | 1,336,223 | 49% |
| 1985 | 4,387,308 | 2,173,388 | 50% |
| 1990 | 5,079,385 | 2,505,587 | 49% |

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[36] This raises the question of why, in a patriarchal, discriminatory society where so many black children did not receive any education, given that fees had to be paid, and the more lucrative careers opened for boys as opposed to girls, did parents persist in paying girls' fees. This is a question which has not been adequately addressed in the current literature; however, a number of possible explanations can be advanced: in the rural areas, school-aged boys worked as shepards both for their families and white farmers instead of attending school; many boys began to earn a living in the mines as young as 15; the separation of families due to labour migration, desertion and divorce resulted in greater decision-making autonomy for some women who may have decided their daughters would benefit from an education, especially in the event that they too would find themselves heads of households; and in the 1970s and 1980s, while many boys demonstrated their opposition to Bantu Education by refusing to attend school at all, parents still had a greater degree of control over their daughters.

[37] Studies show that there are far larger disparities between the so-called population groups than there are between the genders with respect to school enrollment.

| Table 5b | Black Pupils at Secondary School by Sex, 1970-1990 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Total Pupils | No. of Girls | % Girls |
| 1970 | 404,498 | 219,009 | 54% |
| 1975 | 685,249 | 367,759 | 50% |
| 1980 | 817,108 | 433,386 | 53% |
| 1985 | 1,626,046 | 889,944 | 55% |
| 1990 | 2,572,695 | 1,408,359 | 55% |

Source: South African Labour Statistics in
Truscott, 1994,74&76.

Because there is virtually no gap between black male and female enrollment in primary and secondary schools and relatively few blacks, either male or female, have had access to schooling, the inequalities in South African education have often been reduced to factors of race and class, and gender has regularly been ignored. While girls may have had equal access to education, what needs to be examined is the inequity in the education they receive, the environment in which they receive it, and their lack of access to suitable employment and positions of power once they complete their education. Women's equal access to primary and secondary education has not been accompanied by a concomitant change in the gender division of labour or women's position in the power structure. Bantu Education resulted in the imposition of the apartheid regime's patriarchal beliefs. However, in addition to the racist and patriarchal ideologies of apartheid's policy makers, black female students have also had to contend with the patriarchal beliefs of their own

cultures which impinge upon their educational experience through the attitudes of administrators, teachers, male classmates and family members.

Any examination of the impact of Bantu Education must recognize the effects apartheid had on the lives of black women:

> The origins of the disabilities of African women lie in the matrix of South African history, but the system of Apartheid is responsible for the continuation and accentuation today. The policy of Apartheid, which is designed to ensure the permanent subordination of Blacks to Whites in the name of 'separate development', is also responsible for the sub-African status of African women making their discrimination inevitable and sustaining it against trends to end women's disabilities.
> (Landis quoted in Sidzumo-Sanders, 1989, 168)

Because of 'double discrimination', the specific problems of black women have not received sufficient attention. Much of the discrimination they face is not specific to black women, but applies to South African women in general. Conversely, because of their race, many of their problems are part of the overall discrimination faced by all blacks, not only women. Consequently, black women have not had the same educational experiences as black men, nor have they had the same experiences as their white counterparts. Aside from the inadequate facilities and high student:teacher ratios associated with black education in general, female students confront specific gender discrimination including a gendered curriculum and teaching practices, sexual harassment in schools and unequal employment opportunities upon completion of their education.

## Teachers and the Curriculum

In his infamous speech in parliament in 1954, Verwoerd extolled the 'virtues' of the Bantu Education Act:

> A Bantu pupil must get knowledge, training and an attitude in school which will be useful and advantageous to him [sic] and benefit his community. Subject matter must be put to him in such a way that he can understand it easily and make it his own so that he can benefit and serve his community in a natural way. School education must equip him to meet the demands which the economic life in South Africa will make on him. (Truscott, 1994, 42)

While the racism and classism of these words is obvious, their gender bias is less so. The statement 'serve his community in a natural way' implies that Bantu Education was to "cement women into 'traditional' patriarchal relationships" (Truscott, 1994, 42). Although not explicitly stated, Bantu Education implied a life of domesticity and inequitable opportunites for women. This was clearly reflected in the primary school curriculum of the 1950s and 1960s which for girls was based on basic literacy and numeracy as well as sewing and 'housecraft'. While there was little subject choice for either boys or girls, a patriarchal notion of gender often influenced what little choice there was. The main subjects in secondary school were complimented by needlework, housecraft and typing for girls, while boys took woodwork, metalwork and agriculture. This prevailing stratified occupational structure has continued to influence attitudes towards classroom activities into the 1990s. One student, Nomonde Mtukwana, stated:

> At school we did handcraft knitting and sewing whilst the boys
> were doing gardening. Even their hand work was different from
> ours. They used to carve wood and make chairs and things. I did
> not like knitting and sewing. I remember when I was 9 years old
> and we were crocheting, mine was smaller than the other girls'.
> The teacher said to me 'you are so lazy, what kind of a woman are
> you going to become in future if you are this lazy?'... I said to her
> 'I'd like to do wood work as well.' She said 'You are crazy, this is a
> boy's job.'                                                     (Speak, 1991, 23)

The gender differentiation of subjects assumes that girls become wives
and mothers or work in low paying, unskilled labour sectors. The technical skills
boys are taught prepare them for more lucrative careers than girls, ignoring that
women, in many cases, are the sole breadwinners for their households.[38]   Such
gender bias in practical subjects often limits, at an early age, the range of careers
available to women and reinforces hegemonic patriarchal positions. Further,
girls are expected to take the 'soft' sciences such as biology[39], while boys study
mathematics and physics - the 'hard' sciences (McFadden, 1990, 227). In a study
by Truscott (1994), some female students reported that teachers discourage them
from studying mathematics and science by telling them that they are not good
enough (47).

> Most girls know exactly what subjects they wanted to do. Girls are
> channelled into domestic science because of the stereotype that
> girls aren't creative and do not have ideas, they cannot take
> mathematics then [sic]. Girls don't have any real choice.
> (Serame, 1993, 73)

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[38] 59% of all households in rural areas are either de facto or de jure female headed households
(Kadalie, 1995, 210).
[39] Biology is generally held in low regard and girls' enrollment in this subject conforms to the
gender division of labour as it is a prerequisite to nursing courses.

In 1988, only 17% of all black students enrolled in Standard 10 mathematics (the final year of secondary school) were girls (Unterhalter, 1992, 69). Studies have also found that boys are encouraged to answer questions and participate in class discussions while girls are expected to be passive and quiet[40].

> Most of the time the boys dominated the class. The teachers told only the boys to clean the board. The girls had to remain passive while the boys were answering questions, doing very active work in the class. Sometimes when we wrote a test the girls got higher marks than the boys. The teacher would say to the boys: 'You are stupid, you can never let a girl go above you.' There was that attitude that girls have to be below boys all the time. (Speak, 1991, 23).

In *Education in Tanzania with a Gender Perspective*, Mbilinyi et al. (1991) describe similar gender dynamics in Tanzanian classrooms. For example, they cite one study which reports that physics teachers claimed girls were not capable of thinking critically or logically (Damball, 1983 in Mbilinyi et al., 1991, 60). *Education in Tanzania* argues that instead of encouraging girls to be outgoing, assertive, critical and challenging, teachers preferred girls to respond in the "traditional" submissive and subordinate manner since this behaviour was more conducive to maintaining social order in the classroom (45). The report further states that:

> teachers tend to favor boys with more attention. The authoritarian school management system, use of corporal punishment, teacher-centred rote pedagogy and the competitive basis of classroom relations combine to make a macho environment unfriendly to girls. (Mbilinyi et al., 1991, 2)

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[40] This is not unlike what studies on schooling in North America, Europe and Australia reveal.

While female teachers are conscious of gender inequalities related to their own lives as female teachers, they are less aware of those inequalities perpetuated through the education system. In instances where teachers are conscious of gender inequalities within the education system, their interpretations and proposed solutions can be even more limiting than the present situation:

> [The education system] allows female students to go to those programs [maths and sciences] yet knowing there are no jobs [for girls] available. It seems to me that the curriculum is misdirecting. The education system should simply say that since there are no jobs for girls doing maths and physics, girls should not do these subjects at all. They should do homecraft and things that are relevant. They should do things to get employment because in the end they get frustrated. The discrimination that is pursued by the department is being followed by the industry. At the end it appears as if teachers are discriminating between male and female students to go for maths and physics whilst I think it is discrimination of the highest order to put a person in a certain programme which you know very well will not get her any employment. (Dlamini, 1990, 102)

Despite the constraints of Bantu Education, schools in South Africa operate in a manner in which competence and aggressive efforts are rewarded. Girls, however, are assailed with the images of women as mothers, inferior and less intelligent than men; thus, female students face conflicting role expectations. Being "feminine" means not being intelligent, ambitious and resourceful; yet, being successful in school requires girls to be all of these.

