



Tebello Tlali

# **Africanisation and Globalisation: implications for education policy**

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# CHAPTER 1

## ORIENTATION

### 1.1 Introduction

Since Lesotho<sup>1</sup> attained its independence in 1966, emphasis has been put on the importance of the education sector as the fundamental driving force in the socio-economic development of the Basotho nation<sup>2</sup> (Ministry of Economic Planning (MOEP) 1997:14). The desire was to foster the type of education that would differ from the one practised during the colonial era. It was felt that the formal education that came as a result of the arrival and settlement of the missionaries in the colonial era was highly academic and irrelevant to the local needs. Furthermore, it excluded important educational aspects such as those associated with the socio-economic development of the Basotho nation. Most importantly, it showed little appreciation of the Basotho indigenous culture (Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) 1982:11; cf. also Kuroda 1995:5).

Over the years the government of Lesotho's quest to transform education has been voiced in a series of dialogues, strategic and policy-related documents such as the *National Dialogue on Education* held in 1978; and its attendant *Education Sector Survey: Task Force Report* of 1982; the *Education Sector Strategic Plan* (1991/92-1995/96); as well as the *Education Sector Development Plan* (1998/99-2000/2001) (Khati and Matsoso 2006:2; cf. also Lefoka and Motlomelo 1994:5). This goal for transformation has not only been stipulated in the *Education Sector Strategic Plan for the years: 2005-2015*, but has also been reiterated in the *Lesotho Vision 2020* (2004). Furthermore, re-emphasis on this goal was made again in the *National Dialogue on Education* held in November 2006, when the focus was placed on issues of relevance, quality and access regarding education in Lesotho.

Although the above-mentioned dialogues, strategic, and policy-related documents are evident of the Lesotho government's desires to establish an education system that meets its nation's requirements for socio-economic development, the quest for transformation can further be substantiated by examples drawn from the *Lesotho Vision 2020*. In this document the Lesotho government voiced its goal to ensure that the education sector is

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<sup>1</sup>Lesotho is a country south-most of Southern Africa. It is landlocked and entirely surrounded by South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> The word *Basotho* refers to the Lesotho nation. The language spoken by the Basotho people is called *Sesotho*.

channelled towards the achievement of the development goals of the country. This document also outlines several key issues which emerged from the dialogue, namely:

- The expression of Lesotho's desire to develop an education system that produces a labour force with relevant and progressive knowledge, skills and expertise in order to ensure sustainable development.
- The identification of core Basotho values which have to be cherished and promoted because they represent a vital point of reference in the development process. The values include among others: peace, unity, tolerance, sharing, self-respect and respect for others, hospitality, humility, patience, sense of responsibility and obedience, family bonds, Basotho cultural values and norms, resilience and hard work.
- That in order for Lesotho to survive in the global village, it will have to face challenges of producing a highly skilled work-force capable of innovating the country through science, technology and business organisations.
- Emphasis on the fact that Lesotho will have to critically assess its education and training policies and reformulate them appropriately, as well as emulate other small nations who have become great global competitors (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MOFDP) 2004:14-23).

From the foregoing it can be noted that Lesotho has a strong desire to reform education by eliminating the irrelevant colonial education and establishing an education system that would promote socio-economic development and instil core national values. The question is whether this goal remains theoretical, thus only written words in strategic plans and expressed in dialogues, or whether there has been any observable progress towards establishing an education system that is in line with the socio-economic development and needs of the Basotho people?

