

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON ORGANISATION OF PEACE EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITIES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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Submitted to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
May 1995

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EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The universities of Africa and Southern Africa

According to recent estimates the current population of Africa's 53 countries may be more than 650 million. Apparently there are 154 universities with a total enrolment of 925 000 on the continent.¹

When focusing on Southern Africa, a decision has to be taken on how far to the north Southern Africa may be regarded to extend. In the absence of a convenient geographical dividing line, the current political grouping may provide a suggestion. In this study the countries forming part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC, formerly the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, SADCC) are therefore included. Alphabetically they are: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.² These countries have an estimated population of 124 million³ and a university population, in 34 universities, of 370 000.⁴

The full list of universities in these countries is as follows:

Botswana	University of Botswana (Gaborone)
Lesotho	National University of Lesotho (Roma)
Malawi	University of Malawi (Zomba)
Mozambique	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Maputo)
Namibia	University of Namibia (Windhoek)
South Africa	University of Bophuthatswana (Mmabatho)
	University of Cape Town (Cape Town)
	University of Durban-Westville (Durban)
	University of Fort Hare (Alice)
	University of Natal (Durban, Pietermaritzburg)
	University of the North (Sovenga)
	University of the Orange Free State (Bloemfontein)
	University of Port Elizabeth (Port Elizabeth)
	Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (Potchefstroom)
	University of Pretoria (Pretoria)
	Rand Afrikaans University (Johannesburg)
	Rhodes University (Grahamstown)
	University of South Africa (Pretoria)
	University of Stellenbosch (Stellenbosch)
	University of Transkei (Umtata)
	University of Venda (Thohoyandou)
	Vista University (Pretoria)
	University of the Western Cape (Bellville)
	University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg)
	University of Zululand (KwaDlangezwa)
Swaziland	University of Swaziland (Kwaluseni)
Tanzania	University of Dar es Salaam (Dar es Salaam)
Zambia	Copperbelt University (Kitwe)
	University of Zambia (Lusaka)
Zimbabwe	University of Zimbabwe (Harare)

The universities which specialise in professional and technological training (Agostinho Neto,⁵ Medical University of South Africa, Sokoine University of Agriculture, and Zimbabwe's National University of Science and Technology) apparently do not offer specific courses in Conflict Resolution, but wherever there are staff members with the necessary interest and experience, they may share valuable insight and expertise with their students. Obviously this applies to all the other universities as well. So, in addition to all the courses and modules officially listed in the university calendars, a surprising amount of informal peace education may be taking place in innumerable cases.

1. The World of Learning 1994.

2. Africa South of the Sahara 1994, p 113.

3. According to the 1991 United Nations estimates given in Marsden (ed) 993:796,826,939,947,964,967,1012, 1020, 1028, 1060,1061.

4. According to The World of Learning 1994:49,176,975,986,1031,1035,1335-1353,1395,1445,1985,1989.

5. With regard to the difficult circumstances at this university, see Knowles (ed) 1978:342 (vol 2), Clark & Neave 1992:19 (vol 1), and the omission of Angola from Husén & Postlethwaite (eds) 1994, 12 vols.

1.2 The scope of Peace Education

Peace education can indeed be a wide-ranging component of education. It is an interdisciplinary field of study, obviously transcending the boundaries of traditional disciplines. And it comprises a diversity of significant contributions from about the whole spectrum of the human sciences. After all, peace itself is a comprehensive term. It should not be restricted to the narrow, negative sense of apparent calm after the cessation of hostilities. Peace can be experienced as a positive dynamic, inspiring people to penetrate to the widest and deepest causes of a conflict, and to work towards effectively resolving the conflict by solving the underlying problems and towards restoring the relations disturbed by the conflict.

The search through the syllabuses of the universities therefore had to be an extended search. In addition to the obvious primary aim of looking for specific courses in Conflict Resolution, there was also the secondary, and equally important, objective of searching for sub-sections (or modules) of courses on topics like the following: communication, problem solving and human relations.

Such smaller units cannot be disregarded. Since they form part of courses in the "ordinary" subjects, a greater number of students may benefit from them. Obviously, however, it is the specific courses in Conflict Resolution which form the core of peace education. And although they may reach smaller numbers of students, they do have a wider influence. Their syllabuses in university calendars, their names on timetables, and their staff and students on campuses, may all serve to remind entire student communities about the existence and availability of conflict resolution expertise.