The curriculum and teachers' attitudes contribute greatly to students' perceptions of gender equality. In a survey conducted in 1990 in Durban, most male respondents (18 - 24 years of age) made sharp gender distinctions to the question: 'Should boys and girls receive the same education?':

> Boys must have more education than girls. Special task for the girls is to cook and make the house clean. They have to take care of the family so that when they get married they know how to care for the family. Boys must be educated very well and boys are so respected. If a girl is a manager the employees won't be easily controled [sic] by the girl. But if it is the boy they will do what he told them to.                                    (Morrell, 1992, 6)

Some girls' responses were quite different:

> They (boys and girls) are the same only sexism is different to them. The thing that boy can do, the girl can also do that. A girl can do engineering although engineering is learnt by the boys and the boys can do secretarial courses. During nowdays we have boys who are doing dressmaking. I see no need for the girls to be separated from the same education.                    (Morrell, 1992, 7)

In the survey, girls strongly emphasised their desire to be economically independent and felt that education was the way to this independence, while boys stressed 'respect' for men and quite clearly feared equal education would undermine patriarchal domination. It is obvious that at least some girls do not accept traditional gender ideologies[41], although it is unclear whether there is any

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[41] As was noted in Chapter 1 (pg. 50), although schools are sites of pervasive gender socialisation, "they offer girls a chance to use their brains and develop their skills... sometimes spurring students to think beyond the ideological limits laid out for them" (Wrigley, 1992, vii)..

active resistance by female students to the way these sexist beliefs are translated in the school environment.[42]

The gender division of labour is another example of the rigidity of gender roles which is a part of life for black students: "Girls are expected to tidy the premises before the school day commences. In class, boys are given the manual tasks, such as moving tables and desks" (Morrell, 1992, 5). As one former teacher bitterly remarked: "[girls] were brainwashed into believing that they should grow up to be sweet and humble wives who should unquestioningly accept the oppressive rules meted out to them by their husbands" (Graham-Brown, 1991, 217). In a study by Dlamini (1990), a teacher stated:

> [F]emale students, or we - we come from a society that doesn't
> encourage females to think. It is a society that expects us [women]
> to be recipients of ideas as opposed to being contributers or makers
> of ideas - and we carry this with us to the classroom, to our
> disadvantage...                                    (Dlamini, 1990, 98-99)

## Sexual Violence and Harassment

Violence is one of the major social problems South Africa is currently facing and the level of sexual violence in schools is impossible to quantify. It has been virtually ignored at the primary and secondary schools levels in South Africa and although sexual violence is being increasingly addressed at the tertiary level, much more research about this troubling issue is needed. Even so,

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[42] Again female students faced conflicting role expectations. As was noted earlier, 59% of rural households are headed by women; thus, female students often experience first hand the need to be economically independent. However, South African society accepts a household with a male breadwinner as the norm and this is clearly reflected in the curriculum and educators' attitudes.

there is overwhelming evidence to show that verbal and physical harassment, teasing and taunting relating to sexuality or gender against girls and women is rife in schools. Most boys either engage in this or comply with it (Kenway and Fitzclarence, 1997, 123). The literature indicates that the males who are most likely to resort to serious physical violence against females subscribe to patriarchal views of male power and supremacy, traditional gender roles and to the view that violence is an acceptable way of resolving conflict. Sex and sexuality are a key feature of this scenario - misogyny easily translates into sexual violence. Vogelman's study of rapists in South Africa convinced him that "contempt for women underlies most acts of rape. This contempt is bred and nurtured by sexist ideology which casts women as inferior to men" (Vogelman, 1990, 69).

While sexual abuse is an extremely grave problem in itself, it is also a major obstacle to female students' in pursuing their studies. Fear of sexual violence at school means that some girls have stopped going to school altogether (Hallam, 1994, 1). Research shows that black South African female students suffer at the hands of both male teachers and students (Truscott, 1994; Morrell, 1992; Sebakwane, 1994; Graham-Brown, 1991). In Truscott's (1994) study, girls revealed that "a group of Standard 10 boys were raping Standard 6 and 7 girls, [the girls] then had to leave school because of the humiliation. When asked what happened to the boys they said 'nothing' because the boys will attack those

reporting them" (50). Another respondent reported that a particular teacher made repeated, unwanted advances to her. Her persistent refusals made the teacher constantly angry and aggressive with the other girls in the class. Because the matter could not be resolved, the student left school (51).

Morrell's (1992) study on gender and education shows that in Soweto, schoolgirls are the major targets of abduction and gang rape (jackrolling). The "Jackrollers" were a youth gang which emerged in Soweto in the mid-1980s whose aim is primarily the gang-rape of young girls.

> "Jackrolling" means to kidnap and rape girls. To molest. Jackrollers are a group that formed to rape children... Their aim is to molest all the girls by the age of 26...The Jackrollers are jealous of others who can attend school while they cannot. They rape the girl students to get them pregnant so they will not be able to go back to school. Then these girls will be in the same situation as the Jackrollers... boys as young as thirteen joined them and started raping children in the classrooms and in the homes. (Russell in Hallam, 1994, 6)

In Durban secondary schools there are incidents in which boys hide in female toilets and then gang rape the unwary users of the facility" (Morrell, 1992, 5-6).

When the issue of sexual harassment is raised, for example by the Council of South African Students (COSAS), the focus has been more on harassment by teachers than students. This may be at least partly due to the anger felt by male students that "teachers were poaching on their sexual territory" (Morrell, 1992, 6). Perhaps student organisations' failure to address issues of sexual harassment is due to fear of exposing the pervasive sexism in their own ranks. In 1992 there

were at least four incidents of sexual harassment and abuse by leaders of the South Africa Students' Congress (SASCO). Not all the offenders were expelled from the organisation (Kathree, 1992, 38).

The absence of channels for reporting abuses, especially when committed by teachers, means that most cases of sexual violence and harassment go unreported. Many students fear that reporting harassment or rape by a teacher will result in failure, expulsion or backlash[43] from their family, or being labelled a 'loose' woman. The lack of serious official efforts to punish and discourage sexual violence in educational institutions condones and thus encourages such unacceptable behaviour. The majority of male students accused of sexual crimes have only been suspended or expelled - if that. In November 1991 at the University of Natal in Durban, a 20 year old student was gang-raped. The three students charged with the rape were brought before the university disciplinary court. They were found guilty of 'sexual indecency' and were merely banished from residence, underlining the institutionalised acceptance of such behaviour (Hallam, 1994, 13). Female students are also afraid of reporting sexual harassment and violence for fear of further violence (Kathree, 1992, 41). While there are no available statistics regarding the incidence of sexual violence in South African schools, the South African Police Services (SAPS) report that in 1995 36,888 women laid charges of rape or attempted rape. However, this is only

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[43] They fear being blamed by their family for the incidence.

a fraction of actual cases. Estimates of under-reporting vary greatly, yet Rape Crisis[44] holds that only one in every 35 cases are reported (Steenkamp, 1997).

The women of South Africa and the South African government know that their country has a very high incidence of rape, and although the South African media appears to have just suddenly discovered rape (Simpson, Robertson and Hamber, 1997), rape and gang-rape have been enduring problems of great magnitude for at least a decade. The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) states:

> [T]he political and criminal violence rooted in Apartheid - and which has so dominated the front pages of the commercial press - has been matched by incremental increases in the more "private" phenomena of rape, marital battery and child abuse. This has been an ongoing symptomatic manifestation of the growing powerlessness and perceived emasculation of men in this violence-ridden and traditionally male-dominated society...
> Rape and violence against women or children represents a "displacement of aggression" which is rooted in violent social conflict. In this manner, men of all races symbolically reassert their power and masculinity within the last social arenas in which they still traditionally hold sway - over women and children in the family and the home.     (Simpson, Robertson and Hamber, 1997)

Sexual violence against women and children has not gone unchallenged by South Africans. In May 1996, the government identified violence against women and children as one of several crime priorities to be addressed within the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) (Simpson, 1997). The CSVR

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[44] A Cape Town rape centre.

established The Children and Violence Intervention Project in 1993. This pilot programme concentrates on school-based education for children, teacher training and trauma management in 12 primary and secondary schools in Soweto. Workshops and awareness programmes are provided to all the children of these schools while counselling is given specifically to victims of violence and their families (CSVR, 1997). The Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP) is an advocacy organisation which works to address the problem of sexual violence and associated discrimination against women. It pursues the goals of both educational development and institutional change and has recently begun to investigate the potential for including education on sexual harassment in schools (SHEP, 1997). Furthermore, a number of South African universities have organised workshops as the first step towards creating an awareness of these problems; however, much more work needs to be done at the primary and secondary school levels where the age of the girls and their lack of experience makes them particularly vulnerable.

Clearly schools are not the safe havens they should be for female students and the constant possibility of sexual harassment and rape are but another worrying feature of a black girl's school experience. Schools implicitly subscribe to and endorse hegemonic versions of masculinity and this, coupled with the lack of effort by education officials to punish offenders of sexual harassment and rape, is indicative of the system's complicity in this violence. Violence against

women has been a longstanding feature of South African society. Vogleman argues: "Rape, the violent face of sexism, will continue to exist as long as women are oppressed and as long as women's subjugation is anchored in our society" (Vogelman, 1990, 201). Schools inevitably reflect the standards that prevail in their societies.

