

Student diversity in South African higher education

Wandisile Mdepa

University of the Western Cape, South Africa

Email: wmdepa@uwc.ac.za

Lullu Tshiwula

University of the Western Cape, South Africa

Email: ltshiwula@uwc.ac.za

Abstract South Africa suffers from a scarcity of skills in key areas of the economy, and the higher education sector has a crucial role to play in enabling graduates to access the labour market, thus creating opportunities for households to break the poverty cycle. We argue that South Africa's survival depends on expanding access to higher education and improving both diversity and student-throughput rates. In order to overcome the legacy of legalised exclusion of the majority population from educational and economic opportunities, the country has no choice but to address issues related to the inclusion of diversity in higher education.

In this paper, we outline the historical background to South Africa's higher education system during apartheid and highlight measures taken to transform the sector. Changes in the student population between 1993 and 2008 are examined, and factors hindering student diversity are discussed. Finally, two strategies aimed at contributing to access and diversity in higher education are shared.

Key terms: South Africa; diversity; inclusion; poverty; skills.

Background

Access to higher education in Africa is not without barriers. People from disadvantaged social backgrounds in most African countries face a range of obstacles and tend to be poorly represented in higher education institutions. Acknowledging that many African governments have to weigh up their country's needs and make choices between pressing priorities, this paper offers a South African perspective on the issue of student diversity in higher education, without wishing to isolate South Africa from the continent.

A system that encourages diversity in education can be defined as one that is inclusive of participants from different gender, race, ethnic, class and religious

backgrounds with the intention of redressing inequalities and confronting issues that prevent access and success for any social group. A diverse student body is usually considered to be one in which a number of different cultures are represented and practised. South Africans speak 11 different official languages, and an understanding of how to harness student diversity in the context of access, participation and social cohesion is crucial. By their nature, diverse societies are complex and prone to conflicts of interest; hence, a view of diversity simply as a source of richness and variety can be naive and simplistic. Historically, South Africa's higher education sector primarily targeted and served a minority ethnic group. These same institutions now have to strive to ensure the equitable representation, in their student and staff components, of all South Africans; and South Africans are by no means homogenous in terms of economic, educational or social attributes.

Past legislation has a bearing on student diversity in the present-day higher education sector in South Africa. Thus, to examine the inclusion and exclusion of student diversity in higher education and its relation to South Africa's economic survival, one has to place the issue in historical context. In South Africa, the period between 1948 and 1993 was characterised by legalised unequal separate development, namely apartheid – a deliberate and gradual adoption of increasingly racist policies and laws that legitimised many discriminatory practices.

The Bantu Education Act (No. 47 of 1953) classified and separated education along racial lines. In other words, the apartheid state created four separate and distinct education departments to cater for whites, Indians, coloureds and Africans.¹ Schooling for white pupils was free and compulsory, while those classified as 'non-white' had to pay school fees. Not all 'non-white' families could afford to send their children to primary school, much less consider secondary or further education. The Extension of Universities Act (No. 45 of 1959) established colleges for 'non-whites'. Usually located deep in rural areas, these colleges (several of which have been transformed or merged with other universities since the advent of democracy) existed on the margins of the South African economy, ensuring their own, and their students', exclusion from financial and other networks (Magopeni and Tshiwula, 2010). It was a criminal offence for 'non-whites' to register at a white university without state permission.

In the course of its 45-year rule, building upon 350 years of colonialism, the apartheid government institutionalised a higher education landscape consisting of 36 universities, 15 technikons and approximately 140 single-discipline vocational colleges (nursing, education and agriculture). All of these institutions were structured along racial lines in terms of both admission and tuition. Enrolment and staffing patterns largely subscribed to the policy of separate development, with the exception of black institutions, which tended to have predominantly white staff, particularly in senior positions (Kennedy-Dubourdiou, 2006; Soudien, 2007). As mentioned, African, coloured and Indian students were not allowed to pursue

studies in so-called ‘white’ institutions. In addition, some ‘white’ institutions (such as the University of Cape Town) were reserved mainly for English-speakers, while others (such as the University of Stellenbosch and the University of the Orange Free State) catered mainly for Afrikaans-speaking students. Campus locations, environments, cultures, funding sources, etc., were just as differentiated.