## **1.2 Research question and sub-questions**

Broadfoot (2001:5) indicates that "education is charged with the primary responsibility of shaping the next generation, as such it is inevitably a territory where the strains between local, national and international currents and pressures are most in evidence". In line with this view, Waks (2006:403) illustrates that the 1980's witnessed, on the one hand, an accelerated emphasis on *globalisation*, which refers to the combination of a free international exchange or sharing of capital, labour, information, goods and services across borders (Elliot 1994:28; cf. also Hallak 2000:22 and Khan 2003:5). Amidst this

intensification of *globalisation*, however, many communities are ever more forcefully acknowledging their distinctive characteristics and celebrating their cultural differences (cf. Claassen 2000:30; and also Mebrahtu, Crossley and Johnson 2000:9). For example, the former colonised states in Africa started a quest to reclaim their indigenous identities. Claassen (2000:30) observes that an interesting and seemingly contradictory development is taking place simultaneously with *globalisation*, namely localisation, and he uses the term 'global paradox' to describe this seemingly contradictory development. In this regard, Napier (2005:66) indicates that "developing countries face particularly acute contradictions and dilemmas as they enact reforms to improve, modernise and democratise education". These include tensions between seemingly contradictory goals including (among others), local needs versus global trends. Napier (2005:70) further illustrates that *globalisation*, on the one hand, adds pressures on developing countries, for instance there is a drive to keep pace with global developments in the technology and information age. On the other hand, indigenisation or localisation, and the creation of post-colonial national identities are other goals for reform in post-colonial states. Also emphasising the reform contradictions and dilemmas in former colonial states, MacDonald and Muldoon (2006:209) observe:

In the last fifteen years indigenous activists have been remarkably successful at using national and international arenas to press their claims for a distinct form of citizenship. The period since the beginning of the 1990s has been marked by a codification and strengthening of the rights of indigenous peoples in international instruments and these have created new benchmarks for former colonial states. At the same time, processes of economic globalisation have impacted upon...and heightened the vulnerability of indigenous people and undermined their citizenship entitlements.

Lesotho had not been an exception to this attempt: on the one hand the country tries to address local needs and preserve indigenous values, while simultaneously seeking to respond to global pressures and trends. However, its education policy contradictions and dilemmas continue as the after-effects of colonisation. These contradictions and dilemmas also emanate from the misconception that *globalisation* and *localisation* (*africanisation*) are mutually exclusive and contradictory processes (cf. Van Niekerk 2004:117). In this regard, it can be noted that despite the desire to change the inherited colonial education, a number of problems continue to plague the Lesotho education system. For instance, Lesotho's education system remains highly academic and less relevant to local needs (Lefoka and Motlomelo 1994:5). Consistent with this observation, Muzvidziwa and Seotsanyana (2002:12) argue that even after Lesotho gained independence in 1966, its education system has minimally deviated from what it was during the colonial period, in that, it

continues to impart foreign values to the learners. There appears to be very little emphasis on matters pertaining to good citizenship and the upholding of principles drawn from the African culture.

Moorosi-Molapo (1998:15) illustrates that despite attempts to infuse indigenous education into the content, the quality of Lesotho education still leaves much to be desired. In this regard Moorosi-Molapo (1998) suggests that education transformation in Lesotho (and in the rest of the African continent) has to be based on a solid cultural foundation, and that the reformulation of education policies must tap into the rich African cultural heritage. In line with this view, Muzvidziwa and Seotsanyana (2002:12) contend that global agendas continue to dominate the direction and the thrust of Lesotho's education policies. This external or outward approach to education "undermines the development of positive human factor characteristics that enable learners to become creative, innovative, patriotic, responsible, disciplined and oriented towards personal development and the development of their society" (Muzvidziwa and Seotsanyana 2002:12). Based on the foregoing argument, it is suggested that Lesotho needs to establish an indigenous self-propelled education system that is driven by local needs and values to ensure development.

The inability of Lesotho education to promote development goals, as well as to resolve education policy contradictions and dilemmas concerning *africanisation* and *globalisation* can, and should be addressed through a comprehensive education policy. Such a policy should be geared towards meeting the emerging issues and the future needs of both the education sector and the country as a whole. According to a commissioned study by the *Southern African Development Community* (SADC), Lesotho currently does not have an articulated comprehensive education policy document (Chisholm, Makwati, Marope and Dumba-Safuli 1998:72). In this study, it is also observed that the Lesotho education policy is implied in a multiplicity of policy-related documents. Based on this observation, the SADC study therefore concluded that the Lesotho education system is underpinned by a tacit policy (MOET 2005b:9).