## Gender, Education and Employment

Although white girls and women have also been educated within a sexist education system, it does not affect them to the same degree as black, "coloured", and Indian women because of racial and, especially in the case of black women, class factors. For example, there are significant disparities in women's literacy rates among the different groups. A 1994 study found that 99% of white women 13 years and older had at least a Standard 4 (grade 7) education, while one-third of all women in the Transkei over the age of 5 had no education at all and only 15% had any secondary education. Further, of the approximately 540,000 women with a university level education, three-fifths were white (Biehl, 1994, 87). The result of these inequalities are obvious when examining today's employment opportunities for girls and women. Black women constitute the poorest socioeconomic sector of the South African population. While most employed white, Indian and "coloured" women are found in clerical, sales, supervisory, technical, professional and manufacturing sectors (Kadalie, 1995,

210), the vast majority of employed black women are concentrated in the service, agriculture and clerical sectors, or in the professional sector as teachers and nurses. The majority of these black women are employed as domestic servants and on farms (Schreiner, 1994, 298). Of the total number of women employed, black women represent 60% (Commonwealth Expert Group, 1991, 13).

Despite black women's equal access to education with men, women with similar qualifications and experience are consistently paid less than men, are found in lower grade positions and are less likely to be promoted than men (Schreiner, 1994, 300 and Lemmer, 1989, 30). That there are fewer black women in the professional sector than black men or white women, and that they are concentrated in the worst paid and most vulnerable sectors, reflects the gendered and racial power relations inherent in occupational structures, as well as discrimination in education. "Generally women's work roles are supportive of men who hold the monopoly of significant positions in the power and reward structure of occupations" (Lemmer, 1989, 30).

Black women in the teaching profession represent a relatively elite group of employed black women. It is one of the few professions that black South African women occupy in large numbers, yet females are underrepresented in positions of decision-making and power.

> Not only do men enjoy better conditions of service (higher wages, allowances to married men), this being declared departmental policy - they also stand better chances of promotion... Discrimination is not only official. The men come to see themselves as a superior class of teachers. Senior posts are given to men;

School Board secretaries are men. Even teachers' organisations are almost exclusively manned [sic] by male teachers. (Sayedwa in Kotecha, 1994 69-70).

Thus, while the teaching profession may be dominated by women numerically, the teaching hierarchy is dominated by men. A 1990 study reported that women occupied only 20% of all promotion posts. "The under representation of women in positions of power and authority is problematic as it transmits an implicit message regarding male and female divisions of labour to both sexes" (Narsi in Kotecha, 1994, 72). 1991 data indicate that at the primary school level black women represented 76% of all DET[45] teachers but only 60% of principals and 70% of heads of department. Within primary schools women dominate at the junior primary and are almost absent from senior primary. At the secondary school level, women comprise 43% of teaching staff, 10% of principals, and 26% of heads of departments (Pandor, 1994, 103 and Sebakwane, 1994, 85). It is clear that mobility into higher ranking positions is more difficult for women than men, despite larger numbers of women entering the teaching profession. Furthermore, equal provision is not made for housing subsidies, retirement funds and medical aid for married female teachers, thus perpetuating the privileged position of male teachers (Kotecha, 1994, 79). Sexist attitudes towards female teachers are deeply entrenched in the education system and amongst

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[45] DET (Department of Education and Training) was the education department responsible for black education within the Republic of South Africa.

male teachers. A strong culture of male dominance pervades and persists within schools and this finds expression within the hierarchy, in the roles that male and female teachers are expected to perform and in their attitudes towards each other. The gender division of labour in schools is a reflection of the division of labour in society generally. Female teachers are found primarily in 'soft' subjects such as languages, humanities (History, Bible Studies and Biology) and are underrepresented in the more prestigious 'hard' subjects such as Physics, Accounting, Economics and Mathematics. This gender division of labour is also extended to non-teaching responsibilities: female teachers dominate in staff allocated cleaning duties, serving coffee to staff, and entertaining visitors (Sebakwane, 1994, 89-90).

Schools play a central role in socialising boys and girls. Teaching ranks as a high-status female profession, thus female teachers are a role model for black female students. However, the cycle of gender differentiation is reproduced and reinforced by the roles that female and male teachers perform. Women are not treated as equal partners in the teaching profession and this is evident to students.

Table 6 shows that at every level of education black women earn less than whites and black men. It is important to note that while white women earn far more than black women and black men with higher levels of education, white

women still earn less than half the income of white men with the same education

at all but the lowest level of education.

Table 6 Income by Race, Gender and Level of Education as a Percentage of Income by White Men with Similar Education, 1991

|  | Black | | White | |
| Level of Education | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Standards 5-6 | 10 | 25 | 75 | 100 |
| Standards 7-8 | 10 | 10 | 40 | 100 |
| Standards 9-10 | 5 | 20 | 40 | 100 |
| Diploma | 35 | 45 | 55 | 100 |
| Degree | n/a | 65 | 45 | 100 |

Source: Makgetla, 1995, 12.

A 1996 analysis of the South Africa Labour and Development Research

Unit (SALDRU)/World Bank Survey on Living Standards and Development

shows that unemployment for black youth between 16 and 35 years is just below

a staggering 50%. Despite equal (or even higher) enrollment in primary and

secondary schools for girls, unemployment among women is much higher than

among men: 56% compared to 43% (Chisholm, Harrison and Motala, 1997, 217).

Even among secondary school leavers in a 1992 survey, relatively fewer females

were in full-time wage employment compared with their male counterparts.

This survey concluded that "employment discrimination and sexism, in general,

resulted in a lower incidence of female wage employment" (Bennell and

Monyokolo, 1994, 200). Further evidence on youth employment indicates that

people with technical education qualifications have higher employment rates

than those with matric (high school diploma) (Chisholm, Harrison, and Motala,

1997, 217). Historically linked to male domains of work, technical colleges are highly gender biased in terms of enrollment, staffing and curriculum (Chisholm, Harrison and Motala, 1997, 223). According to Kate Truscott's (1994) study, black women make up only 11.2% of total students enrolled in technical schools and represent only 31% of all black students enrolled in technical schools (84-85)[46]. These figures suggest a structural aspect to women's unemployment - a discriminatory education system which tends to stream girls into 'feminine' subject areas is compounded by formal labour market discrimination and the unequal division of labour in the household resulting in the marginalisation of women from and within the labour market. Furthermore, given their location, technical colleges reach mainly urban and not rural students where nearly 60% of all households are female headed and females out-number males.

This discriminatory labour market is reflective of an education system which can provide few models of educational success to black girls. Pam Christie and Adele Gordon (1992) state some female students have accepted this patriarchal dominance: "one sixth grade girl said that men should get more money because they have more 'kimatla' (strength) than women" (45). The disadvantaged position of black women in the economy appears in their relegation to the informal labour market and unpaid labour. It results from

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[46] Of those black women in technical colleges, the majority are concentrated in Health Science, Public Administration and Social Services, Home Ecnomics, and Commerce (73%, 64%, 39%, and 39% of total students respectively). Very few black female students study the generally higher remunerated subjects such as Engineering, Mathematical Science, Life and Phyical Science, or Computer Science (0.04%, 0.3%, 2.5%, and 5% of total students respectively) (Truscott, 1994, 85).

discrimination in education, hiring and promotion, and the gender division of labour in the household[47]. While this situation is partially a result of apartheid's discriminatory state policy, gender ideologies within black societies reinforce the gender biased labour market, inequities in the education system and distribution of power.

## Black Women's Resistance

Women in South Africa have always been involved in the struggle for national liberation. A glance at the twentieth century shows substantial organised resistance by black women at both the local and national levels. Women participated in religious, political, student and labour organisations which sensitised and raised the consciousness of black people concerning the unjust laws which perpetuated inequalities towards blacks in education, employment and other social institutions. They were at the forefront of mass demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, education campaigns, international appeals,

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[47] The household division of labour means that black women can rarely focus solely on their paid work. The distractions of childcare and housework typically leave them less likely to get long-service bonuses, over-time work, or promotions (Makgetla, 1995, 13). The effects of the gender division of labour in the South African household vary according to race. One must take into account who actually does the household work, as well as the location and the housing and community infrastructure' (electricity, water, proximity to stores and clinics, etc.). The better subsidised white households require white women devote less time to household tasks. White women are, therefore, able to participate easily in the formal wage labour sector, while black women, on the other hand, have been relegated to a large extent to the informal and unpaid sectors.

movements in exile, and the armed struggle[48]. In fact, the extent of women's involvement was at times extraordinary considering the lack of transportation infrastructure, the repression of the state, and the resistance women faced at home[49] (Kemp et al., 1995, 136). Despite such support from women, the liberation movement placed national liberation ahead of gender liberation. In 1979, the ANC women's secretariat stated, "In our society women have never made a call for the recognition of their rights as women, but always put the aspirations of the whole African and other oppressed people of our country first" (Seidman, 1993, 296). At the Nairobi Women's Conference in 1985 an ANC spokeswoman left no doubt as to the secondary importance of gender equity: "[It] would be suicide for us to adopt feminist ideas. Our enemy is the system and we cannot exhaust our energies on women's issues" (Seidman, 1993, 297).

