

Educational exclusion and inclusion: Key debates and issues

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Abstract

Educational inclusion and exclusion are primary concerns for governments aiming to advance their societies and foster fuller participation of their citizens. The concepts are framed by a global rhetoric of social inclusion and exclusion that does not necessarily address issues of poverty or the tensions between growth and equity. This article highlights three major lines of critique of the concepts of inclusion and exclusion, arguing that there are no uniform solutions for all citizens due to inequalities, that exclusion and inclusion are not opposing terms, and that inequities have to be understood in their entirety before the concepts become helpful. Policy concerns of educational inclusion are explored. The article proposes pivotal areas around which forms of exclusion are enacted and considers educational policy in respect of specific areas of focus viz. access and governance that will allow governments to promote equity alongside its concerns for growth. It is suggested that without rigorous application of the concepts of educational inclusion and exclusion, actors may overlook the ways in which superficial or nominal forms of inclusion may in fact foster historic and new forms of exclusion.

Introduction

This article examines the concepts of social exclusion and inclusion from an equity and justice framework. It is undertaken as part of a research process funded by the Department for International Education (DFID), which aims to consider educational exclusion and inclusion in South Africa and India.¹ The article seeks to examine the concepts with reference to their usage in the South.² It further aims to interrogate the concepts, given their prominence in more developed countries such as the UK, which has focused on establishing a Social Exclusion Unit as a key agency for tackling inequity. The following discussion seeks to present a synthesis of theory around social inclusion and exclusion, theories around race, gender and class and inequality/inequity; and finally it seeks to draw out policy lessons and recommendations. A key challenge noted in using the concept of social exclusion is to determine whether indeed it adds value to understandings of poverty (De Haan, 2000).

¹ See Sayed & Soudien, 2003; Sayed, Soudien & Carrim, 2003.

² For the purposes of this paper, the South is used as a rubric for 'developing' countries and is understood to include both India and South Africa. Thus it is not used strictly in its geographical sense. Whilst the term 'developing' poses its own problems, this discussion is not undertaken here.

The article is constructed in three parts. The first part discusses the concepts of social inclusion and social exclusion with a view to understanding the appropriateness of their usage in the South. The second part considers these concepts with special reference to education: the concepts of educational inclusion and exclusion are introduced and, once again, discussed in relation to the South. The third and final part maps out some key policy issues that are crucial to understanding the utility of the concepts.

Social exclusion and social inclusion: meanings and approaches

A literature review of the field suggests an absence of singular understandings or definitions of inclusion and exclusion. Indeed, it is argued that such understandings are or ought to be socially constructed and rooted (De Haan, 2000). Instead, there appears to be a rich debate surrounding the nature of the concept and its usefulness to the South. Before approaching this discussion, it is perhaps instructive to consider the dictionary definitions of the concepts as a means of orientation.

The Reader's Digest Universal Dictionary defines the concepts of inclusion and exclusion as follows:

Inclusion: 1. The act of including or the state of being included; 2. Something included.

Include: 1. To have as a part or member; be made up of, at least in part; contain; 2. To contain as a minor or secondary element; 3. To cause to be a part of something; consider with or put into a group, class, or total.

Exclusion: 1. The act of excluding; reject; 2. the state of being excluded.

Exclude: 1. To prevent or keep from entering a place, group, or the like; bar; reject; 2. To avoid noticing or consider; leave out; disregard; 3. To eject; expel.

Such definitions do not identify who is being included or excluded, who is doing the including or excluding, into what and from what people are being included and excluded, and who declares or decides that people are branded 'excluded'. All of these questions arise in the literature (Anderson & Collins, 1998; Betts, 2001; De Haan, 2000; McCarthy, 1997; O'Brien *et al.*, 1997; Slee, 2001) and will be dealt with in the course of the following discussion.

The concepts clearly are juxtaposed in that social inclusion of certain persons or groups implies exclusion of others. Yet it is simplistic to assume that social inclusion and social exclusion are merely opposing terms. Such usage would fail to account for the processes through which people become either excluded or included, nor does it explain who determines the status of inclusion and exclusion. As Kabeer explains:

The intersecting nature of different forms of exclusion and inclusion results in the segmentation of society, and in clusters of advantage and disadvantage, rather than in a simple dichotomy between inclusion and exclusion. There are various ways in which these segments can be characterised. For instance, we can think in terms of privileged inclusion, secondary inclusion, adverse incorporation or problematic inclusion, self-exclusion and 'hard-core' exclusion (Kabeer, 2000, 87).

