

Teaching about Economic and Social Inequality

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ABSTRACT South Africa is a country of stark contrasts, with opulence co-existing alongside poverty. Historically the issue of class has been narrowly linked to race, yet in present day South Africa, economic inequality and poverty know no racial boundary. Teachers often struggle to integrate these issues into the curriculum in a meaningful way. South African education has witnessed significant curriculum reform. While some teachers view this as a daunting endeavour, others disturb this assumption and embrace the opportunity and challenge of curriculum development especially as it relates to addressing the nation's transformation agenda. This paper focuses on the experiences of a novice primary school economics teacher as she engaged with the challenge of curriculum development in economics. It examines how a teacher's cultural capital influenced her ability to interpret and enact the economics curriculum in ways that offer meaningful opportunities to explore issues of economic and social inequality through innovative pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

There is much consternation about South Africa's progress with regard to achieving economic and social equality. The recent Marikana tragedy (2012) in which 34 mine-workers was killed during labour unrest is a reflection of the unevenness and slow pace of socio-economic progress in South Africa. Pillay (2013: 1) describes this as a 'dream deferred' urging us to reflect on the tragedies of racial capitalism, organised labour, and the ruling African National Congress. Daniels (2013: 12) reminds us that in post-apartheid South Africa, "(inequality may have deracialised to some extent but it remains extreme and the vast majority of the population... inhabit a world of poverty)". There is much debate as to how this chronic crisis may be resolved. Current neoliberal economic policies that widen the gap between wages and profit's share of the nation's surplus should make way for what Forslund (2013) terms an 'economic revolution' aimed at eliminating the low-wage regime and poverty in South Africa. There certainly is a need for robust debate; the issue that this paper takes up is the extent to which this debate can be infused into the school curriculum given the complexity and sensitivities that exist with regard to issues of race and class.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study derive from the problem statement indicated above. This paper

thus reports on the extent to which issues of economic and social inequality can be integrated into the EMS curriculum with a view to developing insights into content and conceptual depth when such integration takes place.

Literature and Key Concepts

In the discussion that follows, a description and analysis of the nature of teacher learning that occurred for one of the participant is presented. Moreover, particular attention will be focussed on how the social issues of economic and social inequality were addressed by this EMS teacher.

The dilemma of teaching about economic and social inequality in a South African society is aptly captured in the following quotation by Jonathan Jansen a leading academic and post-conflict education activist (Jansen 2009: 215).

"The problem with South Africa before and after apartheid is that we insist on collapsing race and economics into the same face; whites are rich and privileged and blacks are poor and underserved. This may be true of blunt averages as a national measure of status, but it conceals the thousands and thousands of poor whites and the struggling classes among them who barely make it. Apartheid was as much a racial system of oppression as it was a capitalist system of exploitation; among the victors the nationalists want us to believe only the former, and the Marxists only the latter. But it was both..."

The argument presented points to the essentialised notions of race and class that South Africans have to deal with. While it is not unusual to expect such dichotomised views given our history, the challenge for South African society and education in particular is to engage with such issues so as to disrupt the above mindsets. How then can such issues be integrated into school curricula in ways that are constructive and productive? For teachers of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) in South African schools, there are innumerable rich spaces to use the content of the EMS subject area to explore such phenomena as it plays out in the worlds which both they (teachers) and their learners inhabit. Adopting such a potentially controversial curriculum objective has to necessarily be carefully managed. Such pedagogical manoeuvrings have to be handled with sensitivity and care and have to be grounded in sound educational theory as Davies and Dunhill (2006: 62) caution that "...when curricular are designed to equip students with a multi-disciplinary range of skills and ideas students and teachers find themselves wandering rather aimlessly amidst an ill-defined landscape of ill-fitting ideas". This issue is particularly pertinent to school curriculum policy in South Africa. Teachers are faced with the challenge of teaching disciplinary (content) knowledge that has to be embedded in a social context that will enable their students to make better sense of their daily lives. However, in attempting to achieve this end, teachers when designing their curricular have to engage in disciplinary boundary crossing.