The same situation prevailed within education. Black girls and women joined their male counterparts in protests, campaigns and demonstrations in opposition to Bantu Education and in an attempt to reform the system. Girls were just as militant and active as boys. This opposition, however, paid very

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[48] For example, the anti-pass campaigns of 1912/13 and the 1950s; the beer protests of the 1920s; resistance to forced removals and 'resettlements' in the 1970s; women's involvement in MK, the armed wing of the ANC; and so forth.

[49] Women's involvement in anti-apartheid activities inevitably took them away from their domestic duties and challenged the accepted notion that "women were, in some way, subordinate to men, their responsibilities primarily domestic, and their political contribution supportive rather than innovative" (Walker, 1982, 156).. Unwilling, or unable, to cope at home, husbands constrained women's involvement in political protest. An excellent example of men sabotaging women's efforts is found in the anti-pass campaigns of the 1950s when husbands unilaterally bailed out their wives (Walker, 1982, 218).. Women's political involvement was not allowed to interfere with their fundamental roles as wives and mothers in the home.

little attention to the specific needs of women in education nor did it link the struggle against Bantu Education to the need to overcome gender subordination. In fact, even the organisations which struggled to remove Bantu Education were fraught with gender bias. For example, in her study, Truscott (1994) stated that "even within NEPI [National Education Policy Investigation][50], many of the reports continue to treat the terms 'student' or 'pupil' or even 'teacher' as sex-blind categories, as if everyone's treatment by the education system or experience of it is the same. The point is, it is not. The education system treats females differently from males..." (41). Student organisations appear to have been no better. Despite the fact that girls wanted to become involved in the coordination of student organisations resisting Bantu Education, they were often excluded due to responsibilities at home and the negative attitudes of their male schoolmates. This left them bitter:

> Meetings are called by the SRC [Student Representative Council] and only the boys are invited to those meetings. When you question why the girls are not there, the boys will say it's because the girls can't keep important things to themselves. Even if they fight it in the classroom, they [girls] still have to go home and do the household chores that are specially set aside for girls. In fact, girls are often complaining about it, you know, that they have to study just as much as boys but the boys get very few chores to do around the home. I mean, girls will sometimes end up even ironing the boys' shirts for school. (Graham-Brown, 1991, 220)

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[50] The organisation for which she did her report.

A study of the black student organisation the South African National Student Congress (SANSCO) in the late 1980s, showed how little the organisation was concerned with gender subordination and how female students were forced to accommodate their concerns and demands to the mainstream of the national liberation movement (Nkomo in Unterhalter, 1992, 75).

Despite such obstacles, it is evident that girls and women laboured heroically in a myriad of ways in the struggle against Bantu Education[51]. Although not specifically acknowledged in the education literature, this is quite obvious upon examination of the extensive photographic records of various protests including the 1976 Soweto uprising and its aftermath, and testimonies of South African women in both academic and popular writings[52].

## 2.4 Conclusion

The discussion above reveals that while Bantu Education was designed for the servitude of black South Africans, especially women, students did not

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[51] Authors (see, for instance, Serame, 1993) have claimed that methods of resistance to Bantu Education included not adhering to uniform regulations, failure to attend class, disruption of class, laughter in the classroom, and so on. I would argue that these actions were not unique to the racist , sexist apartheid education system. These are examples of resistance to authority which could characterise students of almost any classroom, in any school system in the world.

[52] Various issues of *Agenda*, *Work in Progress* and *Speak*, as well as Jane Barrett, Aneene Dawber, Barbara Klugman, Ingrid Obery, Jennifer Shindler, and Joanne Yawitch (1985) *Vukani Mahkhosikazi: South African Women Speak*; Diana Russell (1989) *Lives of Courage: Women for a New South Africa*, Cherryl Walker (1982) *Women and Resistance in South Africa*, Phyllis Ntantala (1993) *A Life's Mosaic: The Autobiography of Phyllis Ntantala*, Peter Magubane and Carol Lazor (1993) *Women of South Africa: Their Fight for Freedom*, Hilda Bernstein (1975) *For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears: Women in Apartheid South Africa*, and the autobiographical narratives of Sindiwe Magona, especially *To My Children's Children* and *Forced to Grow* all identify the significance of women's participation in political protest including Bantu Education opposition.

passively accept this system. Bantu Education was meant to inculcate the apartheid ideological apparatus of white patriarchal supremacy and not to promote growth and development, nor to stimulate students' thinking; however, schools provided students - both boys and girls - an opportunity to mobilise and fight against the existing apartheid social structures.

Quantitatively, Bantu Education did not have a harsher impact on girls than on boys. This is especially evident when South African statistics for the primary and secondary school enrollment of girl are compared with most other African countries. Qualitatively, however, apartheid ideology combined with patriarchy to impact in a particularly prejudicial way on female students during the era of Bantu Education. Despite the quantitative expansion of education provision for Bantu Education in the 1970s and 1980s, there was no substantial transformation of the conditions of gender discrimination. Female students (and teachers) struggled within the confines of both their traditional patriarchal cultures and the patriarchal relations built into Bantu Education. The qualitative aspects of the education system, such as curriculum content, teaching practices, and sexual harassment, which markedly affected girls' educational experience, were not addressed and are a legacy of Bantu Education which continue to affect female students today. However, the marginalisation of black girls and women in South African education cannot be blamed on apartheid alone. None of the cultures or societies within South Africa are exempt. "It is a sad fact that one of

the profoundly non-racial institutions [in South Africa] is patriarchy" (Albie Sacks in Bazilli, 1991, 9). Gender inequalities prevalent in family, school and authority structures in South Africa affect the life chances and opportunities of women. Complex social relations are understood in terms of an ideology of domesticity that contributes to the formation of social roles which often become reified when reinforced in institutions such as the family and school.

Equality of race, class and gender is a stated aim of the Government of National Unity in both the *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) and the *White Paper on Education and Training*. However, the government's capacity to challenge inequality will be inadequate if the notions of equity and equality in education refers merely to equality of access and opportunity. "It is important to ensure that the conceptual base of calls for equality is as inclusive and just as the aim which is being sought" (McLennan, 1994, 53).

## Chapter 3

## Gender and Education Reform in the 'New' South Africa

"Use the education and training systems to promote social
transformation for gender equality"
(Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,
Nairobi World Conference, 1985)

### 3.1 Introduction

Women, who make up 50.6% of the South African population (CSS, 1995,

8), are located predominantly in regions which are economically

underdeveloped. Recent statistics show that 59% of rural black households and

39% of urban black households are headed by women[33] (Kadalie, 1995, 210).

Generally, these households are the most marginalised. And while many

women live in neither a nuclear nor extended household, the state, employers

and society regard the nuclear family with a male head as the norm (Shreiner,

1994, 297). Few would disagree that South Africa is a patriarchal society or that,

within this society, black women are particularly disadvantaged.

> There is little dispute today over the existence and nature of
> women's oppression. In the home, at the workplace and in the
> sphere of public life, women are variously ignored, or put down,
> discriminated against and subordinated. The dominant social,
> political and economic order conspires to relegate women to a
> position of inequality in relation to men in all areas of life. Women
> are poorer than men. They own less property, earn less income per
> capita and are more likely to be unemployed... Women are also

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[33] While this can be partly attributed to apartheid influx control legislation and the migrant
labour system, this is a trend within most developing countries (Budlender, 1991).

more likely to suffer physical abuse, violence or harassment in the home, the workplace or on the street.[54]             (Nhlapo, 1994, 185)

Now that political independence and legitimate government have been achieved, black women are mobilising to challenge the traditional and cultural sanctions which discriminate against and oppress them. While feminism in South Africa does not form a single coherent movement, the growth of gender consciousness since 1990 has been extraordinary. In April 1992, the Women's National Coalition (WNC) was established. Through it 81 organisational affiliates and 13 regional alliances of women's organisations represent more than two million women members (Daymond, 1996, xvi). In 1994, the WNC published *The Women's Charter for Effective Equality*. This document acknowledges that while South African women come from diverse backgrounds, the Women's Charter

> gives expression to the common experiences, visions and aspiration of South African women. We are breaking our silence. We call for respect and recognition of our human dignity and for a genuine change in our status and material conditions in a future South Africa.                    (WNC in Daymond, 1996, xxxv)

The South African government has acknowledged women's demands for equity and the interim constitution unequivocally states its commitment to gender equality. South Africa's equality clause in the constitution is one of the

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[54] These inequities are based not only on gender but on race, class and location as well.

most progressive in the world. Calls for transformation have also resulted in the Termination of Pregnancy Act, which allows women to terminate unwanted pregnancies, the commitment of the South African Law Commission to end domestic violence against women, and the establishment of the Commission on Gender Equality. Despite progressive legislation and a commitment to gender-sensitive policies in both the constitution and the *Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)*[55], many women feel there has been too little progress[56].

In order for the position of women to be ameliorated much change is needed in areas such as the legal system, the gender division of labour, violence against women, and women's involvement in the policy-making structure of government[57]. A critical component in any attempt to radically change gender relations is the transformation of patriarchal attitudes. The most effective method to facilitate this transformation is education.

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly outline the basic tenets of the *White Paper on Education and Training*, to examine the Government of National Unity's commitment to gender equity in primary and secondary formal education and to recommend strategies to move towards an anti-sexist education

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[55] The *RDP* is a socio-economic policy framework which addresses the problems of poverty and inequalities in South African society by pursuing high and sustainable growth. The *RDP* (1994) acknowledges that "women are still subject to innumerable forms of discrimination and bias" (4-5) and "that women often represent the poorest, most exploited and most marginalised sector of our society" (51).