This notion of 'shades' of inclusion allows for an understanding of how 'social inclusion' can in fact further perpetuate or underline disadvantage. There are various examples of this. For instance, historical research in Africa has shown that processes of inclusion are often problematic: "individuals and communities in Africa had been incorporated into the broader economy and society ... what was problematic was their terms of incorporation" (International Labour Organisation, 1994).

It would appear that inclusion and exclusion are not simply bipolar concepts. The concept of inclusion in itself presents problems of co-option and control and does not imply that people are not excluded. The act of inclusion begs the question of what the included have become included in, on whose terms, and what new exclusions the act of inclusion presents for them.

One approach in developing the usefulness of the concept is that of Sparkes who offers the following definition of social exclusion, recognising that some view the concept merely as a new way of referring to existing concepts such as poverty and unemployment:

social exclusion is a process of long term non-participation in the economic, civic and social norms that integrate and govern the society in which an individual resides (Burchardt *et al.*, 1998). It is conceptually differentiated from poverty and deprivation, primarily by having a focus on the process of disengagement. Indeed, tracing this process from source to outcome emerges as a key issue (Room, 1995), and as a result social exclusion perspectives recognise the dynamism of individuals' trajectories over time. In addition, the term moves the unit of analysis from the individual to socially structured disadvantage (Sparkes, 1999, 1).

This definition, located in an educational context, reverberates with the thrust of others below. It recognises social exclusion as a process, as linked to but differentiated from poverty, and as a concept affecting groups of people.

A review of the concepts of educational exclusion and inclusion suggests that there are three lines of critique underlying much of the debate. **First** is the critique of the concepts as assuming a 'one size fits all' approach (De Haan, 2000, 10). This approach assumes that social inequality can be overcome by providing the same opportunities equally for all citizens. Whilst this would go a long way towards correcting historic imbalances and injustices, it is short-sighted. A discussion below on social exclusion, equality and equity shows the challenge of dealing with many varied requirements. One size does not fit all because citizens do not arise from positions of social, economic and political equality. This approach also tends to lump inequalities together so that gender problems are dealt with in the same way as racial problems. Slee (2001, 117) takes this further, "most complex of all is the tension between the rejection of the 'one size fits all' approach to schooling (i.e. differentiation) and a potential drift into new segregations". In other words, in an attempt to afford communities of learners the opportunity to explore and celebrate their common denominators,³ differential programmes may in fact foster new forms of segregation and consequently new discriminations. Or according to Soudien (1998, 127) "schools share many generic features, they are marked by differences and tensions emanating from a variety of social causes".

It appears that 'common denominators' alone may not allow for easy categorisation of schools. Schools, which apparently share many common features, may equally — and will inevitably — be significantly different. This implies that educational policy, which by its nature is generic, needs to provide an architecture which can be applied and made practicable in a variety of settings and contexts.

A **second** line of critique that can be discerned is that of 'normalisation' in that the usage of these concepts in the literature comes with the strong normative stance that inclusion is by definition good and exclusion, similarly so, is bad. Thus, the end of inclusion policies is to overcome exclusion: the triumph of good over bad, as it were. Whilst this may be laudable, it fails to recognise the possibility that inclusive policies may result in new forms of exclusion. Education, for example, is both a means of social mobility and access and a means of social selection. Education includes inasmuch as it excludes.

The normative model operates on the principle of 'normalisation' in which groups, be they kinship groups, classes, structures or whatever, are defined and constituted (socially) in

³ Slee cites the work of Felicity Armstrong in noting that instances of special education may indeed allow learners to feel a great deal more 'included' and whole than regular education. Armstrong interviewed a deputy head teacher at a special school who said that students find affinity with other students when they feel a sense of common identity and a sense of community and sharing. These students may not experience this in a school in which their disability singles them out and sets them apart from other students (Slee, 2001, 114).

their 'ideal' forms, and, relative to them, *other* groups, communities, and individuals are identified and invariably positioned. Out of this, amongst other things, the perception is generated that certain groups lack access or entitlements to certain services. Hence, as a consequence, such groups, communities, and individuals need to be targeted for special inclusive measures which would overcome their exclusion. Such an approach often ignores the existing and complex social relations in society, which give rise to and perpetuate inequities. It fails to take into account the power relations (economic, social and epistemological) within society and ends up conserving existing political conditions.