The thrust of peace education can therefore be exerted in three ways:

- Through courses specifically focused on studying conflict, conflict resolution and peace
- Through peace education themes infused into a variety of courses presented in existing disciplines
- And through the influence of staff and students who are committed to solving problems, resolving conflict and restoring relationships

Obviously, however, an assessment of the radiating influence of peace education will need more than a short-term analytical study. What can be presented in this study is therefore a brief analysis of the first two methods of peace education: specific courses and infused themes.

5. COMMUNITY SERVICE WITH REGARD TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION UNDERTAKEN BY SOUTHERN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

The Centre for Conflict Resolution, situated at the University of Cape Town, is continually rendering its services in the areas of mediation, facilitation and consultation.

The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) at the Universities of Durban-Westville and the Western Cape is constantly involved in projects of training, consultation and intervention.

The Eduardo Mondlane University has been involved in organising seminars and workshops to discuss pertinent matters related to the constructive resolution of disputes in a society embarking on a multi-party and multi-ethnic democracy.

The Alan Paton Centre at the University of Natal organises workshops aimed at building democracy promoting tolerance within organisations.

The department of Communication Science at the University of the Orange Free State is envisaging a Centre for Community Communication. At the same university the department of Public Administration, in conjunction with Civic Organisations and the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA), has designed a Local Government Training Programme for Capacity Building in the Orange Free State. The development of negotiation skills and the management of conflicts and change have been identified as separate modules in the programme.

The Industrial Relations Unit at the University of Port Elizabeth is extremely active in conflict resolution country-wide.

The department of Sociology of the University of Pretoria renders community service through involvement in labour mediation, community mediation and voting processes.

Staff members of the faculties of Law and Divinity at Rhodes University are involved in mediating disputes, conducting training workshops in conflict resolution in the community, planning (jointly with two other organisations) a programme in local schools on conflict resolution skills, providing input in committee work and seminars related to community-orientated police methods. A report on the Grahamstown policing project, which may be regarded as a pilot project for the rest of South Africa, has been drafted.

The above mentioned (p 38) research project on the Promotion of Positive Community Relations, initiated by the department of Sociology at the University of Stellenbosch, is obviously community related. Staff members of the faculty of Theology at the same university represent their faculty on a regional committee of Empowerment for Reconciliation and Justice and work with various groups where serious attention is given to developing conflict handling skills and theory. They are also presenting extensive workshops in conflict handling to ministers of religion.

The already mentioned (p 38) Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation at the University of the Witwatersrand runs a Trauma Clinic to provide (individual, family and group) psychological counselling for victims

of criminal and political violence. Through Education programmes the Centre aims to empower the victims of violence and to challenge the perpetrators, seeking to restore faith in non-violent alternatives for resolving conflict in all spheres of peoples's lives. Training programmes include: understanding the dynamics and effects of violence, trauma counselling for helping professionals, psychological debriefing, victim support and victim policy formulation, and skills training around the issues of tolerance, democracy and reconciliation.

The Institute of Human Relations at the University of Zambia organises a series of public lectures on current African conflicts and attempts being made in finding peaceful solutions. Examples of topics are: The role of Nigeria in conflict resolution in Africa in the 1990s and beyond; Peace projects in Southern Sudan; Peace prospects in Somalia.

7. CONCLUSIONS

From all this information two conclusions, which form an interrelated pair, seem to be obvious.

7.1 A RELATIVE SCARCITY OF SPECIFIC CONFLICT RESOLUTION COURSES

Courses which, according to title and content, focus entirely on conflict resolution are few and far between. The course names appearing in bold print in section 3 above, are the following:

University	Course	Faculty/Department	Level
Bophuthatswana	Conflict and Conflict Management	Political Studies	3rd yr, Master's
Bophuthatswana	Conflict Studies	Political Studies	Master's
Cape Town	Conflict in World Politics	Political Studies	3rd yr
Cape Town	Alternative Dispute Resolution	Law	LLB
Cape Town	Negotiation	Graduate School of Business	Master's
Durban- Westville	Conflict Resolution/Management	Social Policy	Master's
Namibia	Conflict Resolution	Education	Postgrad
Natal	Legal Studies (Conflict Resolution)	Law, Arts, Commerce, Social Science	1st yr
Natal	Conflict Management and Dispute Settlement Procedures	Industrial Relations	Postgrad Dipl
Natal	Alternative Dispute Resolution	Law	LLB
Natal	The Peaceful Settlement of Disputes: The United Nations and its Agencies	Law	LLM
North	A comparative study of successful and peaceful reform in various countries	Political Development	Hons
Port Elizabeth	Conflict and Conflict Resolution	Political Studies	Hons
Potchefstroom	Alternative Dispute Resolution	Law	LLB
Pretoria	Alternative Dispute Resolution	Sociology	Hons
Pretoria	Conflict Studies	Sociology	Master's
Rhodes	Appropriate Dispute Resolution	Law	LLB
Rhodes	Conflict Studies	Divinity	Postgrad
Stellenbosch	Conflict Studies	Political Science	Hons
Stellenbosch	Political Conflict in Africa	Political Science	Hons
Western Cape	Christianity and peace	Christianity and Society	2nd yr
Western Cape	Conflict Studies	Industrial Psychology and all faculties	Hons
Western Cape	Conflict Resolution	Public Administration	Hons
Western Cape	Conflict Resolution	Industrial Psychology	Master's
Western Cape	Negotiating Skills	Industrial Psychology	Master's
Witwatersrand	Appropriate Dispute Resolution	Law	LLB
Witwatersrand	Power relations in organisations	Business Administration	Master's
Zimbabwe	Conflict Resolution International Law	Law	LLM

Although these courses are only available at less than half (14) of the 30 universities, and in most cases only to students in a particular department or faculty, they do form part of a new trend. When the typical situation of great caution before doors (and funding!) are opened to new, untraditional courses (see section 2.1 above) is taken into account, the establishment of these courses can indeed be seen as an encouraging sign.

7.2 A RELATIVE ABUNDANCE OF PEACE EDUCATION THEMES INFUSED INTO COURSES OF A VARIETY OF DISCIPLINES

The numbers of entries in section 3 above can give a rough indication of the spread of such infused themes over the four broad areas and their broad subdivisions:

Social Sciences	
Sociology and Anthropology	33
Social Work	17
Politics	51
Psychology and Industrial Psychology	28
Religious Studies	9
Communication Studies	15
History	6
Philosophy	6
Community and Health Sciences	<u>7</u>
	172
Management Sciences	
Industrial and Business Management	34
Public Administration and Development Management	<u>13</u>
	47
Law	
Alternative Dispute Resolution	3
Industrial Law	14
Customary Law	7
International Law	5
General Jurisprudence	<u>8</u>
	37
Education	
Educational Theory and Practice	21
Educational Leadership	<u>17</u>
	38

This pair of conclusions point to a third conclusion, which will surely be endorsed by all who are convinced that this field of preparation for professional and life situations should be taken seriously.

7.3 THE NEED FOR FURTHER PROPAGATION AND PROMOTION OF BOTH SPECIFIC COURSES AND INFUSED THEMES

At all levels of our human existence, from the interpersonal, through the intergroup, to the international, conflict resolution insight and skills are urgently needed. Peace education, as the training towards attitudinal change, mutual understanding, creative problem solving, restoring and maintaining justice, and improving human relations, therefore deserves to be advertised and promoted everywhere.

A report like this one may contribute to the sharing of information and ideas. If it could be disseminated to, and at, the universities of Southern Africa, and the rest of Africa, it could play its role to make academic planners aware of possibilities, and committed to become part of the growing team of peace educators across Africa and across the world.

In such a way more and more university staff and students may be able to endorse the encouraging testimony of others.

"Teaching staff have said:

- The conflict resolution courses are heavily enrolled and well liked ...
- ... a definite increase in enthusiasm, interest, and demand among ... students and clients for conflict resolution training ...
- ... there is tremendous interest and enthusiasm for work in this field ...
- Courses and workshops are heavily populated by students from the professional schools of education, law, management, communications, and social work, and the deans of these schools have expressed increasing interest in this field ..." (Malan 1987:3)

And students have assessed a typical course as follows:

- "Excellent learning experience ...
- Class was the best I've taken ... to date.
- ... made me realize a lot about myself, and about life.
- The best class I have taken in my entire formal education." (Malan 1987:3)

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