[56] See Haffajee (1997), Fedler (1997) and the various recent issues of *Agenda*.

[57] Currently there are 177 women (26.5%) in parliament which is amongst the highest level of representation in the world (PRODDER, 1996, 3); nevertheless, there are few women at the cabinet level and all nine provincial premiers are men (Balch, et al., 1996, 188).

system. This chapter will show that an analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and initiatives by the Department of Education[58] indicate that the government is influenced by a neo-liberal framework which concentrates on extending and equalising educational opportunities for all. The previous chapters clearly indicate that while equality of access and distributive processes are essential issues to be tackled by the South African Department of Education, an equal opportunity approach overlooks the systemic and ideological nature of gender discrimination and oppression. Initiatives cannot fail to recognise that education operates within a cultural and socio-political context; therefore, efforts which merely seek to draw more women into education without also challenging societies' construction of gender and gender relations of power and domination will be deficient in achieving gender equity. It will become clear that overall the *White Paper on Education and Training* exhibits a vague commitment to gender equity. Although the discourse of gender equity is explicit in introductory paragraphs and broad vision statement, gender is virtually non-existant in discussions of specific policies and programmes.

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[58] The South African government distinguishes between the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education. The Ministry of Education comprises the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Education, advisors and administrative staff. In terms of the constitution, the Minister is personally accountable to the President and Cabinet for the administration of the Ministry of Education. Ministers are obliged to seek Cabinet approval for their policy proposals, such as the *White Paper on Education and Training*, and to ensure that approved policy is effectively executed. The Department of Education is part of the organisational structure of the public service, which is required to execute the policies of the government and Ministry. The Department of Education is headed by the Director-General.

## 3.2 The *White Paper on Education and Training*

The educational mandate of the Government of National Unity, as stated in the *White Paper on Education and Training*[59], is to "create a system that will fulfil the vision to open the doors of learning and culture to all. The paramount talk is to build a just and equitable system which provides a good quality education and training to learners young and old throughout the country" (Department of Education, 1995, 17). The *White Paper* commits the government to the reconstruction and development of the education and training system on an equitable basis and lays the foundation for the establishment of a non-discriminatory system. "Education and training are *basic human* rights. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights, so that all citizens irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age, have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential, and make their full contribution to the society" (Department of Education, 1995, 21). The government is committed to advancing these rights by extending access to the education system through the expansion of capacity and by addressing the social and structural barriers that prevent some children from going to school, such as lack of transport, hunger, household tasks, homelessness, inability to pay for uniforms, and so on. Thus, the *White Paper* situates educational transformation within a broader strategy for

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[59] Hereafter referred to as the *White Paper*.

national reconstruction and development by placing it within the framework of the *RDP*.

Furthermore, the *White Paper* describes a single structure of governance for all schools, simplifying the former forms of governance and ownership[60]. Governing structures will be comprised of parent, teacher and student representatives to bring an element of democracy to schools for the first time.

With few exceptions, education in South Africa has been the privilege of a minority; thus, the democratic movement has been committed to a system of "education for all". In order to achieve this goal, an integrated education and training system has been envisioned, with multiple access, cross-over and re-entry points. The National Qualification Framework (NQF) is the policy initiative by which the Department of Education seeks to accomplish this integration of education and training. The NQF will attempt to accredit all forms of learning, including prior learning experiences[61], for learning outcomes achieved. The concept of lifelong learning, which underpins this approach, would ensure that youth, among others, would be able to move without restriction from any starting point in the education and training system regardless of the delivery mechanism or site[62]. The formation of this framework

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[60] Formerly there were nineteen different ministries of education, divided on the basis of "population group" and location (i.e. independent homeland, non-independent homeland, and Republic of South Africa).

[61] These "experiences" are defined as "learning and skills which people have acquired through experience and on-site training or self-education" Department of Education, 1995, 26).

[62] It is important to note that the emphasis on integrating education and training overlooks the fact that the labour market is sharply stratified along lines of both gender and class - as well as

is an effort to unite organised business and labour, government and educational institutions. In addition, it is consistent with, although perhaps not directly shaped by, the approach advocated by the World Bank for sub-Saharan Africa in its sectoral policy paper *Vocational and Technical Education and Training: A World Bank Policy Paper* (1991).

External agencies have played a significant role in developing and influencing education policy for post-apartheid South Africa. Major policy studies and initiatives developed by the African National Congress (ANC) have relied heavily on foreign funding (Samoff, 1995, 43). As argued in the first chapter (pp. 16-18), and as Samoff (1994) argues in the South African case, "agencies influence policy discussions by commissioning or underwriting studies that delimit the issues and specify the approaches, constructs and methodologies that are to be used to address them" (29). External agencies can and do exert strong pressures on education policy; therefore, it is important not to underestimate their influence nor to ignore the ideological framework[63] and aims of these agencies. None of the major donor agencies has, as yet, developed a systematic programme for addressing the ways in which the education system itself discriminates against girls and women and thereby perpetuates gender discrimination and oppression in society. Research and policy documents,

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race - and that the majority of black women, engaged in domestic work or tea-making, are not in a position in the formal wage labour market to upgrade their skills or to be recognised or accredited (Daniels, 1995, 49).

[63] In keeping with World Bank discourse, the *White Paper* consistently equates education with human resource development.

which have not moved beyond equal opportunities concerns, see education as neutral in its objectives and ignore the links between education, societal constructs of gender, and relations of power and oppression in society. Will this neo-liberal influence, coupled with the conservative nature of South Africa's societies, hinder the development of effective strategies to achieve genuine equity and equality for girls and women in South African education?

### 3.3 Gender Equity in Primary and Secondary Schools

#### Curriculum Development

The *White Paper* proposes the establishment of a National Institute of Curriculum Development (NICD) - a professional body operating through a devolved structure of teachers and educators outside the departmental structure. It is suggested that the NICD would examine the relationships between curriculum, assessment and teacher education processes at all phases of education and training. While there is a clear commitment to restructuring the curriculum, elements key to any South African curriculum reform initiative are not even mentioned in this section. In acquiring knowledge and skills, learners should also be developing tools of critical reflection that challenge the traditional power relations entrenched in the society. Racial and gender discrimination, which were fundamental components of apartheid's formal and hidden

curriculum, are not even referred to within the curriculum development section

of the *White Paper*. The South African government will fail in its mandate to

create an equitable and quality education system unless curriculum development

is accompanied by systematic efforts to eradicate gender and racial

discrimination from the formal and hidden curricula[64]. In addition to those

concerns mentioned in the *White Paper*, curriculum development should address

gender inequities by focussing on: women and black people in history, politics,

economics and literature; anti-sexist and anti-racist language; gender sensitive

math and science; women and men in the labour market; encouraging both boys

and girls to study non-traditional subjects[65]; health and sex education; male

privilege in sports; the construction of gender and race in South African societies;

the gender division of labour in the private and public spheres of society

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[64] While the elimination of racial and gender discrimination should be the foundation of any curriculum development initiative in South Africa and although there are similarities between sexism and racism, these forms of oppression have their own histories and are experienced differently. Therefore, anti-racist strategies will not necessarily have anti-sexist outcomes.

[65] Often the focus on the gendered nature of curriculum focusses solely on the deficiency of girls without challenging male privilege. This stems from the perception that the male student is the norm and that girls should fit into that universal mold. Because female and male students may resist breaking from traditional subject selection, educators must be cognisant of the structural constraints in the school, labour market and society which discourage such subject selection and develop strategies to counter these constraints. Active discrimination in the labour market discourages some girls from male-dominated subjects which could lead to non-traditional careers. Budlender (1992 in Daniels, 1995) found that there is "little interest in encouraging the employment of female apprentices with many organisations preferring to follow a males only policy. Among the reasons for not employing women as apprentices was that women were not suited to the trade, that they did not have separate change room and toilet facilities, that women were not prepared to work on standby or do overtime and in the case of mining that women were not allowed to work underground" (50).

(including the school); conflict and peace management; and violence against women[66].

The *White Paper* ignores that girls' access to technological and professional careers has been especially hindered as a result of the legacy of Bantu Education and gender discrimination by teachers, administrators and the labour market. Students are ambiguously neutered when discussing lack of access to these careers:

> Access to technological and professional careers requiring a strong basis in mathematics and science is denied to all but a fraction of the age cohort, largely because of the chronic inadequacy of teaching in these subjects. (*White Paper*, 1995, 18)

When outlining a student recovery programme in science and math, the *White Paper* again acknowledges that black students have been particularly disadvantaged; however, it repeats its previous omission and fails to point out that black female students especially suffer discrimination. Without recognising this fact and adopting special measures to target girls and women, any recovery programme will have negligible, or even detrimental, effects on female students.

It is perhaps due to this lack of a gendered analysis of curriculum that Daymond (1996) found that not even agreements in principle about gender equality have been carried through to policies for school curricula. Individual "teachers are taking up the need to develop children's understanding of the

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[66] This is by no means meant to be an exhaustive list.

questions about women that face this society, but so far theirs are isolated efforts" (xviii).

