

Editorial

This edition of *Perspectives in Education* seeks to add to education discourses by exploring experiences in both school and higher education settings. I was struck by the fact that most of the papers challenged hegemonic systems and how teaching and subsequently, effective learning, can contribute to the development of agency to address pertinent social issues.

The paper of **Wood, De Lange and Mkumbo** on the implications of Aids for the re-circulation of teacher education programmes reflected on teachers' awareness of the social injustices that fuel the AIDS pandemic. They pointed out that it is rather lamentable that teachers do not regard themselves as agents of social change, which urges teachers to address the social dilemmas that come with the pandemic. This article sets the scene for the discourse about the role education can play in the improvement of social challenges. Along the same line of reasoning around the influence of the social environment, **Sethusha** revealed that teachers' conceptions of dimensions of teaching, such as assessment, are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they find themselves.

The other papers in this edition also contain nuances of justice and transformation in teaching and learning contexts. These papers range from teaching in a Church Refugee House to emotional intelligence and community engagement. In opening up the debates, it is clear that researchers have moved from a mere content-based teaching and curriculum approach to the inclusion of transformation as core element. Transformation implies change in view of improvement and here the paper of **Muthivhi** highlights the fundamental connection between the verbal thinking processes and problem solving abilities of TshiVenda-speaking primary school children and how such abilities can be improved if linked to practical activities generally applied in that particular society or culture. Additionally the paper of **Wootton and Roets** focusses on the relationship between cognitive, emotional and behavioural processes, which have implications for helping learners with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) if their emotional intelligence could be developed.

The transformative angle of the papers in this edition, generated some new thought about justice and it is not surprising that quite a number of the papers deal with marginalised groups. **Pausigere's** paper on Zimbabwean economic migrants and political refugees, **Dreyer's** focus on learners with learning impairments and **Msibi's** paper on homophobia and queer theory also enter the social justice debate. The inter-sectionality and multiplicity of the various social identities, addressed in these papers, also bring to the debate issues such as throughput, patterns of behavior, silencing, education for repatriation, learner support and vocational skills.

The critically reflective papers of **Murimo, Treptow and Mda** shifts the education dialogues as they challenge current practices and pedagogies that facilitate learning in order to develop the potential to transform society. Similarly, the papers of **Alexander and Preece**, take the learning into the community and explore how learning and research at higher education could benefit by engaging in collaborative community partnerships. These papers address the responsibility that higher education institutions have in being socially responsive and the need for dialogue for mutual understanding between all stakeholders. The focus on the agency of the higher education sector in the development of capabilities and graduateness, was particularly framed by the contributions of **Ivala, Kioko, Treptow and Mda** as they addressed student engagement, workplace demands and the potential value of research interns.

Using qualitative methods, such as ethnography, the twelve papers in this edition embraced the personal narrative as a meaningful way of deconstructing education at both school and tertiary level. These papers clearly set the tone for extensive theorization on the inter-connectedness between curriculum, teaching and learning and society as they advocate the development of agency to provide all learners access to quality education and the opportunity to improve their success.