Thus, during the apartheid period, the higher education sector was predicated on the persistence of inequality and characterised by highly fragmented, incoherent and uncoordinated policy and planning. It was further compromised by the extensive duplication of structures and by the exclusion of Africans, such that the largest demographic group had the lowest participation rate in the system (Sedgwick, 2004).

Although the higher education system has been extensively restructured since apartheid was abolished in 1994 (for example, several higher education institutions merged in 2005), South Africa’s past continues to hinder the access and participation of certain students in the higher education sector. To give just one example, South Africa has 11 official languages, of which nine are African languages; given that many of the universities were single-language institutions before 1994, the issue of language of instruction presents major challenges.

Key changes in the higher education sector since 1993

The turning point for South Africa was the adoption of the Interim Constitution (Act 200 of 1993), which guaranteed universal suffrage and allowed all citizens, regardless of colour, to vote in the 1994 general elections for the first time. The final Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) guaranteed all South Africans rights of citizenship and equality before the law. Section 29 of the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to basic education, including adult basic education and further education, while Section 29.2(c) refers to the need to redress the results of past discriminatory laws and practices that institutionalised difference. These clauses provided a firm foundation for an overhaul of discriminatory legislation and for the creation of state policies that could serve a country in transition.

The first policy document to present a framework for the radical transformation of the higher education sector in South Africa after 1994 was the National Commission on Higher Education’s (NCHE) *Overview of a new policy framework for higher education transformation* (1996). This document accorded higher education a pivotal role in the political, economic and cultural reconstruction and development of South Africa. The central features of the policy framework can be summarised as:

- increased participation (massification was understood as addressing issues of equity, redress and development) and increased diversity of students, and flexibility with regard to enrolment and programme offerings

- greater responsiveness to social context – that is, an open knowledge system
- increased co-operation and partnerships between higher education institutions and with civil society and the state.

The intention to increase participation specifically targeted students in the 18-to-24 age group, and aimed both to expand student numbers and improve access for black students. This was seen as key to overcoming apartheid's legacy of economic and social inequality, as well as to producing the high-level skills required for overall economic growth. Universities were required to enrol students in ways that more accurately reflect South African demographics (International Education Association of South Africa [IEASA], 2009).

Higher-education institutions opened their doors to all race groups. As noted by Badat (2010:7) total student enrolment increased from 473,000 in 1993 to 799,388 in 2008. In 1993, 40% of all students were African (191,000 students), and 52% were black; by 2008, African enrolment had risen to 64.4% (514,370 students) and black enrolment stood at 75% of overall enrolment. After 1994, South Africa focused on the role of education in promoting economic and social development. Although there is progress, the realisation of the ideal of equal opportunity in terms of access and success is, from a number of critical perspectives, still rather a long way off.

Among policy documents that stress redress and the need to increase student access and diversity in line with national goals is the *Human resource development strategy (HRD-SA) 2010–2030* (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2009). The HRD-SA outlines 15 strategic goals, of which two are worth highlighting here:

- The seventh strategic priority illustrates the government's commitment to ensuring student diversity and 'equitable outcomes in education and training [DHET] with respect to race, gender, disability and geographic location'.
- The eleventh strategic priority makes reference to ensuring that South Africa is ranked 'in the top ten per cent of comparable countries in terms of its economic competitiveness'.

Furthermore, the indicators in the HRD-SA's five-year strategic framework make reference to the number of engineers, medical doctors, artisans, doctoral graduates, and research and development personnel required per 100,000 of population (DHET, 2009:18–20). The document thus complements the state's focus on addressing the issue of scarce skills by pushing for the inclusion of a diversity of students in scarce-skills areas.

Obstacles preventing wider access to higher education

In 2001, the Ministry of Education's *National plan for higher education* estimated participation rates in higher education to be 15% and set itself the target of achieving 20% participation in the next 10–15 years (that is, between 2011 and 2016) (Department of Education, 2001). As of 2010, access is improving and the 18-to-24 year cohort is approaching 20%. However, if these figures are analysed more closely, there is still a clear racial divide: the participation rate for whites is at 60%, and more than half of Indians in this age range are enrolled in higher education; yet the rate for Africans stands at 11% and for coloureds at just 7% (Benatar, 2010). One of the reasons given for these differences is the poor quality of primary and secondary schooling in the poorer areas, which still tend to be occupied by mainly coloured and African communities.²

Thus, in spite of the progress that is being made, the legacy of apartheid is clearly still hindering both access and success, and is still a cause for major concern. Based on the scale and magnitude of imbalances, proponents of diversity have argued that admission and selection processes should favour Africans. Accordingly, some measures have been put in place to widen access, but retention and throughput rates for black and coloured students remain extremely worrying.