In normalising individuals and groups the concepts hide differences between and within groups, communities and individuals in that it ignores 'who' is being included or excluded. Thus, what are ignored are, *inter alia*, the different (and unequal) racial, gender, and ethnic positioning of groups, communities, and individuals. The tendency here is also to assume a pathology of individual and group failure.

Furthermore, a normalising approach is rooted in the belief that people feel deprived and that they wish to be included. Citizens may consciously choose to exclude themselves from certain processes and opt to occupy alternative spaces (Robinson Pant, 2000). Rogers supports this view by arguing that the dichotomous discourse of inclusion and exclusion tends to create the excluded as 'other' and sees the only movement occurring from excluded to included. Nivedita Monga's example of 'deprived' women in India participating in the system echoes this point:

... people without the commodified 'skills' advocated by the state are still participating socially, they themselves are subverting the dominant discourses, rather than being co-opted by them, whether these be the discourses of social inclusion/exclusion, oppression or liberation, or the formalisation/informalisation of the South African case (Betts, 2000, 10).

Thus, one of the striking difficulties with the concept of social exclusion is its shortcoming in understanding inequity and the different sources of inequity in society. This raises the final line of critique.

Third, with respect to equity the concept of social exclusion fails to offer a useful analysis of the different sources of **inequity** in society and their interrelationships. The discourse of educational exclusion and inclusion fails to specify the relationships between race, class, gender, and other forms of difference and inequity in society, and to show how these articulate with each other. Various theorists have advocated different versions of the complex interrelationships between race, class, and gender. Some authors forward the 'parallelism' framework in which race, class, and gender interact with three spheres of societal activity (economic, cultural, and political). This they call a relational framework. Others forward a cumulative, linear, hierarchical framework in which, for example, gender, race, and class add up to the 'triple oppression' of women. Whilst none of the frame-works is incorrect, they do not, as McCarthy (1999, 547) notes, capture the 'mix of contingencies, interests, needs, differential assets, and capacities in local settings such as schools'.

In this regard, recent work has challenged the notion of the primacy of any one category of injustice over and above others and understood the articulation between race, class and gender in rendering injustices (McCarthy, 1997; Kabeer, 2000; Soudien, 1998; Anderson & Collins, 1998). Two approaches in particular have been useful in this regard. The first is that of McCarthy who proposes a 'non-synchronous theory of race relations'. Drawing on the work of Hicks he advances the position that, "individuals or groups, in their relation to economic, political and cultural institutions such as schools, do *not* share identical consciousness and express the same interests, needs or desires 'at the same point in time' " (Hicks, 1981 in McCarthy, 1997, 547). Similar to this is the interlocking model (Anderson & Collins, 1998, 3), which proposes that factors of race, gender, class, region, language, etc. all intersect in ways that produce unique and peculiar experiences. It suggests further that these factors can-

not be placed on a two-dimensional grid, which simply seeks the intersection of two of the categories. Such a grid would merely tell of the dual effect of two of these categories on a number of groups but nothing more. Instead it appears that understandings of these experiences of deprivation are qualitative and at least multi-dimensional⁴ as earlier discussed. This has clear implications for policy development because of the inability to always quantify measures of development (see Sayed & Soudien, 2003, for a further development of this argument).

The fact that there is a dominant articulating principle of conflict or inequality does not or should not undermine the prevalence of other levels of injustice. It simply highlights that the primary form of political posturing may be around the articulating principle. The importance of this for the work of understanding the value of the concepts of inclusion and exclusion in India and South Africa resides in the need to investigate the nature of injustice at a deep institutional level. It is important to study the nature of social relations beneath the 'apparent' nature of the problem by regarding the way in which dominant articulating principles do in fact articulate with other factors of social injustice. Given the reality of levels of discrimination prevalent in both South Africa and India, it is necessary to understand relations of inequality that may well be masked by dominant principles either of race, caste, gender, or class. The non-synchronous model and the interlocking framework help achieve this.