In the light of the above exposition, it can be agreed with the observation made by the MOFDP (2004:23) that in order to attain its development goals, the government of Lesotho is faced with the challenge to critically assess its education and training policy, and to reformulate it appropriately. That is, the endeavour would be to come up with a comprehensive education policy which sufficiently addresses the issues of relevance and

the attainment of the socio-economic goals of the Basotho nation. As indicated earlier, scholars such as Moorosi-Molapo (1998:15; cf. also Muzvidziwa and Seotsanyane 2002:12) argue that in order for Lesotho to achieve its socio-economic goals, indigenisation or *africanisation* would be the way to go. In line with the foregoing standpoint, the *Southern African Development Community (SADC) Review Progress on Education* (2007:4) also indicates that its protocol on education and training is part of the African renaissance and that all governments, including Lesotho, are committed to it. The foregoing standpoint has, however, been questioned by scholars such as Badenhorst (1993:405), who observe that in this post-modern or global era where the world has vastly evolved technologically and otherwise, any education system that makes indigenisation a priority and does not incorporate global standards and trends, is likely to be perceived as inadequate and might face rejection.

According to Khati and Matsoso (2006:19; cf. also Badenhorst 1993:405), the world is moving at meteoric speed, and for any nation to survive, it needs to keep pace with it. Thus, survival in the post-modern or global era requires communication and dissemination of information beyond the nation state to operations that are both local and global. This standpoint is also underscored by Olssen, Codd and O'Neill (2004:3) who illustrate that in order to ensure their transformative ability and effective response to contemporary crises of survival and sustainability, education policies must be contextualised both nationally and globally. In the light of this argument, it can be noted that in the quest to reform education, the government of Lesotho would have to cautiously resolve education policy contradictions and dilemmas pertaining to *africanisation* and *globalisation* earlier expressed by Waks (2006:403). In this regard, it can be envisaged that it would be crucial to carefully take both dimensions into consideration and draw from both.

In addition, Matsoso (2001:120) posits that education policies that are informed by research are more valid than those with no such research basis. This standpoint is also supported by Wiseman and Baker (2005:6) who argue that basing education policy on research imbues it with prestige and legitimacy. Based on the foregoing argument, it can be noted that in order for education policy reform to be valid and comprehensive, it needs to be guided by relevant research. In Lesotho, however, there seems to be a limitation in this regard. Thus, the MOET (2005b:8) has voiced the concern that there is currently not enough proactive research that informs education policy. For instance, there has so far not been any study that carries out an education policy audit with the purpose of

establishing the extent to which the latter has been influenced by *africanisation* and *globalisation*.

Based on the foregoing exposition, the main research question of this study is: ***what are the implications of africanisation and globalisation for education policy reform in Lesotho?*** This question gives rise to the following specific research questions:

- What is the meaning of the concepts *africanisation* and *globalisation*?
- What are the implications of *africanisation* and *globalisation* for education, and for education policy in particular? And to what extent can the two processes be complementary and simultaneously beneficial for education policy reform?
- To what extent have *africanisation* and *globalisation* influenced education policy in Lesotho?
- How can education policy reform in Lesotho benefit from taking both *africanisation* and *globalisation* into consideration?

### **1.3 Purpose and focus of the research**

The focus of this research is determined by its purpose, namely to establish the implications of *africanisation* and *globalisation* for education policy reform in Lesotho. However, to ultimately arrive at this goal, a conceptual analysis of both *africanisation* and *globalisation* will be conducted. Based on the latter, a textual deconstruction of the Lesotho education policy documents will also be carried out with the view to establish the extent to which the Lesotho education policy has been influenced by the two processes. Finally, the study will seek to determine how education and training policy reform in Lesotho could benefit from taking into consideration and drawing from both *africanisation* and *globalisation*.