While addressing the official curriculum is of course urgent, it is the hidden curriculum, which is so pervasive and works at the level of feelings and attitudes, that has perhaps the greater influence in perpetuating gender inequalities and biases. The Southern Natal Gender Committee (SNGC) concluded that:

> Analysis of the curriculum needs to extend beyond the ways in which gender bias operates in the written accounts of textbooks and in gender-biased classroom practices. Aspects such as the presentation of curricular materials, the practices of classroom teachers and policies that may have a harsher impact on girls than boys... need also be examined.
> What must be acknowledged is that a non-sexist curriculum [and] equal access to education... do not of themselves provide sufficient conditions for change. Often girls internalise gendered roles as experienced in the home and evidenced in the workplace. Classrooms and teachers' practices serve to reinforce traditional female roles. (SNGC, 1994, 61)

The *White Paper* proposes that the NICD should examine the relationship between curriculum and teacher education; however, it fails to acknowledge how the hidden curriculum interacts with societies' dominant gender ideologies to reinforce gender inequities.

## Teachers, Trainers and Educators

In order to develop appropriate anti-sexist strategies, teachers need a high level of understanding of both the condition and position of women in South African society. This requires teachers, to some extent, to deal with gender issues on both practical and theoretical levels. In order to be able to do so, teachers' colleges, universities, Departments of Education and INSET (in-service education for teachers) programmes must incorporate gender training for teachers and assist teachers in the development of teaching methodologies which challenge the sexism prevalent in South African education and society[67]. This is not addressed within this section of the *White Paper* nor is the issue of active gender discrimination by members of the teaching profession, despite the statement that the "redesign of teacher education programmes [must be] in line with the new values, goals and principles of the national education policy determined by the Minister" (*White Paper*, 1995, 30).

The Southern Natal Gender Committee (SNGC) believes that

> [I]t is very important to translate the current rhetoric of non-sexism into a concrete process that is rooted in the reality confronting teachers in the classroom... We believe that the classroom is a hive of sexism, much of it unconsciously propagated... [T]eachers have been trained within a very patriarchal tradition and were themselves taught within the same tradition. It is important for teachers to become aware of the way in which we perpetuate a sexist learning environment and seek ways of changing this. Also, the actual learning material is deeply rooted within a patriarchal understanding of knowledge and learning... [O]ne of the first steps

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[67] This must be tied directly to the suggestions made in the previously regarding curriculum.

is to recognise the sexism and stereotyping that is found in the curriculum.                                                (SNGC, 1994, 59)

Equity for girls cannot be tackled in isolation from other gender power relations in the school and education system. In schools this is reflected most clearly in the position of women teachers. "Unless the whole school ethos is one in which equality in the broadest sense flourishes, then piecemeal measures are unlikely to have any effect" (Riddell, 1992, 89). Despite recent studies which show quite clearly the exploitative situation women teachers face in South Africa (for instance Pandor, 1994 and Kotecha, 1994), the 'Teachers, Trainers and Educators' section makes no mention of gender discrimination in the teaching profession. Chapter 2 of this thesis clearly laid out the systemic discrimination women teachers face in the forms of wage discrimination; gender division of labour in the extra-curricular activities, duties and subjects taught; male teachers' attitudes towards female teachers; and the under-representation of women in the education hierarchy. In South Africa, while the teaching profession amongst blacks is numerically dominated by women, formal decision making is in the hands of men. While the paucity of women in positions of decision-making and power within education is of concern as a question of equal career rights and discrimination for teachers, it is also crucial for boys and girls to see women in decision-making capacities and to challenge male domination of the selection of school knowledge and curricula.

While this section of the *White Paper* fails to address gender issues related to teachers and teaching, the section proposing a Gender Equity Unit does consider the position of women teachers and sexism in the education system. Daniels argues, however, that it should be within the proposed National Council on Teacher Education, in consultation with the Gender Equity Unit, that the issue of discrimination against women teachers should be located (Daniels, 1995, 51). Such uneven policy consideration tends to 'ghettoise' gender issues.

## The Gender Equity Unit

The *White Paper* recognises that

> By virtue of its educational function, it [the national education system] has great potential influence on gender relations and on the respective career paths of men and women. However, within the education system there are worrying disparities between girls and boys, and many girls and women suffer unfair discrimination and ill-treatment... Such phenomena have long histories and complex causes. The reasons for the poor representation of women in educational management are probably to be found as much in the values and gender role patterns of South African families and communities, as in the patriarchal culture of the South African bureaucracy... In many schools and other educational institutions, including the most senior, social relations among students, and between staff and students, exhibit sexism and male chauvinism. Sexual harassment of girls and women students and women teachers, as well as acts of violence against women, are common in many parts of the education system. (*White Paper*, 1995, 45-46)

In order to address these and other problems, the Department of Education has proposed the creation of a Gender Equity Unit, which will be

directly accountable to the Director-General of Education, to study and advise on all aspects of gender equality in the educational system. In particular, it will be responsible to:

> •identify means of correcting gender imbalances in enrolment, dropout, subject choice, career paths, and performance
> •advise on the education and social desirability and legal implications of single-sex schools
> •propose guidelines to address sexism in curricula, textbooks, teaching, and guidance
> •propose affirmative action strategies for increasing the representation of women in professional leadership and management positions, and for increasing the influence and authority of women teachers
> •propose a complete strategy, including legislation, to counter and eliminate sexism, sexual harassment and violence throughout the education system.                    (*White Paper*, 1995, 46)

The issues which the proposed Gender Equity Unit is to be responsible for investigating are indeed important and long overdue; however, they may also be too extensive for one unit - especially considering the financial constraints of the Ministry of Education and the Government of National Unity. Having said that, there are also key issues the *White Paper* ignores in this section which are imperative to ensure a gender equitable approach to education policy. This includes the establishment of gender equity as one of the criteria by which teachers, principals, school governing bodies, and national and provincial education officials are evaluated in performance reviews.

Experience in other countries and in a variety of organisations has shown that the creation of separate "women's" or "gender" units has not always

instituted a gender equitable approach. In fact, such units have, at times, simply been co-opted into the dominant organisational structure or have encountered considerable resistance. Caroline Moser (1993) argues that "the creation of a separate unit frequently results in higher levels of organisational tension and trauma than does a mainstream strategy... [The unit] has a mandate to confront those not delivering, but also must be prepared to be on the receiving end of abuse" ( 116). Others, however, firmly believe that a separate institution provides the necessary space to "think through" gender policy (Moser, 1993, 117). While a Gender Equity Unit may be a step in the right direction, it is important that all bodies of the new education system take responsibility for ensuring gender equity. The South African Department of Education must ensure that "gender equity" does not become ghettoised as a "woman's issue" and that gender relations and male privilege are not ignored. Such a unit could play more of an overall monitoring and coordinating role in order to have a more manageable task-load initially and then reassess its role (Daniels, 1995, 53). This approach would ensure that the process of identifying gender inequities and discrimination are integrated into the system as a whole and that issues of race, class and geographic location are not disconnected from gender. The success of the Gender Equity Unit will ultimately depend upon the commitment of the Ministry of Education as demonstrated by adequate budgetting, staffing, and decision-making and advisory capacities, as well as public support.

The *White Paper* was published in March 1995 and the Gender Equity Task Team (the group which will advise the Department of Education on the establishment of a more permanent Gender Equity Unit) was not created until a year and a half later - November 1996. Since its inception there has been little information available regarding its activities until just recently (July 1997), at a conference highlighting some of its findings[68]. The delay in the Task Team's creation and the failure of the Department of Education to respond to my many queries regarding the status of this unit may be indicative of an inadequate commitment and/or the minor status attached to the Gender Equity Unit.

School Governance

Governance and ownership of a school by the community it serves is one of the principles upon which the *White Paper* is based.

> •School governing bodies should be representative of the main stakeholders in the school. Parents have the most at stake in the education of their children, and this should be reflected in the composition of governing bodies, where this is practicably possible.
> •In primary schools, the main stakeholders for purposes of governance comprise the parents and teachers.
> •In secondary schools, the main stakeholders for purposes of governance comprise parents, teachers and students.
> (*White Paper*, 1995, 70)

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[68] As of yet, no document has been published from this conference, although South Africa's Gender Network (an e-mail discussion group) reported that the effects of violence and sexual harassment were a discussion topic.

Although the notion of community governance and control itself is not problematic[69], the *White Paper* fail to address the ways in which communities and families are structured and the relations of domination they perpetuate may serve to reproduce unequal gender relations in a governing body. The only point at which this section of the *White Paper* even mentions gender inequities is when it acknowledges that the composition of governing bodies needs to be sensitive to gender representation (p. 70). However, there are no policy proposals to enforce this nor is it recognised that even if women are equally represented in such a body, community participation may result in male opinions being uncritically accepted as those of 'the community'. Furthermore, the existence of community governing bodies does not guarantee representative community involvement. Poorer communities where many parents are migrant workers or must work long hours, are unlikely to have satisfactory involvement[70]. Parents who have had negative school experiences when they were young may not feel comfortable enough to play an active role in a school governing body. Another consideration must be the time of meetings and workshops. Will they be compatible with women's more time-consuming domestic commitments? In communities where parents have the time and

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[69] Indeed, it is a step towards a participatory and democratic education system.
[70] Since female headed households tend to be the poorest and most marginalised in communities, they are less likely to have the opportunity for involvement.

inclination to participate, schools will prosper; in communities where active parents are few and far between, schools may have to fend for themselves.