In a post-conflict era, teachers are expected to play multiple roles, namely, to support the effort to face the past based on evidence, to create a safe environment for discussion and dialogue with controversial issues, to actively remember the past, and to help learners to connect a traumatic past with their current lives in a manner that will not entrench divisions (Murphy 2009: 158-168). Post-conflict pedagogy (Jansen 2009: 107-108) and a pedagogy of forgiveness (Waghid 2005: 745-748) have particular relevance for a South African context. Similarly, the notion of 'mutual vulnerability' as a humanising pedagogy has resonance with this type of work (Keet 2009: 109-119). Elbaz-Luwisch (2009: 169-176) reminds us of the need to be acutely aware of polarization that may occur when dialogue degenerates into unproductive argument. Reconcilia-

tion pedagogies by their very nature have an intrinsic social justice agenda that foreground the need to reconcile and not alienate.

The teaching of the Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) subject area presents a dual challenge, namely, establishing the depth at which to pitch new content as well as embracing the concept of integration. The peculiar genesis of EMS means that it draws from related but also somewhat disparate disciplines Accounting, Economics, Management and Entrepreneurship. Teachers have to work out the depth to which they wish to pursue disciplinary knowledge in each of these disciplines and which discipline gets foregrounded in the EMS curricular they develop. At the same time, the curriculum advocates as a fundamental principle, integration across different school subjects. Having said this however, teachers of EMS who embrace the social nature of the subject area, and who engage in considered integration, are likely to develop meaningful learning experiences for their learners.

In the discussion and analysis that follows later, we see how a novice EMS teacher, involved in an EMS continuing professional development (CPD) project, was able to negotiate these issues as she engaged with developing the EMS curriculum. The objective of this paper then is to examine how issues of social and economic inequality may be addressed via the EMS curriculum. This paper will engage with data obtained from one participant in a development programme by focussing on the kinds of capital (Bourdieu 1986: 241-258) that she possessed that led her to approach her teaching in the way she did. The reason for selecting this particular participant was that she displayed significant learning in all four of Wenger's categories of learning (Wenger 1999: 7). Furthermore, the data set of this particular participant was selected because it provided the richest and instances of how a teacher, by virtue of a particular biography was able to apply innovative pedagogy to interpret and implement the EMS curriculum in a manner that proceeded beyond simply teaching the content of economics, an approach that was nuanced with an integration of social and economic inequality.

As a prelude to the discussion on this selected participant's involvement in the EMS teacher development project, it is necessary to provide a brief background to the origins and

the various disciplinary strands that shaped the emergence of this subject, namely, EMS. EMS, an interdisciplinary subject area is essentially a uniquely South African formulation that draws mainly on the field of economics and includes elements of the fields of accounting, management and entrepreneurship. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS) Statement (Department of Education 2012: 4) defines the EMS subject area as follows:

The Economic and Management Sciences subject area deals with the efficient and effective use of different types of private, public or collective resources in satisfying people's needs and wants, while reflecting critically on the impact of resource exploitation on the environment and on people.

The subject Economic and Management Sciences deals with the efficient and effective use of different types of private, public or collective resources to satisfy people's needs and wants. It reflects critically on the impact of resource exploitation on the environment and on people. It also deals with effective management of scarce resources in order to maximise profit (Department of Education 2012: 8). It aims to equip learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to adapt, participate and survive in an economically complex society and aims to promote productivity, social justice and environmental sustainability. Some of the unique features of the subject area include the study of the economic problem, the economic cycle, reconstruction, sustainable growth and development, the economic environment, leadership and management, entrepreneurship and financial and consumer knowledge and skills. These are wide ranging fields of study and serves to emphasise the point made earlier that new EMS subject area has its roots in discipline of Economics and it also draws on elements of related disciplines. The literature on Economics teaching advocates that because problem solving or decision-making is a central feature of Economics, teachers have to create learning experiences that will help pupils to develop knowledge and skills that will enable them to analyse and discuss problems in an Economics way (Becker 2001: 269-279; Cole 1993: 79-84; Elliot 2003: 80-86; Greenlaw 2003: 61-70). Knowledge of Economics subject matter and its associated discourse as well as the pedagogy associated with the discipline places a unique set of demands on the new EMS teacher.