The University of Cape Town, a formerly advantaged university, is applying demographic quotas to allow more African and coloured students to study at its medical school. Amid a barrage of criticism from some quarters, the university's vice-chancellor was quoted as arguing that that quota system is valid. He went on to say:

using a race-based policy is second best and it is a proxy for disadvantage most of the time. Our experience shows that a black student coming from a township school who manages 65% or 70% in matric (Grade 12) has overcome incredible odds, we know that if they had been in a good school, they would have got 90% therefore we do not want to penalise them because of the accident of the circumstances they were born into. (Govender, 2010)

The University of Ibadan in Nigeria has a similar arrangement, whereby a category of students from educationally less-developed states are given special consideration in admission processes even if they have not achieved the requisite marks for their courses of choice. This mechanism provides opportunities for at least five such students to be admitted to each department in the institution. The programme has proved effective and has allowed a greater number of under-represented groups to have access to higher education at university level (European University Association, 2010).

Some argue that preferential treatment that aims to enable increased numbers of previously disadvantaged students' access to higher education merely sets underprepared students up for failure. However, at the Stakeholder Summit on Higher Education Transformation held in April 2010, a wide range of institutions and state agencies agreed that access should be widened and that teaching environments should focus on enabling the success of students in higher education (DHET and Centre for Education Policy Development [CEPD], 2010).

Insufficient funding for bursaries and student support programmes

Aiming to increase access to higher education, the South African government established the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) in 1991. According to a NSFAS website, loans are offered to cover students' tertiary-level expenses.³ Up to 40% of the loan may be converted into a bursary, depending on year-end results, which are re-evaluated every year after the first year of tertiary study. This opened paths for some formerly excluded students to enter the higher education arena. However, the loans offered do not cover living expenses, and access is therefore still hindered where students live away from campuses and cannot afford to cover these expenses themselves. Higher-education institutions in South Africa tend to be located far from where the majority of students live. Public transport is expensive and often unsafe, and students who have to commute to university often live in accommodation that is not conducive to studying. These factors necessitate accommodating students in residences, but until 2009, student accommodation was not subsidised by the state. There have been students whose funds have been depleted by the end of their first semesters, and who have been forced out of the higher education system as a result.

South Africa is not unique in its experience of student financial constraints. A lack of financial resources is one of the major problems faced by students in Africa generally, especially related to living expenses.

In a study completed by the European University Association (EUA), a majority of the students from selected African universities who completed the questionnaire responded 'Yes' to a question about whether lack of resources was the main barrier to access to higher education (EUA, 2010:90). There is cause for concern in respect of increasing costs in accessing higher education, especially concerning declining living standards. In the African higher education setup there seems to be a direct correlation between access and funding in higher education. Many students in the EUA study were of the opinion that, in order to succeed, they needed a strong social-security system that would take into account their needs for housing, food, medical care, study material and transport. In South Africa, NSFAS has expanded

considerably since its inception. In fact, by 2009 NSFAS was spending R2.5 billion (roughly £192 million) on 140,000 students; loans and bursaries have become indispensable for funding tertiary-level education in South Africa.

South Africa's population is burdened by illiteracy levels of between 10% and 29%,⁴ and this affects tertiary students in that the majority represent the first generation in their families to attempt higher education. According to Letseka and Maile (2008:6), 70% of South African university dropouts fall into the category 'low economic status', with some parents earning R1600 (up to £46) a month. The students depend on their parents or guardians for financial support to pay their fees and/or to supplement what they obtain from NSFAS and provide for essential living expenses. It is highly likely that a majority of these students were first-generation tertiary students.

A closer look at other African higher education systems reveals that about 30% of African students who apply for admission into institutions of higher learning actually gain access to these institutions and 5% or more of these students drop out depending on which country they are in (EUA, 2010). In fact, based on the research and information from the EUA survey sample, the retention rate in southern Africa is higher than central Africa, east Africa and west Africa.