Based on the foregoing broad aim, this research has the following specific objectives in view, namely to:

- conduct a conceptual analysis of the concepts *africanisation* and *globalisation*;
- examine the implications of *africanisation* and *globalisation* for education in general, and for education policy in particular; and establish the extent to which the two processes can be complementary and simultaneously beneficial for education policy reform;

- undertake a textual deconstruction (content and discourse analysis) of the Lesotho policy documents with the view of establishing how *africanisation* and *globalisation* have influenced education policy in Lesotho; and
- determine how education policy reform in Lesotho can benefit from taking both *africanisation* and *globalisation* into consideration.

#### **1.4 Necessity of the research**

This study derives its importance from the government of Lesotho's outcry that education policy requires to be reformulated (cf. MOFDP 2004:23) in order to promote the socio-economic needs of the Basotho nation. The study also draws its necessity from a concern voiced by the MOET (2005b:8), namely that there has not been enough proactive research that informs policy formulation in Lesotho. Although there has been a number of commissioned studies designed to address specific issues, none of them has explored the implications of either or both the processes of *africanisation* and *globalisation* for Lesotho education policy. In summary, this study has therefore been inspired by the following key issues:

- the fact that the government of Lesotho contemplates to reformulate its education policy (MOFDP 2004:23);
- MOET's concern that there is not enough proactive research (MOET 2005b:8) to inform such a reform; and
- the observation that it would be pertinent for a former colonised country such as Lesotho to consider and resolve the contradictions and dilemmas concerning *africanisation* and *globalisation* as part of a comprehensive education policy reform.

#### **1.5 Research design: research methodology and research methods**

##### **1.5.1 Rationale for post-structuralist deconstruction as research methodology**

Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997:42-43) indicate that in the past, educational policy research has been methodologically unsophisticated. For instance, it was often framed within structuralist theories which took issues of language and meaning for granted. According to Watson and Wood-Happer (1996:60; cf. also Olssen 2003:189) structuralism treats language as a structure or as a system. Focus is put on the way in which parts of a system are dependent upon the whole, and parts are only understood in relation to the whole and not individually. Structuralism also tends to assume that the meaning in language (as a system) have longstanding stability. Structuralism consequently presents a static view of meaning and it neglects the fact that meaning can be dynamic and



contextual. However, this has changed with the emergence of recent theoretical developments around post-structuralism. Post-structuralism has offered an alternative methodology that transcends structuralism and focuses on issues of meaning. It does this by questioning linguistic systems to consider how both texts and practices of reading them are founded in particular assumptions about language (Watson and Wood-Happer 1996:60). For instance, post-structuralism questions the authors' intentions as well as text implications. Against this background, the latter has become useful in offering a new set of tools to explain policy-related issues. In order to consider the usefulness of these tools, it should be considered that post-structuralism suggests a close nexus between power and knowledge, and that meaning is constructed historically in contested social domains (Taylor *et al.* 1997:43). In this regard, it could be noted that post-structuralism has greatly enhanced educational policy research.

Codd (1988:235) defines policy as a course of action relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values or the allocation of resources, and he notes that "fundamentally, policy is about the exercise of political power and the language that is used to legitimate that process". According to this view, policy documents can be understood to be texts which are capable of being decoded in different ways depending on the contexts in which they are read. Codd (1988:236) subsequently suggests that "policy analysts can use some of the methods and theories of textual analysis that have been developed and refined within the field of literary criticism to examine the language content of policy documents". Policy analysis "requires a conception of how language can produce real social effects, and how it can be political, not only by referring to political events, but by itself becoming the instrument and object of power" (Codd 1988:241). Based on this argument, it can be noted then that such a materialistic conception of language has led to the development of linguistically and textually oriented post-structuralist methodologies in the analysis of policy documents, such as deconstruction. Codd (1988:243) underscores this perception by illustrating that

the deconstruction of official discourse, in the form of documents, reports and policy statements, treats such texts as cultural and ideological artefacts to be interpreted in terms of their implicit patterns of signification, underlying symbolic structures and contextual determinants of meaning. Policy documents in this kind of analysis do not have a single authoritative meaning. They are not blue prints for political action, expressing a set of unequivocal intentions. They are ideological texts that have been constructed within a particular historical and political context. The task of deconstruction begins with the explicit recognition of that context.