The challenge in this field of teacher development is to develop programmes that will induct EMS teachers into the deeper structure of the discipline.

This paper draws on elements of three social theories: a Wenger's theory of learning in a community of practice (Wenger 1999: 1-48); b Bourdieu's theory of social practice (Bourdieu 1986: 241-258), and Yosso's theory of community cultural capital (Yosso 2005: 69-91). According to Wenger's framework, an individual's learning in a community of practice can be analysed in terms of four components that make up the concept of learning in a community of practice; namely, meaning, practice, identity and community. The focus of Wenger's theory of learning is on 'learning as participation', that is, being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities (Wenger 1999: 1-48). He posits the following deeply interconnected and integrated elements of a social theory of learning:

Meaning: a way of talking about our (changing ability – individually and collectively – to experience our life and the world as meaningful.

Practice: a way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action.

Community: a way of talking about social configurations in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and our participation is recognizable as competence.

Identity: a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities (Wenger 1999: 5).

The purposes of a community of practice are for expanding and exchanging knowledge and the development of individual capabilities. People participate through dialogue and sharing of knowledge about their common practices. It is through this participation that members develop deeper understandings (Wenger 2002: 4-36). Using this framework, it was possible to discern significant changes in teachers' learning as a result of participation in the programme. However, Wenger's work was somewhat limiting in its ability to provide a framework to understand why individual teachers participated in the programme in the ways in which they did and it is for this reason that Bourdieu's concepts of field, habi-

tus and capital were employed to analyse difference in teacher participation and learning (Bourdieu 1992: 37-92). According to Bourdieu, habitus refers to a system of dispositions that an individual develops in response to the conditions or contexts that they experience. Field represents the social arena, structured in terms of power relations within which individuals manoeuvre and struggle in their pursuit of desirable resources. An individual's ability to participate is influenced by the economic, cultural and social capital that they possess. Economic capital refers to the material goods and resources that an individual may possess, while social capital constitutes the sum of actual or virtual resources that accrue to an individual as a result of having a network of relationships. Cultural capital is made up of embodied capital (an individual's knowledge, skills and dispositions); objectified capital (cultural goods, texts and material objects) that are physically transmissible to others and institutional capital (academic qualifications), awards, professional certificates and credentials (Bourdieu 1992: 37-92).

In an attempt to avoid a deficit framing by asserting that some individuals are culturally rich and others are culturally poor, Yosso's model of community cultural wealth has currency. Yosso argues that an individual's cultural capital is a function of that individual's community cultural capital. Community cultural capital is shaped by various other forms of capital including, linguistic capital, resistant capital, aspirational capital, familial capital and navigational capital (Yosso 2006: 69-91). Aspirational capital refers to the ability to develop resiliency, that is, to maintain hopes and dreams even in the face of real or perceived barriers. Linguistic capital is the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in multiple languages. Familial capital entails knowledge that develops a broader understanding of kinship, and a sense of community history and memory. Navigational capital comprises skills of manoeuvring through hostile social institutions and to reflect and refine navigational skills and to exercise agency within institutional constraints. Resistant capital is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination and refers to knowledge acquired through oppositional behaviour that challenges inequality and teaches individuals to value themselves within structures of inequality (Yosso 2005: 69-91).