To summarise the obstacles facing students in terms of access, there is, in our view, a direct correlation between poverty and student retention in Africa. Several studies (including EUA, 2010, and IEASA, 2009) show that in Africa, many students are forced out of higher education as a result of financial barriers, and that a high number of students from lower economic backgrounds fail to complete higher education after gaining access. Thus there is neither equitable access to nor retention in higher education.

Contested diversity in South Africa

The issue of diversity in most of Africa is not problematic because the majority of the population is African and views itself as such. In South Africa, however, the issue of diversity is contested because some South Africans are ambivalent about whether they are Africans and about whether they should retain their apartheid racial classification. The discourse around this contestation, be it in private or public conversations, is ongoing.

With the exception of Liberia and Ethiopia, every country on the African continent experienced colonialism in some form. As far as education under colonialism is concerned, the British are said to have confined themselves to the provision of basic education, while other colonisers, such as France, Portugal and Belgium, invested solely in the education of a small elite required to serve their administrative needs (Lloyd and Hewett, 2009:9).

Under apartheid, one of the key functions of segregation was to make sure that education in black communities was inferior and limited. Although apartheid was

brought to an end in 1994, the ramifications of the system mean that the entire education sector is still undergoing transformation and many students arrive at higher education underprepared for their studies. Underprepared students tend to come from the worst resourced schools, where there is often an absence of adequately qualified teachers, particularly in the areas of mathematics and science. This, in turn, limits students' choices in relation to fields of study, particularly in the areas of engineering, medicine and science (areas of skills scarcity in the country). In South Africa, the poorer-resourced areas are inevitably racially slanted towards the previously disadvantaged communities. To compound these factors, there is often an absence of career guidance in the poorly resourced schools, especially in the rural areas.

In South Africa, the question of under-preparedness relates not only to knowledge and skills in subjects such as mathematics and science, but also to language competency – that is, the ability to speak and understand the languages of instruction in the country's higher education institutions. The fact that English and Afrikaans are the languages of instruction in these institutions is in direct contravention of the Constitution of the Republic. Section 29(2) of the Constitution states that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public education institutions, where that education is reasonably practicable. To ensure the effectiveness and implementation of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single-medium institutions, taking into account equity, practicality and the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices. As Badat (2010) argues, funds have to be spent in higher education to provide academic development programmes to address under-preparedness (be this linguistic ability, conceptual knowledge or academic literacy and numeracy) to ensure that expanding diversity within the student population leads to academic success for the students involved.

For South Africa to meet its economic imperatives and compete globally, the number of South Africans accessing higher education has to be widened. The value of focusing on diversity is its ability to redress inequality and confront issues of access and success. Many South African institutions retain some lingering racism, and certain privileges are still associated with social class. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds experience this as alienating, exclusionary and disempowering (Badat, 2010).

Opening up to Africa

South Africa was largely excluded from the rest of the African continent during apartheid. Images of Africa shown on South African television focused on famine in countries such as Ethiopia, as if to prove that apartheid was the best option for Africans.

Since the demise of apartheid, South Africa has become a preferred destination for students from other southern African countries. South Africa offers a range of courses and qualifications that are not always available in nations that have smaller university sectors. As a result, student diversity in relation to students from southern and sub-Saharan Africa is increasing. In 1997, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) put the finishing touches to its *Protocol on education and training*. Article 7(A) 1 of the Protocol states: ‘Member States agree to recommend to universities and other tertiary institutions in their countries to reserve at least 5% of admission for students from SADC nations, other than their own’.⁵

Zimbabwe is noted as the major source country for sending students to South African universities. At the time of writing, Zimbabwe was sending 39% of its students to South Africa (up from 27% in 2006) (EUA, 2010:94–5). The rapid increase in numbers can be explained by the political turmoil and the economic and educational crisis in that country (a case in point being the closure of institutions of higher learning and the dismantling of student organisations after violence erupted in the lead up to Zimbabwe’s last elections).

Other African countries are also contributing to the numbers of international students in South Africa’s higher education system. In 2008, Namibia accounted for 8000 students and Botswana for over 5000, followed by smaller numbers from Lesotho, Swaziland, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Mauritius and Angola. It is noteworthy that over 9500 students from non-SADC African countries studied in South Africa during 2008, and that less than 7000 came from the rest of the world (Department of Education figures cited in IEASA, 2010:14).