South African societies tend to abide by strict generational hierarchies which may also impede student participation in school governance. Again a gender bias may become apparent as female students may be more affected than male students since parents have generally succeeded in maintaining a greater degree of control over their daughters than their sons. This may result in the silencing of their voices in governing bodies. Finally, as was revealed in Chapter 2, student organisations are fraught with gender bias. Girls are often excluded from student meetings due to the negative attitudes of male students and responsibilities at home. Strategies must be developed in order to ensure that such gender subordination is not duplicated in school governing bodies. Unless strict policies and guidelines are developed and enforced the unintended consequence of the Department of Education's participatory governing policy may be that bodies become stratified along economic/class and gender lines.

## Gender Equity and the *White Paper*

A commitment to gender equity is set forth in the broad vision statements of the *White Paper*; however, a closer reading of the document reveals a problematic unevenness. Gender issues are, at times, singled out and at others conspicuously absent with no justification (were they ever really present?).

Descriptions of key programmes and policies such as the student recovery programme in science and math, or INSET programmes are entirely gender-blind, as are the discussions on freedom of religious belief and expression in education, language and culture in education, and the 'culture of violence' in South Africa. The failure of the Department of Education to incorporate a gendered analysis through the whole of the *White Paper* indicates an inability, or lack of desire, within the Department and Ministry to conceptualise thoroughly the inequitable and unequal gender relations within education. Cherryl Walker (1994) makes a similar argument in her analysis of the government's RDP and concludes that "given the limitations on the way in which gender equality is perceived within the ANC... it is likely that... the ANC-led government will compromise or delay its commitment to gender equality" (347).

Since policies are always rooted in conceptual frameworks, the assumptions people make about equity will determine the values which will be incorporated into education policies and the manner in which these policies will affect women. In order to implement an education system which seeks to improve the position of women *in* and *through* education, it is essential to understand the concept of 'gender equity' and the difference between 'gender' and 'women'. Achieving gender equity in education requires providing an anti-sexist education which does not reinforce attitudes and structures which constrain or oppress girls and women. It equips girls and women (and boys and

men) with the knowledge and skills to critically assess their lives and the society within which they live; it assesses the extent to which teachers, students and others contribute to a transformative process; and finally, it examines the qualitative aspects of curriculum, pedagogy and school environment which affect the status of gender relations - either for change or by perpetuating the status quo.

Repetitive use of equity and equality throughout the *White Paper* fails to obscure the Ministry's inadequate neo-liberal conceptualisation of these terms. Equity is based on notions of fairness and justice not merely equal access and equal opportunity; however, given the historical context from which South African education is emerging, it is not surprising that the *White Paper* emphasises distributive issues at the expense of considering social relations of power, domination and male privilege. As I argued in Chapter 1, equity and equality in education involve more than issues of access and equal opportunity. In South Africa women have equal access to education but experience discrimination within the education system, lack access to fair and suitable employment, are victims of sexual violence and are inadequately involved in the policy-making structures of government.

'Gender' and 'women' (or girls) are used interchangeably in the *White Paper* so that 'gender' means paying attention to women and the special disadvantage they suffer, but does not acknowledge male privilege or

domination. Gender analysis deals with the dynamics of social interaction between women and men, boys and girls. Strategies which focus solely on women (or men) simultaneously direct attention away from the broader social, economic and cultural factors which create the conditions of women's inequality in education.

The policy initiatives proposed in the White Paper conform to the prevailing neo-liberal 'equal opportunity' approach. This approach takes society's traditional gender roles and practices as given and works within this context to improve women's and girl's opportunities. Educational values, structures and systems created by men are accepted and women are expected to adapt. While this approach may help girls and women meet their practical gender needs, it does not assist them in realising any strategic gender interests. Without an anti-sexist approach to education, the prevalent gender biases and ideologies in society will remain.

The task for South Africa's Ministry and Department of Education is to move beyond the rhetoric of equal opportunity and non-sexist education to integrate gender equitable and anti-sexist strategies into all aspects of efforts to transform the education system. Gender issues cannot be ghettoised within the Gender Equity Unit.

## 3.4 Strategies for Change

The recommendations which follow suggest a range of measures to promote anti-sexist education. These strategies are not intended to provide an exhaustive list[71], but rather a point from which South African educators can start. As further research[72] is carried out on gender and education, additional strategies will be identified.

A. School Environment

i) Establish repositories for complaints about gender discrimination at schools. Publicising the complaint, while not breaching confidentiality, allows staff and students and/or the school governing body to respond to and participate in decisions about what should be done (Davies, 1990, 181). All complaints should be kept on file since they could prove useful research information and case study material for PRESET, INSET[73] courses and gender workshops.

ii) Implement gender workshops for all teachers, administrators and school governing bodies. These workshops should examine where and

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[71] These strategies do not include those already identified within the *White Paper*.
[72] Such research should utilise gender-sensitive methodologies and analyses.
[73] Pre-service Training and In-service Training, respectively.

how different women experience discrimination and oppression and motivate participants to actively challenge it. Participants should be encouraged to network with other schools/communities in order to develop their own strategies towards gender equitable education.

iii) Work with local/regional NGOs and women's organisation to organise above workshops.

iv) Provide girls' hostels at all co-educational boarding schools[74].

v) Supply all girls' hostels with adequate security. This does not imply locking girls in at night (as is the practice in some schools and presents a fire hazard), but preventing intruders from entering.

vi) Conduct studies on the benefit of girls' single-sex schools[75]. Studies in Tanzania (Mbilinyi, 1991), Kenya, Swaziland (Hyde, 1993) and my own informal research in Lesotho indicate that girls in single-sex schools perform significantly better than girls in co-educational schools.[76]

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[74] Some coeducational boarding schools provide boarding facilities for boys only.

[75] Currently, these are virtually non-existent for black South African students.

[76] Girls in single-sex schools tend to be more assertive, have more self-confidence, participate in class more frequently, and have noticeably better communications skills. Girls in co-educational institutions in both Lesotho and Tanzania were reluctant to participate in class for fear of 'looking smarter' than their male counterparts and, in the case of lab experiments, were fearful of damaging their physical appearance (Mbilinyi, 1991, 60).

vii) Provide guidance counselling services[77] in assertiveness training for female students and teachers to help cope with and learn to resist and contest gender discrimination.

viii) Abolish punitive measures against girls for pregnancy.[78]

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ix) Change the nature of schooling by replacing authoritarianism with cooperation, collective decision-making, and participatory education (Weiner, 1990, 39).

x) Establish girls' support groups (Weiner and Arnot, 1987, 356).

xi) Establish crèches at or near secondary schools for female students with children.

xii) Require use of gender-inclusive language in all areas of the school environment (staff room, classroom, library, administrative offices, assemblies, school newspapers, examinations, etc.).

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[77] While such services would be too expensive for each school to establish, Provincial Education Departments could establish mobile regional guidance counselling units which could visit schools on a bi-weekly basis.

[78] For example, in 1994 13% of girls were pushed out of school due to pregnancy (Mokwena, 1995, 135).

B. <u>Sexual Harassment and Violence</u>

i) Educate girls and women (and boys and men) to be able to recognise various forms of sexual harassment.

ii) Establish appropriate mechanisms for: registering and investigating complaints; promoting education and training regarding sexual harassment and violence; counselling and support services for victims (teachers and students, female and male) of violence and harassment; ensuring effective measures to discipline and punish offenders within the school system.

iii) Ensure adequate funding for and work together with organisations, such as the Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP)[79], which specialise in the issue of sexual violence. Cooperative initiatives could include: school and community-based education programmes, trauma management and teacher training, curriculum design, lobbying and advocacy work.

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[79] See Chapter 2 for more information on this organisation.

iv) Enact special legislation providing for stronger legal sanctions against educators and school administrators who take advantage of their positions of power and sexually abuse or harass students (Mbilinyi, 1991, 9).

## C. Teacher Training

i) Implement gender-training workshops in the PRESET and INSET stages of teacher training ( see A, ii). Because all educational reforms ultimately rely on teachers to see that desired changes are carried out[80], there needs to be a high level of self-consciousness amongst educators to be able to deal with the content and practice of gender oppression[81]. There are a number of excellent gender-training facilities within South Africa such as the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape.

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[80] In Namibia, despite textbook rewriting and curriculum revamping, changes in the education system have not occurred to the degree expected because, according to a specialist from the Ministry of Education, "not much has been done to help teachers to cope with the new thinking about the curriculum" (EFA 200, 1995, 5).