In the analysis that follows later, the researcher use the concepts offered by these theorists to

analyse how and why the selected research participant experienced learning in the way she did.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study was informed by a symbolic interactionist perspective which entails interpretative research that is concerned with how people see things and how they construct their meanings (Woods 1996: 72). Contextual factors play an important role in influencing teachers and teacher learning and it is for this reason that a qualitative research study was considered to be most appropriate (Walford 2001: 66). Given that the focus of the larger study was on the nature of teacher learning in a community of practice, a qualitative approach that engaged the tenets of interactionist ethnography was employed as it allowed the researcher to capture the processes that were unfolding. It also served to construct rich understandings of contextual factors that influenced teacher learning. While the research study spanned a sixteen month period, the continuing professional development programme continues to operate. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers; one at the commencement of the programme, one approximately halfway through the programme and a final interview. Two EMS lesson observations were conducted, with the first one taking place early in the programme and the second, nine months into the programme. Detailed field notes of each participating school were recorded in order to develop a thick description of the context within which participating teachers were working. Detailed observation notes of teachers' participation in the monthly teacher development workshops were recorded. As the project progressed relationships of trust began to develop between the teachers and the researcher thereby allowing for the negotiation of video recordings of both lesson and workshop observations. Large quantities of rich, textured data were gathered over the sixteen month period. An inductive process of open coding was used to analyse the data (Best 2006: 252-254).

OBSERVATIONS

An Analysis of a Teacher's Experience of Engaging with the EMS Curriculum

Extracts from initial and final interviews, lesson observation reports and the researcher's

reflective journal are used to develop the following narrative vignette:

Debbie a teacher in her late thirties was an honours graduate who had been teaching at her school for fifteen years. Many of her pupils came from very poor homes and often came to school without the basic necessities. She said that the curriculum required that pupils have at least the bare necessities, and this created a problem with the poorer children who did not have their own rulers, glue or scissors. Debbie had confidence in her school management team. She regarded them as 'strong' and 'excellent', and supportive of the teachers at the school. Although class sizes were large, teachers were able to cope because of the support they received from school management. Debbie's school was located in a township in the Greater Durban area. It serviced children from a poor socio-economic area. High unemployment and poverty manifested itself in numerous social problems which teachers had to contend with on a daily basis. The principal and the management team had a tight rein on the functioning of the school. Teachers were expected to submit their record books (preparation files, assessment files, daily planners and pupils' books to management for scrutiny on a weekly basis. Curriculum planning took place well in advance. Term plans for forthcoming terms had to be submitted to the management team for approval. The principal placed much emphasis on maintaining a good work ethic and accountability on the part of both teachers and pupils.

In the initial interview Debbie described her knowledge of EMS as follows:

Well, I'll say good but I'm still trying to get, you know, I'm still learning because it's a fairly new subject area. So I won't say that it's excellent and I'm still reading, trying to get familiar with the subject matter... I have to do a lot of my own reading and learning before I plan the lesson and actually teach.

From the above extract we see that the teacher recognised her shortcomings by acknowledging that she was in the process of becoming competent with regard to the subject content in EMS. In order to achieve this she made a concerted effort to study the content before she attempted to teach this to her class. She was fairly confident that she could learn the new content. Her positive disposition towards embracing new EMS knowledge can be attributed to the fact that she was an Honours graduate who was con-

templating Masters study. Her history of ongoing learning certainly helped this disposition.

In the final interview, after eight months of exposure to the programme, Debbie had the following to say about her changed classroom practice. From the transcripts it becomes evident that Debbie's content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge had changed significantly. She also ascribed her development to increased participation in the teacher community and the support of the community members. In response to a question regarding her changing classroom practice, Debbie made the following comment:

Debbie: Oh, I've really begun to look at my teaching differently. I tell you, for the past 15 years, I've basically been working on my own. Only in my first year, ... that was the only time that anyone had really helped me with my teaching. Although we had subject meetings, at the end of the day, you do your own thing, you basically struggle away on your own. I think, in the workshops, listening to how others approach topics, and all that stuff we did on group work, questioning and assessment really helped me look at my teaching differently now. There's so much, there's so much more now, so many different ideas and ways, you know. Like that handout on using research as a teaching tool and also the problem solving method, I thought they were excellent, really good. I'm getting brave now, I'm trying them out. It's not easy, lot of prep but it's making my teaching much more enjoyable.