An analysis of the data collected from higher education institutions in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Cameroon, Togo, Benin, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Senegal and Gambia on a wide a range of issues reveals that African countries tend to experience similar problems in relation to student access to higher education (EUA 2010:90). There is little equity in terms of access as a result of social inequalities. Furthermore, population growth in most African countries is high and few universities have expansion plans to absorb this growth.

Strategies addressing access at national and local levels

Two strategies that offer some hope for the future are examined in this section. The first is a national strategy that has had some success in increasing access to accountancy education, and the second is an example of university–community connectedness, namely the *Brawam-Siswam* project, which took place at the University of the Western Cape.

A national strategy to increase access to accountancy education

The South African Institute for Chartered Accountancy (SAICA) developed a model that is proving successful as a comprehensive strategy for increasing the number of qualified accountants. Since accountancy is a scarce skill in South Africa, the model is aligned to South Africa's national human-resource development strategy.

First, SAICA identified the barriers for growth at each level of competency in the field of accounting. Then, as part of the strategy to increase throughput and success rates, SAICA developed programmes to overcome each barrier. For example, to overcome the problem of funding, the Thuthuka Bursary Fund was set up. According to the SAICA website, the purpose of the project is to place 250 to 300 African and coloured students annually at selected universities on special undergraduate Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) programmes on full bursaries (that is, all fees and books, plus a subsistence allowance).⁶ SAICA works with universities and accredits those with which it has made agreements around teaching, learning and other concerns before sending Thuthuka students to those institutions in cohorts of 50 per university. It is made clear to universities that failure to adhere to the agreements may result in the withdrawal of the students and the associated Thuthuka funding.

Furthermore, the SAICA model provides additional tutorial and computer support as well as co-curricular peer mentors. SAICA obtains university support for students in relation to residence placements and other forms of financial aid. In addition, after completing the programmes, students are placed in companies to complete their articles while they prepare for their chartered accountancy board examinations.

The throughput target is 70% of students on the programme, and because of the strong support systems, the target is achievable. The model has a student tracking and monitoring system to enhance the required throughput rate. The students, even those from the least-resourced schools, have shown high levels of commitment to their studies in terms of attendance at lectures, and their rates for the submission of assignments are at 100%. SAICA has been invited by the South African government to assist in expanding the model to training in other scarce skills such as medicine and engineering (Mulder, 2010).

At the time of writing, the state-run NSFAS loan scheme does not match up to the SAICA model financially or in terms of student support. The NSFAS scheme needs to be redesigned so that it responds to, for example, the issue of subsistence allowance, so that students are not worrying about where their next meal will come from instead of focusing on their studies.

The *Brawam-Siswam* programme

An attempt at enhancing university–community connections and addressing the issues facing first-generation university students was undertaken by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in its appropriately named *Brawam-Siswam* programme – in the *Xhosa* slang that is widely spoken on campus, *brawam* means ‘big brother’ and *siswam* means ‘big sister’.

A large number of South African university students are first-generation students, and the majority of these are black (that is, African, coloured or Indian) as black people constitute 89% of South Africa’s population. First-generation university students often experience a disconnection between themselves and their communities. The *Brawam-Siswam* programme aimed to address this gap at a local level.

In South Africa, university education is not free and parents tend to be primarily responsible for paying for tertiary education. Families go to great lengths and make enormous sacrifices to enable their sons and daughters to enter university; parents in urban areas often work two or three jobs, while those in rural areas will sell their most precious assets, their livestock. The families often hope that the student will study hard to quickly complete their degree, and then find a well-paid job – thus contributing significantly to household income and assisting the family to escape from the cycle of poverty.

This vision is not far removed from the government’s own aims as espoused at the 2010 Stakeholder Summit on Higher Education Transformation (DHET and CEPD, 2010). In a nutshell, it is the notion of education taking the economy of the country as its starting point. It should be recognised that socio-economic constraints are such that in poor households, education competes with many other priorities, yet the failure to access education will continue to relegate the majority of the population to low living standards. Tertiary education has the potential to open access to the labour market and to provide an opportunity to break away from the reproduction of poverty and disadvantage, especially in the quest to overcome decades of legalised exclusion from education and economic opportunities on the basis of colour.

However, these family expectations may conflict with the student’s own ambitions of, for example, wishing to proceed to a post-graduate degree. One way of managing this family–student disconnection is to involve high-school learners with university students from similar backgrounds so that high-school learners and their families obtain a deeper insight into what being at university is all about.