These critiques signal the need for rigorous analysis in the application of the concepts of social exclusion and inclusion. They suggest that while the concepts are employed in the South in efforts to identify the highly textured nature of communities and groupings in a context of shifting power relations, superficial application or usage may well render meaningless descriptions. With this in mind, rigorous application of the concept should offer a more nuanced understanding of inter-personal and inter-group dynamics that could help direct policies that promote equity and fuller participation of all citizens.

Educational exclusion and inclusion

As argued earlier in this paper, educational exclusion operates in a sea of social exclusions which usually affect domains of access to a number of basic commodities: 'adequate' or 'quality' food, shelter, social security, employment, education, etc. It usually occurs in the guise of an acceptance of differentials: a smaller section of society is assumed (almost legitimately) to have greater access to commodities, better housing, education, sporting facilities, local amenities, etc. because of their socio-economic status. In other words, the socio-economic structures of societies are taken as given and educational exclusion is regarded as a norm. Thus educational inclusion, much as the rest of society, is framed by these inequalities and the various ideologies used to reinforce them. This means that social inclusion could easily take the form of a window dressing (changing the look of things) without recognising that as different groups become involved in systems, their interactions and varying interests of necessity transform these systems. All too often, social inclusion occurs in an effort to appear responsive to the need for change, without introducing any fundamental changes, and, on the contrary, every effort to maintaining the *status quo*.

In education, one tradition out of which this concept has emerged has been from progressive and radical critiques of special needs education. Such critiques of special needs education have pointed out the limited and medical discourse of special needs education. Barton (1999, 58) in particular has argued that special needs education and inclusion need to "go well beyond those of disablement". Whilst much of the work in the educational inclusion

⁴ If one were to consider from a western scientific perspective the difference which the dimension of depth makes to that of length and breadth, the fact that space allows for a depth of experience as opposed to the 'flat' perspective offered by a two-dimensional experience, some of the impact of a multi-dimensional experience presents itself.

debate is cast within the framework of special needs education, Barton argues for placing the issue of disability alongside all forms of oppression in a human rights framework. This, it is believed, will lead to the formation of societies that address the needs of all citizens. Inclusive education is therefore viewed as an 'agenda' which aims at fundamental educational transformation with a view to developing an equitable education system that echoes and reflects fundamentals of an equitable society (Dyson, 1999, 40). Furthermore, as Slee argues, the discussion ought not to start from the premise of how to include special needs students in 'regular schools', it must question the very basis on which these schools are regarded as 'regular'. Whilst acknowledging that the educational inclusion debate has largely occurred in the special education community,⁵ Slee proposes that the debate must of necessity move towards "the development of strategies and classroom practices that enable inclusion to be achieved" and by this, he refers to the "education of all pupils" (Slee, 2001, 115). This article adopts the view that there are many different aspects to educational inclusion, and, as Dyson argues, that there are probably different inclusions (Dyson, 1999). It is hoped that this broader framework allows for rich discussion of inclusive education that takes account of the many varied categories of difference.

One way of understanding the ways in which educational inclusion manifests at institutional levels is to see it in relation to:

- **The point of access to the school.** Access policies determine who does or does not have access to particular institutions. Students are often excluded on the basis of geographical location with schools only accepting students who fall within their 'catchment' area. Other levels of access relate closely to institutional access in terms of a school's dominant culture undermining the cultures of some of its learners.
- **Institutional setting and ethos.** Institutions will nominally include but subtly continue to exclude learners. Particular indicators of inclusion are, for instance, participation in school structures such as the Student Representatives' Council, sports teams and, also, participation in the classroom, etc. Governance of institutions is a key area which determines not only policies pertaining to access but also those relating to institutional culture and practice.
- **The curriculum.** Curricula are foci of power. Curricula have to address not only the varied interests of their expanded learner-base, but equally must re-assess and transform those offensive aspects that reinforce inequality. New students may be included without any changes made to curricula to reflect their interests, histories, etc. or to offer 'new ways of seeing'.
- **Social location of institutions.** The relations between institutions and the wider social contexts within which they exist need to be taken into account. The 'articulations' between forces outside of schools, their filtration into schools, the ways they are reinforced and/or opposed within schools need to be taken into consideration, not only to understand the dynamics within the institution but also to gain a more complex understanding of what exactly the institution in fact includes and excludes, how and why.