In the above extract the teacher reflects on how her teaching enterprise had been largely an individual pursuit. Apart from the occasion when she was evaluated as an apprentice teacher, in her first year of teaching she had experienced limited professional development support at the micro, classroom level. Even though school subject committee meetings had taken place in the past, teaching was still very much a private matter that individual teachers had to negotiate themselves, an issue Delamont describes as the 'privacy' of the teacher's role, suggesting that classrooms are essentially private places. (Delamont 2002: 102). Debbie noted, however, that the different pedagogical issues discussed in the teacher workshops had helped her approach her teaching differently, and that she had become 'brave' and was beginning to experiment with different pedagogical strategies.

In response to how her knowledge of EMS had changed, Debbie described her learning in the following way:

I never did commerce at school or on campus (meaning university. I think I should have.

So many things are starting to make so much more sense to me now. You know I love to read, but I never really read like economic news, it didn't appeal to me. Now when I open the newspaper, I look for the articles that talk about business and the economy, like the...reading of the budget, trade. I even explain to my husband why the petrol price goes up every month (laughs. My knowledge of how the economy works, the cycle, what's inflation, exchange rates ... I can talk about all of this now. When teachers complain about paying taxes and where's the money going, I tell them to look at the charts we (meaning her class made on my classroom wall. So what I'm saying is I'm learning a lot and I want to learn more for myself as well.

Of the participating teachers in the programme, Debbie stood out as the participant who had made the most significant shift in terms of developing the content knowledge of the EMS subject area. She focussed and determined to develop and deepening her understanding of economic phenomena. She actively participated by posing questions, offering advice and taking responsibility for others learning. Business media began to make new sense to Debbie. Having developed sufficient knowledge, she was able to offer rich conceptual explanations of movements in the fuel price and interest rates. This improved understanding also applied to more complex concepts like the consumer price index and the working of the economic cycle. Debbie's final comment reflects a profound sense of ongoing personal advancement and learning as it suggests that she was keen to acquire more knowledge about EMS content knowledge not only to be able to teach the subject area, but for her own personal development.

From the above analysis of Debbie, it is clear that significant learning had occurred for Debbie. In terms of Wenger's model of learning in a community of practice, we see that Debbie had in fact experienced significant change in her meaning (learning as experience, her practice (learning as doing, identity (learning as becoming and community (learning as participation (Wenger 1999: 38).

The nature and extent of the learning was, however, different for the participating teachers. Wenger's framework is somewhat benign as it does not provide an adequate conceptual framework with which to understand why Debbie's participation happened in the way it did (Graven 2004: 117-211, 2003: 185-194). Debbie's career trajectory and history of ongoing reading and study allowed her to embrace the new EMS subject area with well-developed skills. Her cultural capital (Bourdieu 1992: 37-92), that is her disposition and way of thinking, knowledge, skills, attitudes (high expectations and post graduate education (institutional capital augured well for her to 'succeed' and therefore benefit in profound ways in the teacher community. She had developed an intrinsic desire to read and broaden her knowledge and regularly used the forum to engage with other teachers on issues that were important to her. As far as Debbie's personal and professional life was concerned, she appeared relatively settled and secure in her current position. She was financially stable, owning her own home and vehicle (Economic capital). She was an established languages teacher and belonged to the languages committee. Her school appeared to be highly organised with quality assurance mechanisms in place that made Debbie accountable to school management for all aspects of her professional work. Debbie accepted this as part of what was required of her. This social capital (Bourdieu 1992: 37-92) as represented by her access to resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support, enhanced her potential to move from peripheral to full membership of the teacher community. Debbie was thus able to use her habitus to successfully negotiate the social arena of the project and the teaching and learning of Economic and Management Sciences at her school.

However, in the discussion that follows, we see that Debbie did more; she began to extend and enhance the teaching of EMS by moving beyond simply teaching EMS as if it were a neutral discipline. She began to bring to the fore the strong social character of EMS by addressing issues of social and economic inequality through the teaching of EMS. Using Yosso's notion of community cultural wealth (Yosso 2005: 69-91), we explore how Debbie's community cultural capital enabled her to use music (lyrics of song to begin to raise awareness amongst her pupils of issues of social and economic inequality in

South Africa and how they came to be. In the extract that follows, we see how Debbie was able to use the lyrics of a popular song (about apartheid South Africa released in the eighties, to engage her pupils in a discussion on the role of the government in addressing the needs of its citizens.