UWC therefore set up a collaborative relationship with the Western Cape provincial departments of education and social development to involve Grade 9 learners with UWC students in a mutually beneficial mentee–mentor programme. The aim was to educate Grade 9 learners (prospective first-generation students) and

their families about what higher education meant for their future. The second aim was to bridge the gap between the university's mission and what the community understands a university to stand for.

Permall (2009) cites Grove and Huon as referring to mentoring programmes as aiming to develop and enhance a sense of identity. The programme is also intended to assist UWC students in acquiring the necessary skills to become independent and lifelong learners.

A similar example is cited in the EUA report (2010:48). In the Compact Scheme, undertaken by Kingston University in the UK, students who were the first in their family to go to university were given a mentor in the university who could act as a single point of contact for any information students wished to obtain. In addition, the scheme was structured so as to strengthen the university's links with communities: secondary education colleges were asked to help identify potential university candidates and assisted them through the application process. Thus, the university was able to achieve another part of its civic mission.

At UWC, a variety of benefits emanated from the programme. Students experienced the validation, self-awareness and self-confidence that come from taking action, reflecting on these actions and considering what they could do differently in future. Thus they learned to plan for the future in ways that take their past experiences into account (Permall, 2009).

Training for mentors who signed up for the programme focused on skills such as motivation, building relationships (teacher–learner, family–learner), communication skills, study skills, experiential learning, hope and resilience, reframing and restoring. These were the lessons that first-generation students were able to take back, not only into their homes, but also into their communities, transferring their insights and their learning. In the process, some were able to bridge the gap between their parents' understanding of what happens in higher education. This was part of the feedback received from first-year students who enrolled at UWC in 2008. The benefits of the programme became apparent as students progressed into post-graduate studies but kept the promise of completion in sight for themselves and their families. In some cases, the families learned to let go of their expectations and supported students in aspiring to post-graduate study, especially where financial relief was available in the form of bursaries (University of the Western Cape, 2008).

Conclusion

We acknowledge that South Africa's legislative policies aim to redress the consequences of apartheid education. Progress is being made in the implementation of measures of redress; however, the reality is still far from the ideal. In order to pursue an inclusive diversity, South Africa has to pay attention to a quality foundation in its primary and secondary schooling as a pipeline for its higher

education goals. There are still areas requiring focus to achieve educational goals as espoused by the South African Constitution (1996). The majority population in South Africa – relatively, the least skilled – is no different than the populations of other countries in Africa in terms of resource constraints and student funding. It is for this reason that the acceleration of their access to education and knowledge will give effect to the realisation of a truly diverse society.

That is why South Africa's human capital development strategy, while broadly focused, has to acknowledge the history of exclusion of the majority. The Thuthuka Programme, explained earlier in this paper, is one example of an innovative attempt to ensure exposure for all students to areas that were historically reserved for whites. This includes finding ways to encourage and mentor a wide range of students from diverse backgrounds, languages, classes and educational backgrounds. The challenges of access, diversity, retention and success can be addressed if South Africa continues to seek equitable solutions, and this should, in turn, contribute to enhancing its competitiveness in the global economy. Failure to attend to these pressing priorities will severely affect its capacity to address complex socio-economic realities. The country has no choice but to embrace student access and diversity in higher education.

References

- Badat, S. (2010) *The challenges of transformation in higher education and training institutions in South Africa*, Paper commissioned by the Development Bank of South Africa, at www.dbsa.org/Research/Higher%20Education%20and%20Training/The%20challenges%20of%20transformation%20in%20higher%20education%20and%20training%20institutions%20in%20South%20Africa%20by%20Saleem%20Badat.pdf (accessed: 14 November 2011).
- Benatar, J. (2010) "'Just Admissions': South African Universities and the Question of Racial Preference', *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 24, 2: 258–67.
- Department of Education (2001) *Draft national plan for higher education in South Africa*, Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Department of Higher Education and Training (2009) *Human resource development strategy (HRD-SA) 2010–2030*, Pretoria: DHET, at http://chet.org.za/manual/media/files/chet_hernana_docs/South%20Africa/National/HRDS-SA.pdf (accessed: 11 September 2011).
- Department of Higher Education and Training and the Centre for Education Policy Development (2010) *Report on the stakeholder summit on higher education transformation*, Pretoria: DHET and CEPD, at www.cepd.org.za/files/pictures/Report_Stakeholder_Summit_on_HE_Transformation_2010.pdf (accessed: 14 November 2011).
- European University Association (2010) *Access to success: Fostering trust and exchange between Europe and Africa, Project Compendium*, Brussels: EUA, at www.accesstosuccess-africa.eu/web/images/literature/access%20to%20success%20project%20compendium.pdf (accessed: 14 November 2011).