⁵ Slee in fact argues that "the appropriation of the multi-disciplinary area of inclusive schooling by special education shows an astonishing lack of reflexivity by some special education researchers about the nature of their research and appalling ignorance of the scope of inclusive education. ... it reinforces the popular conception that inclusive education is about special children and special educators who will prove problematic as they are resettled in the mainstream. ... inclusive schooling demands reconstructed educational thinking and practice in regular schools for the benefit of all children ... [there is] a misconception that disabled children are to be the sole beneficiaries of inclusion ... such an approach sustains the uncoupling of the education of disabled students from a robust study of all forms of educational exclusion and the policy context that allows it to continue" (Slee, 2001, 120).

This article considers how inclusion and exclusion operate, particularly in terms of access and governance. It develops these ideas from an earlier article (see Sayed, Soudien & Carrim, 2003) that critiques various models of inclusive education including multicultural education.

The question of access

The debate of the contradictory nature of schooling notwithstanding, the burning question of who has access to schools and education remains. In posing two scenarios (a conflict of objectives versus complementarities) of the interface between globalisation, education and human rights, Hallak proposes that in the former instance, education policies:

may be designed and adopted taking human rights principles into consideration, but more often than not, access to schooling and to good education is determined by market considerations and by prevailing social, economical, cultural and geographical inequalities (not consistent with the conventions of human rights) (Hallack, 1999, 15).

It may be argued that economically poorer communities generally have access to poorer quality education. The issue of access is therefore a political question regarding the kind of schooling students can attend in comparison to schooling in other areas. It also raises questions concerning why students don't have access to certain schools. And, if geographical constraints of access were circumvented, it would raise questions of the dominant cultures at schools that continue to alienate certain 'groups' of learners. The Model C schools in South Africa bear testimony to this potential for 'exclusion' in the light of education inclusion (Jansen, 1998). These are important issues regarding access that need to be addressed including the question of what happens in schools to which access is granted.

It is also of significance that educational exclusion has been the order of the day even in societies that have allowed 'minorities' into their schools. It has assumed various forms including expulsion, which, though not the immediate brief of this paper, bears relevance:

Exclusion is the ultimate sanction a school can employ against a pupil who is persistently disobedient, disruptive or violent. Exclusion may be permanent or fixed term (whereby a pupil is excluded for not more than 15 days in any one term). At an individual pupil level the longer-term consequences of school exclusion are often profound. For example, students who are excluded from school in the final two years of compulsory education are two and a half times as likely not to participate in education, training or employment, between the ages of 16 and 18, than those not excluded (Sparkes, 2000, 24).

The relevance of suspension or expulsion to this work is that often newly included students are 'seen' as problematic because of their misfit with what they experience as an alienating environment. The consequences for these students are as dramatic as if they were excluded from society on all levels. It is important to note that "... the number of black students being permanently excluded is four times greater than their proportion within the school population" (Gillborn, 1994 quoted in Vincent, 1999, 175).

This serves to underline the link between disadvantage and permanent exclusion which in turn raises questions about institutional policies *re* integration of learners at the level of culture, classroom, curriculum and general ethos. It should be noted that these learners become socially excluded, defined by Walker as:

the dynamic process of being shut out, fully or partially, from any of the social, economic, political and cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society. Social exclusion may, therefore, be seen as the denial (or non-realisation) of the civil, political and social rights of citizenship (Walker, 1997, 8 quoted in Barton, 1999, 59).

Educational exclusion thus reverberates in other forms of social exclusion underlining the political nature of access.

The question of governance

School governance is a key area through which schools may reproduce or transform their institutional ethos and cultures. School governing bodies engage with educational injustices in a number of ways. Governance structures seem to reflect the racial, gender and class biases of societies. For example Brehony notes, there is nothing in the British Education Act to ensure that 'ethnic minorities' are represented and "interests based on social class, gender or ethnicity are not recognised as requiring representation" (Brehony, 1999, 159). Given the nature of social inequalities, the composition of governing structures often favour and promote the interests of certain social groups over and above others. As Jansen questions:

... who has the right to decide on or represent issues of curriculum and diversity within integrated schools. Can a governing board which is largely or exclusively white, in a school which is mainly black, decide on the content of the education experiences of these children? (Jansen, 1998, 104).