First extract from Debbie's lesson observation/transcript:

Debbie turned up the volume to the Eddie Grant song "Gimme hope Joanna". Most pupils appeared to be very familiar with this song (popular amongst many South Africans. Pupils were allowed to read the transcript of the song as it played. Debbie ... reminded them to think about the questions she posed at the bottom of the transcript. After the music had stopped, she divided the class into groups of four to six pupils - instructed them to try to answer the questions. Debbie acceded to a request to play the song softly while pupils engaged with the task of answering the questions. Questions on the worksheet included:

Who is the singer?

What is the name of the song?

In which year was this song first released and became a big hit?

Who were the few people that Joanna was making happy?

Who or what do you think is Joanna?

What do you think the singer is singing about?

Is the singer correct in saying that Joanna did not care about the rest of the people?

Who is the preacher who works for Jesus? Which archbishop is he referring to?

What does he mean when he says "Sneaking across all your neighbours' borders?"

What kind of 'fun' was he referring to?

Why do you think the singer chose to sing about these problems?

How do you think the problems created by Joanna could be solved? Do you think that there is a need for the new government to solve some of these problems?

The first three questions did not present a serious challenge to the class as Debbie circulated the CD cover amongst the groups. From question four onwards; much intense and animated discussion between pupils began to take place – it was a revelation to many pupils who Joanna actually was – sought confirmation from Debbie.

It was evident that some pupils were more aware of South Africa's apartheid history and its consequences than others. Most children had heard the song, knew a few sing-a-long lines of the chorus but had previously not paid attention to the words. Pupils expressed amazement that it was more than a 'pop' song and that it was in fact a song about South African politics and that the singer's reference to Joanna was actually a reference to the former apartheid government that ruled South Africa at the time when this song gained popularity. Some pupils indicated that their parents liked the song but were unsure if they (parents really understood the meaning and what the singer was singing about. At least two pupils had heard interpretations of the song previously but admitted that they had not given it serious thought.

Debbie was able to use her background and experience to provide a discussion of the South African political landscape before and after 1994. She was able to use her community cultural capital, more especially her resistant capital (Yosso 2005: 69-91) to help her pupils make sense of how inequality had played itself out in South Africa. She drew pupils into a discussion as to whether the status quo ought to have remained after 1994. At first pupils could not understand the point she was making. She went back to the last question on the worksheet, which questioned whether the state had a responsibility or duty to change the way in which the country's financial resources were distributed.

Second extract from Debbie's lesson observation/transcript:

Some pupils felt that government should not be involved in the economy. Many were quite vocal about how they perceived the state's role – commented on fraud and unnecessary spending (president's new jet – said that their parents were unhappy with crime and many people were unemployed. Some pupils were quite adamant that the government was not doing enough for the poor – compared schools and residential areas etc. At first Debbie attempted to answer questions and respond to issues that pupils posed. She then resorted to writing key issues on the board and allowed pupils to continue to voice their opinions on the role of the state. In the discussion of questions six and seven, pupils appeared to accept and understand that certain groups of people had received special privileges under the old government and that a similar situation is emerging in the new context.

For question eleven, some pupils agreed that the state had to play a role but were quick to point out that they felt that the state was not doing enough and that things were getting worse. One pupil mentioned that he knew of a family who was leaving the country because they were unhappy in South Africa. Debbie asked pupils to think about whether things would improve if the government did nothing at all – did not take discussion on the issue at that point.

Written task one: Write a letter to your local newspaper. In your letter describe some of the problems South Africans experience and whether you think the government is doing enough to solve these problems. Explain what you think the government should be doing.

Written task two: As the spokesperson for the government, write a good reply to the above letter.