- Govender, P. (2010) 'UCT urged to scrap race criteria', *Sunday Times Higher Education Opinion Supplement*, 10 May 2011.
- International Education Association of South Africa (2009) 'South African Higher Education: Facts and Figures' in *Study South Africa: Higher Education and Development in South Africa*, Pretoria: IEASA, at www.ieasa.studysa.org/resources/Study_SA/Facts_Figures_section.pdf (accessed: 27 August 2011).
- International Education Association of South Africa (2010) *Study South Africa: The guide to South African higher education*, Pretoria: IEASA.
- Kennedy-Dubourdieu, E. (ed.) (2006) *Race and inequality: World perspectives on affirmative action*, Farnham: Ashgate.
- Letseka, M. and Maile, S. (2008) *High university drop-out rates: A threat to South Africa's future*, Policy brief (March), Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Lloyd, C.B. and Hewett P.C. (2009) *Educational inequalities in the midst of persistent poverty: Diversity across Africa in educational outcomes*, Working Paper, No. 14, New York: New York Population Council.
- Magopeni, N. and Tshiwula, L. (2010) 'The Realities of Dealing with South Africa's Past: A Diversity in Higher Education', Paper presented at the Tenth International Conference on Diversity in Organizations, Communities & Nations, 19–21 July, Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland.
- Mulder, C. (2010) 'The Identification of Blockages and Best Practice in the Production of Professionals: The Thuthuka Model', Presentation made to the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, Johannesburg, 5 November.
- National Commission on Higher Education (1996) *Overview of a new policy framework for higher education transformation*, Pretoria: NCHE, at http://us-cdn.creamermedia.co.za/assets/articles/attachments/04394_highereducationtransformation.pdf (accessed: 11 September 2011).
- Nyaigotti-Chacha, C. (2004) 'Reforming Higher Education in Kenya: Challenges, Lessons and Opportunities', Paper presented at the State University of New York Workshop with the Parliamentary Committee on Education, Science and Technology, Naivasha, Kenya, August 2004, at www.international.ac.uk/resources/Reforming_HE.pdf (accessed: 14 November 2011).
- Permall, L. (2009) 'Peer Mentoring as a Mediating Factor in the First-year Experience', Paper presented at the 30th SAACDHE Conference, Gaborone, Botswana, 14–17 September.
- Sedgwick, R. (2004) 'Institutions of Higher Education in South Africa after the Mergers', *World Education News and Reviews*, 17, 3, at www.wes.org/ewenr/04may/Feature.htm (accessed: 27 August 2011).
- Soudien, C. (2007) 'Diversity and Higher Education in South Africa', Paper presented at the Diversity Conference, University of the Western Cape.
- Southern African Development Community (1997) *Protocol on education and training*, Gaborone, Botswana: SADC, at www.sadc.int/index/browse/page/146 (accessed: 14 November 2011).
- University of the Western Cape (2008) *Brawam-Siswam evaluation report, 2005–2008*, Bellville: University of the Western Cape.

End notes

- ¹ For purposes of clarity only, apartheid classifications are used in this paper, but in no way do the authors recognise the legitimacy of these categories. The term 'black' is used inclusively to refer to people of African coloured and Asian descent.
- ² The view that both primary and secondary education have a pivotal role in preparation for, and widening participation in, tertiary education is supported by Badat (2010), IEASA (2009) and European University Association (2010).
- ³ See www.nsfas.org.za/index.htm (accessed: 14 November 2011).
- ⁴ See www.mapsofworld.com/thematic-maps/worldilliteracy-map.htm (accessed: 27 August 2011).
- ⁵ The Protocol is available at: www.sadc.int/index/browse/page/146 (accessed: 14 November 2011).
- ⁶ See www.saica.co.za (accessed: 14 November 2011).

Copyright of Widening Participation & Lifelong Learning is the property of Open University, Centre for Widening Participation and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.