This problem of composition and interests of governing bodies is, however, not skin deep. Nominal representation is akin to window dressing. If representatives are not confident in their tasks, they occupy spaces that could otherwise be productively filled. Whilst governing bodies need to address the issue of their composition in relation to their school body and in relation to the composition of the country as a whole, the issue of the agenda and general framework of the structure is equally crucial. The governing structure, irrespective of composition, may well simply be interested in maintaining rather than transforming the *status quo*. Nonetheless, the call for 'representation' in governance remains crucial and is akin to that made in relation to research into inclusive education.

Access and governance reflect two important aspects of schooling and show the complex interrelationship between inclusion and exclusion. They show how forms of inclusion are not always necessarily a normatively 'good' thing. The key issue is what this implies for policy which the next section of the article considers.

Policy and educational inclusion

It is evident from the preceding analysis that there is much academic debate about the meanings and usefulness of the concepts of educational inclusion and exclusion. What is often ignored is the fact that educational exclusion and inclusion have become part of public policy in contemporary society. For example, in the UK the Labour Government has initiated what it considers to be a 'joined-up' policy initiative in the form of Social Exclusion Units headed by the senior Deputy-Prime Minister, whilst in South Australia, the state government has established a Social Inclusion Initiative. As these examples illustrate, these concepts are significant in so far as they influence governments' policy and actions.

An earlier article examines the different discourses of policy and the implication for policy development (see Sayed, Soudien & Carrim, 2003). This article tentatively outlines a framework for inclusive education policy with particular reference to access and governance.

From the review of the literature a number of factors emerge as crucial to developing inclusive education policies:

- *Feasible, enabling, and adaptable policy:* Effective policies are those which draw on global models of success, but which are recast to reflect the conditions to which they apply. Implementable policies presuppose policy that is enabling in allowing actors to use the framework or policy architecture to guide and enact transformation. An enabling national architecture provides a rubric within which actors are able to design policy at a regional and institutional level. Thus national policy ought to be feasible not only in terms of facilitating national processes of educational delivery but also in terms of articulating with and facilitating regional policy development and institutional policy development. Policy has to make sense for all these levels of

delivery. Policy has to be adaptable, containing simultaneously elements that allow for (a) adaptation to regional and local conditions, and (b) an ongoing mechanism for reflexivity and innovation.

- *Holistic, integrated policy:* Policies must be part and parcel of broader educational policy. If inclusive educational policy is located outside of the broader framework, it will constantly face problems of inarticulation with other educational initiatives. But beyond this, policy makers and implementers need to think inclusively. There is a further aspect to holistic policy development. Inclusive education policy ought to be broad enough to address the multidimensional nature of educational exclusion. It needs to take account of the contradictory nature of exclusions and the non-synchronous way in which factors of social injustice articulate in different contexts to generate various forms of exclusion.
- *Democratising policy formation:* Policies should be developed by a collective of actors, all of whom are legitimately involved to advance the interests of certain social groups. The interests of all social groups must be represented to ensure that the structures that develop policy reflect and indicate the interests of all citizens. This implies democratic representation as opposed to nominal representation and the real inclusion or consideration of what may be conflicting issues with a view to resolving or working with discrepancies and conflicts. This further implies the development of a policy creation space, methodology, and set of related mechanisms that facilitate the production of a coherent policy framework.
- *Look to the rich and the poor:* Policy should "shift from a focus on the global poor and their conditions to the global rich and their private privileges" (Deacon, 1999, 38). Such thinking is helpful in developing policy around educational inclusion although there is the danger of reintroducing a "catching-up" scenario in which those previously deprived seek to acquire the 'standards' and benefits of privileged groups/elites. The benefit of considering the 'rich' in regarding fundamental transformation lies in addressing the culture of domination and the patterns of social and structural behaviour that generate such domination in the first place.