In the discussions that followed, Debbie drew pupils' attention to key economic concepts of scarcity, choice and opportunity cost and related these to the economic problem. A discussion of the choices that the current government had to make and the consequences of such choices ensued. Pupils began to argue for alternative ranking of priorities for government spending with varying opinions on how to rank welfare and social security, education, health, housing etc.

In the above lesson, Debbie introduced and consolidated several economic concepts, such as 'scarcity', 'choice', 'needs', 'wants', distribution of resources, inequality and the RDP (the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme). Pupils were introduced to the role of the government in the economy. In post lesson discussions, she said that she had planned to engage pupils in a discussion of the scarcity problem that the government faced by reviewing how financial resources were distributed in the national budget. Debbie had shown initiative and had read and explored commerce material over and above the material that was available from the teacher programme. She had begun to actively seek out economic information. Assimilating economic knowledge on a daily basis for personal growth had become a phenomenon of Debbie's learning. Of particular significance was that Debbie had developed the ability to access her own rich cultural experience and make this relevant to the her pupils in a way that addressed EMS concepts and terminology as well as is-

ssues of social and economic inequality. She was able to relate the broad social goals of an economy and managed a useful discussion on the tradeoffs that were likely to occur when different social goals were prioritised.

DISCUSSION

From the analysis above, it can be inferred that collaborative endeavours that involve teachers at a local context in which teachers take ownership of determining curriculum and teaching materials as it relates to engaging learners with issues of economic and social inequality can prove to produce positive classroom outcomes. This is supported by Henning who posits that

Continuing professional development programmes for teachers should be context-specific that allow teachers to work collaboratively towards solving pedagogical problems as it relates to the teaching of issues of social justice (Henning 2013).

It is clear that the teacher in the study being reported on had an inclination towards exploring social justice issues in her classroom and that it is crucial to arouse and sustain this kind of inclination. Mills concurs that dispositions of teachers towards engaging social justice issues and diversity in their classrooms are likely to change depending on the school contexts teachers find themselves in (Mills 2012). It suggests that continued mentorship especially by mentors with strong social justice dispositions is likely to sustain the social justice agenda in classrooms.

A further observation is that teachers are likely to struggle with establishing the extent to which subject content and social justice issues take precedence in any lesson. An over-emphasis on social justice issues may be at the expense of deep conceptual development in the discipline. Garii and Appova remind us that when social justice issues are integrated into the teaching of content subjects like mathematics, novice teachers are likely to struggle to find a balance between focussing on Mathematics or on social justice issues (Garii and Appova 2013).

CONCLUSION

Although EMS, a relatively new subject area, is still finding its place within the school curriculum, it is clear that it holds much potential as a

means to address social and economic issues. Although the subject area draws on a range of existing disciplines like economics, accounting, entrepreneurship and business management, it readily lends itself to pedagogy that embeds social issues into the teaching of disciplinary knowledge. The paper described and analysed how a teacher engaged in and responded to a continuing professional development programme that tried to create the conditions for learning. It showed how this novice EMS teacher embraced the challenge of curriculum development, teaching and learning in EMS. It argues that teachers can tap into their cultural capitals to engage the issues of economic and social inequality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching about sensitive issues of economic and social inequality has to be handled with utmost care. Teachers have to be acutely aware of their own biases and how this may influence the messages both overt and hidden that they may transmit. In developing and implementing a curriculum with social issues on the agenda, requires a fairly sophisticated pedagogue that has the meta-cognitive competence to fashion such learning experiences that reconciliation and post-conflict pedagogies alert us to. Failure to take the necessary care in developing and enacting the pedagogical encounter can be counterproductive if such pedagogical experimentation only serves to reinforce existing uncontested notions of race and class and poverty. Also of importance is the tension between actual subject content loading and the loading of social issues in the pedagogical endeavour. If the endeavour tilts towards an overload of social issues then disciplinary content knowledge is likely to suffer. A further recommendation is that continuing professional development of teachers as it relates to teaching about economic and social inequality should be situated in local contexts where teachers collaboratively explore content, pedagogy and curriculum materials.

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