[81] Educators need to go through the process of consciousness-raising, which gender-training will provide, to enable them to confront their own experiences and understanding of gender relations. Workshops are based on participants' concerns and examine unequal power relations in society. Riddell (1992) found that teachers stressed socialisation rather than structural factors within the education system as the main cause of gender differentiation in school, but that gender-training undertaken with beginning teachers was highly significant (78-88).

ii) Establish regional resource centres for teachers/administrators who are concerned about their interactions with students, are uncertain about the gender implications of their teaching strategies, or require anti-sexist teaching suggestions.

iii) Reward schools and teachers who have successfully introduced innovative programmes of gender positive curriculum, teaching methodologies, and school organisation (Mbilinyi, 1991, 12).

iv) Provide support and funds for women teachers to create their own professional organisations at regional and national levels.

D. Curriculum Reform

i) Introduce gender issues and analyses into all subjects at all levels of education and encourage the development of gender studies courses in all post-primary and adult education institutions (Mbilinyi, 1991, 10).

ii) Challenge the gender biased economic, political and domestic power imbalances which are reflected in the education system by introducing curriculum which examines:

a) gender roles in families and households,

b) how laws (including customary law) and legislation affect men and women differently,

c) sexual violence and harassment (including domestic violence),

d) conflict and anger management, conflict resolution and mediation, peer mediation and communication skills to improve interpersonal relations[82].

e) sources of credit available to women[83],

f) value of women's domestic labour, community contributions and waged labour, and the discrimination women suffer in the workplace,

g) leadership and resource mobilisation skills such as how to organise a meeting and fund-raising techniques,

h) family life and parenting (for both boys and girls),

i) sex education,

j) beliefs, myths and stereotypes about sex differences,

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[82] This type of curriculum reform should be performed in cooperation with organisations such as the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) and the Centre for Conflict Resolution. The Centre for Conflict Resolution has designed a conflict resolution approach called the 'dispute resolution systems design' (DRSD) which it believes can be implemented in schools. It uses people within the school system to help "diagnose, design, promote, implement and monitor the dispute resolution system" (Arnold, 1995, 21). On a more theoretical level, Peace Education should also be developed. Themes could include: concepts of peace, violence and power; creating a democratic culture; roots of conflict, and so on.
[83] Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) incorporates such information into its education programmes.

k) women's contribution to the liberation struggle and human rights in South Africa and other nations.

iii) Assist female students to recognise the way in which their own attitudes perpetuate their inferior status.

iv) Educate male students to take gender equity issues seriously at home, school and the workplace and to realise that gender equality is not a threat to their 'masculinity'.

v) Encourage career days, guest speakers, popular theatre groups and other activities which project a positive image of women, including those in unusual and/or high-level positions. Job shadowing and summer work-terms for girls could be included in this project.

vi) Encourage core subjects to integrate special projects which provide girls with a sense of pride in the lives and work of the women in their communities. For instance, English classes can incorporate biography assignments.

vii) Ensure male and female students discuss the ways in which customs and traditions entrench gender inequalities.

viii) Purge school libraries of sexist and racist materials[84].

ix) Develop 'mentor' programmes. Mbilinyi's (1991) examination emphasised the positive influence of a 'significant other' (teacher or school administrator) on female students in science fields (63). Such programmes can be extended to include secondary school students tutoring primary level students.

x) Ensure that efforts aimed to get girls into math and science subjects are not approached as though girls have a learning deficiency, but rather as a problem of systemic discrimination.

xi) Transform domestic science by creating a compulsory basic life skills course for girls and boys which includes basic household repairs, basic food preparation, housekeeping skills, household budgetting, etc. (Mbilinyi, 1991, 17)[85].

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[84] Since many schools do not have libraries, this practice should include mobile libraries that visit schools on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

[85] Education reforms often encourage girls and women to engage in non-traditional tasks, but rarely do they target boys to do the same.

xii) Require use of gender-inclusive language in classrooms and all school assignments (see A, xii).

xiii) Utilise expertise of women's organisations, NGOs and academics to develop an anti-sexist curriculum.

xiv) Show marriage and motherhood as possible choices rather than inescapable ones (Stromquist, 1994, 6).

xv) Encourage female students to launch a magazine or newspaper written by and for girls to provide a forum within which girls from different schools (maybe even different regions and provinces) can address issues which are of concern to them and develop a sense of pride in something they have created[86].

xvi) Incorporate self-defence classes for female students into the physical education curriculum (Weiner, 1985, 48).

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[86] A magazine of this sort recently began publication in Canada and by all accounts it is a huge success. This type of project does not have to be an expensive endeavour.

## E. Working Environment of Teachers

i) Eliminate the sexism inherent in the unequal employment conditions of female and male teachers:

a) Ensure that wages, benefits and pensions are provided to women and men equally, regardless of marital status[87].

b) Initiate positive discrimination through legislation, quotas and hiring practices.

c) Establish written guidelines to remind interviewers that questions regarding marital status and domestic circumstances are inappropriate.

d) Parental leave for both parents.

ii) Target professional development at women and ensure that INSET programmes are compatible with family commitments. Ensure child-care facilities are available to participants. Determine times and venues of such programmes in cooperation with teachers.

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[87] Currently workers fall into three categories: single person, married man and married woman. Married women are taxed more and receive less of a pension than married men or single people. Their incomes, and therefore pensions, are considered supplementary.

iii) Implement and maintain statistics relating to recruitment and promotion[88] of women within the teaching profession.

iv) Establish crèches at or near schools (see A, xi).

v) Establish appropriate mechanisms for: registering and investigating complaints; promoting education and training regarding sexual harassment and violence; counselling and support services for victims (teachers and students, female and male) of violence and harassment; ensuring effective measures to discipline and punish offenders within the school system (see B, ii).

vi) Eliminate gender discrimination in subject and duty allocation to teachers.

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[88] Of course, merely replacing men by women at the top of the hierarchy will not in and of itself create radical change in gender relations or discrimination. The focus on gender in management should, however, challenge "patriarchal world views as they are manifested in educational organisations, in particular those that deny participation and responsibility to the mass of their members - male or female" (Davies, 1990, 83).

F. Research Suggestions

i) Analyse gender dynamics in the classroom and school (teacher-student, student-student and teacher-teacher relations).

ii) Examine changing expectations of female and male students towards marriage, life partners, children and careers.

iii) Research impact of anti-sexist education strategies on gender relations in schools, communities and families.

iv) Investigate employment patterns for women and men and employers' attitudes towards gender equity, and hiring and promoting women.

v) Research the ways female students/teachers have contested, resisted and accommodated gender inequities in the past and at present.

vi) Investigate sexual harassment and violence in schools against students and teachers.

vii) Study and promote innovative anti-sexist programmes initiated by individual schools and teachers.

viii) Investigate the influence of donor funding on anti-sexist initiatives in education.

ix) Incorporate educators and administrators into research projects and promote a participatory approach to research and analysis.

## Conclusion

> [J]ustice [in education] is often reduced to a notion of measurable equality as fair distribution. This disguises the extent to which numbers obscure the experience and interpretation of inequality and the social relations of domination on which they are based. These factors are crucial if gender equality is to be achieved in education. (McLennan, 1994, 54)

In most discussions of equal education, issues such as equal allocation of resources and access are prioritised. Education cannot be seen simply in terms of access, provision and opportunity. The education system must be situated in relation to other structures in society including gender relations. Unless the notion of equitable education is sufficiently conceptualised and the patriarchal and inegalitarian ideologies present throughout South African societies are acknowledged and challenged, policies to transform the education system will fail to ensure the elimination of gender discrimination in education.

The educational attainment of black South African girls and women should not mislead one to conclude that gender inequalities in education do not exist. Schools are not neutral and do discriminate along gender lines. It is necessary to shift from quantitative approaches which focus on how many girls/women are in school, how much education they get, and the economic benefits of their education for South Africa to an alternative analysis which

examines what, how and for what girls/women learn within an education system which offers representations and cultural values insensitive to gender inequalities and the oppression South African girls/women face. While the past and present forms of education have resulted in some mobilisation of female students (especially at the tertiary level), it is clear that the persistence of patriarchal ideologies and social systems imposes constraints on education as a vehicle for women's empowerment and liberation. Primary and secondary education in South Africa must be transformed so that sexism becomes an object of discussion and controversy and anti-sexist strategies, at all levels of the system, are embraced by the majority of educators.

The proposals outlined in the *White Paper on Education and Training* will not achieve an anti-sexist education system. While the initiatives proposed, such as guidelines to address sexism in curricula and textbooks, are undeniably important, they are insufficient. For example, experiences from other countries[89] suggest that changes in the images and content of textbooks need to be accompanied by in-service (INSET) and pre-service (PRESET) training programmes for teachers and administrators in order to assist educators to examine the attitudes, expectations and values they transmit when teaching girls and boys. Teachers must be able to reflect upon the consequences which gender biased textbook images and curriculum content have on the educational

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[89] Tanzania and various Latin American nations, for instance. See Mbilinyi (1991) and Stromquist (1992), respectively.

experiences and performance of girls and boys, and implement strategies which permit all students to develop their capacities and interests free from discrimination and oppression.

Despite the progressive discourse of gender equality and non-sexism found in the new constitution, the Reconstruction and Development Programme, and the *White Paper on Education and Training,* the government and its Ministry of Education have failed to make the fundamental commitment necessary to use the education system to transform South Africa's patriarchal society and redress the disadvantages suffered by women. A gender equitable education system must be sought not under the premise of strengthening the economy , increasing contraceptive use or reducing the birth rate, but as a matter of social justice.

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