Educational access and policy

Policies about access must consider how to include 'previously excluded' students in the system as a whole and in specific institutions that would previously have fostered exclusionary practices. The education system needs to correct practices of educational exclusion by ensuring that a) all students eligible for education, especially those from deprived backgrounds are meaningfully included in education programmes and b) learners recognise the incentives to include themselves in the education system. This has proved especially important in Britain's joined-up thinking programme, which has taken cognisance of the fact that students from poorer areas are at greater risk of being excluded or opting out of the educational system. Similarly, in the South African context, as Deacon & Parker state: "Large numbers of those who benefited least under apartheid will continue to be excluded in the post-apartheid era" (1996, 166).

It appears that as South Africa deepens its participation in the global economy, creating a 'curriculum for competitiveness', much of the tensions between equity and growth remain, with many arguing that where these tensions exist growth will always win out over equity (Badat, 1995). On this basis it is argued that:

South Africa needs to respond to the challenges of globalisation. However, such a response must be cautious, considered and strategic. It is essential that any focus on competitiveness and growth should be combined with a concern with equity and poverty reduction (King *et al.*, 2001, 22).

Alongside issues of equity within schools, policy around access must consider quality of schooling. It would seem that where disparity in the education system remains *vis-à-vis* allocation of resources, etc., students who can afford to will enter better resourced schools. Conversely, those students who cannot afford these schools will have access to a much smaller pool of schools that will presumably be under-resourced. This pattern will reinforce the legacies of inequity and educational exclusion.

Educational governance and policy

Policy should address the areas of governance directly. Evidence shows that this is an area of great importance to the smooth running of inclusive educational programmes and to fostering an inclusive institutional culture. Governance relates both to political governing structures that include stakeholders, as well as the management of schools by principals and other members of the management team. Leadership and management are regarded as key features in the effective operation of the school in implementing its inclusion strategies. In the UK, the work of the Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED, 2000; 2001) highlights the centrality of leadership and management in effecting inclusion. Where senior staff display strong commitment to programmes of inclusion, its students and the community, greater levels of success are recorded. Participative management, through which strong head teachers encourage participation of other staff members, fosters commitment to collectively owned goals and objectives.

Policy relating to governance should also ensure that parents and students are meaningfully engaged in decision-making processes. Experience in Ethiopia shows that decentralisation of decision-making and increased participation in planning, financial and personnel management at school level improves efficiency and accountability. It is argued that:

schools and *woreda* [a sub-national unit of government] institutions are well positioned to allocate and manage resources by demonstrating, for example, their capacity to monitor budgets, manage personnel, and undertake regular program evaluation. If applied more broadly across Ethiopia's *woredas*, an 'earned autonomy' instrument could enable local authorities to systematically take on responsibilities for planning, prioritisation, and program implementation, in ways that are consistent with the Government's intention of developing genuine executive authority at the regional level (Girishankar, 2001, 1).

This experience underscores the importance of active participation of parents and students in school governance. Such inclusion generates participation in, ownership of and commitment to the education system, its philosophies, programmes, and ventures.

Concluding remarks

This article has discussed the concepts of educational inclusion and educational exclusion in the context of the social exclusion / social inclusion debate in the South. It has considered these concepts in relation to the multidimensional issues of poverty and shown ways in which the concepts could usefully be employed. The discussion has highlighted that the issues are hardly simple or easy to tackle. Educational inclusion requires careful consideration of every aspect of schooling and societal context. Innovative approaches to educational inclusion will need to address issues at macro, micro, personal, and interpersonal levels. Connections between school and community cultures have to be drawn, as well as between educational and community programmes of inclusion. The concepts of inclusion and exclusion press for much closer conscious and self-conscious consideration of identity and role: who is doing the excluding and including, who is choosing the excluding and including, how are these processes of inclusion and exclusion facilitated, and what are the dominant views and relations of social, economic, and political power.

It is evident that it is much easier writing about transformation in abstract than deal-

ing with reality and its various emotional tensions and stressors that face all schools keen to take on the challenges of change. It is clear also that change has come to be recognised as a constant and that policies need to be flexible architectures that allow institutions to herald transformations in their own ways. A fundamental problem seems to be the gathering of political will to direct and effect change. This suggests that in a time of increasing privatisation of education, governments have a key role to play in directing and facilitating change while ensuring that the educational sector is strengthened as a key means of promoting human rights and equity.

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