



RESEARCH ARTICLE

2024, vol. 11, issue 2, 115 - 123  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.#>

## EXPLORING THE PREVALENCE OF RACISM IN FORMER MODEL C SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA: FROM A SOCIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE

Saltiel K. C. MATABOGE <sup>1</sup>  
Vimbi P. MAHLANGU <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Educational Leadership and Management, Senior Lecturer, College of Education, University of South Africa, South Africa, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7805-9123>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Educational Leadership and Management, Professor, College of Education, University of South Africa, South Africa. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8251-750X>

### Abstract

The purpose of the study was to investigate the prevalence of racism in former Model C schools in South Africa, with a specific focus on the perspective of social justice. Literature review was used as the primary source to gather information in understanding the topic. Data analysis followed an interpretive paradigm which focused on the subjective experiences and viewpoints of other researchers' discoveries concerning racism in educational settings. The interpretive technique enables a detailed understanding of how individuals interpret and respond to instances of racism, highlighting the need for more inclusive and fair approaches. The study aimed at uncovering the persistent and varied expressions of racism that are prevalent within educational institutions. It was found that racism is present in former Model C schools through both subtle and overt acts of prejudice, unjust disciplinary actions, and policies that foster exclusion. This study contributes to the broader discourse on educational equity and provides recommendations for policymakers, teachers, and stakeholders to address and mitigate racism in South African schools.

*Keywords: Racism, Former Model C Schools, Social justice, Educational equity*

### 1. Introduction

Pitsoe and Vlăduțescu (2024) believe that resistance becomes less effective when power systems are well-entrenched. The study aimed to examine the frequency of racism in former Model C schools in South Africa, with a particular emphasis on the viewpoint of social justice. Palma et al. (2024) found that many school-age children and adolescents experience extremely stressful or traumatic circumstances in schools. On the other hand, Liu (2024) is of the view that racism must be understood as the mundane, everyday acts that maintain white supremacist structures and cultures. The enduring consequences of apartheid in South Africa have had a substantial influence on other areas, including the field of education. Former Model C schools, once designated exclusively for white pupils during the apartheid era, now cater to a heterogeneous student body. Although there has been a change in the population's demographics, racism continues to exist, which is a major concern from the standpoint of social justice. This study examines the prevalence and characteristics of racism within these establishments, with the goal of comprehending how past disparities persistently influence educational encounters. Former Model C schools are renowned for being exceptional educational institutions that provide superior resources and opportunities in comparison to other public schools. Nevertheless, this esteemed standing is tarnished by accounts of racial prejudice that might appear quietly through microaggressions or more explicitly through biased disciplinary measures and exclusionary policies. These occurrences have a negative impact on the academic achievements and mental health of underprivileged pupils, as well as their feeling of inclusion. This study utilizes a literature review to integrate up-to-date research findings and theoretical frameworks, offering a full overview of the subject. The technique employs an interpretative paradigm, with a specific focus on the subjective

experiences and views of other experts in the field. The study aims to examine the intricate mechanisms through which racism manifests in former Model C schools by evaluating personal narratives. This will highlight the pressing necessity for educational methods that are all-encompassing and promote fairness. To deal with racism in schools, school leaders must be able to transform through critical reflective praxis to become culturally responsive leaders who prioritise social justice (Kotz, 2024).

Racism in educational institutions is a pressing issue that reflects broader societal inequalities. Former Model C schools in South Africa, established during apartheid to serve white students, continue to grapple with racial dynamics despite the country's transition to democracy. This study explores the prevalence of racism in these schools from a social justice perspective, examining the experiences of students and the systemic factors contributing to racial disparities. Former Model C schools are semi-private institutions that were desegregated in the early 1990s as apartheid ended. While these schools have become more racially diverse, historical legacies and institutional cultures have persisted, often marginalizing non-white students. Understanding this context is crucial for analyzing current manifestations of racism.

## 2. Racial Segregation and Discrimination in Former Model C Schools

The persistence of racism and racial inequities in former Model C schools presents significant challenges from a social justice perspective. These schools, which were designed to uphold white privilege and exclusion, have yet to fully transform into truly inclusive and equitable educational institutions. The legacy of apartheid continues to cast a long shadow over South Africa's education system, particularly in the context of former Model C schools. These schools, originally designed to cater to the educational needs of the white minority under the apartheid regime, have struggled to adapt to the post-apartheid era and promote genuine racial integration and equity (Soudien, 2004; Subreenduth, 2013). From a social justice perspective, the prevalence of racism and racial inequities within these schools is a concerning **issue** that warrants critical examination.

During the apartheid era, the education system in South Africa was explicitly designed to maintain racial segregation and white privilege. Model C schools, as they were known, were established as a means of ensuring that the white minority population received a high-quality education, while the majority Black and other non-white students were relegated to inferior, underfunded schools (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). This system of educational apartheid reinforced racial hierarchies and denied equal access to educational opportunities. Even after the demise of the apartheid regime and the transition to a democratic South Africa, many former Model C schools have struggled to shed their legacy of racial exclusion and discrimination. Studies have revealed the persistence of racial segregation within these schools with much of the student population often remaining predominantly white (Soudien, 2004; Subreenduth, 2013). This lack of racial diversity is compounded by the continuation of institutional practices and cultural norms that privilege white students and marginalize their Black and non-white peers. One of the key manifestations of racism in former Model C schools is the prevalence of microaggressions and racial harassment experienced by non-white students. Microaggressions are subtle, often unintentional, comments or actions that convey negative or derogatory messages about a person's racial or ethnic identity (Sue et al., 2007). These can take the form of dismissive comments, insensitive stereotypes, or the exclusion of non-white students from social activities and leadership positions. Research has shown that Black and other non-white students in former Model C schools frequently encounter such microaggressions, which can have a profound impact on their sense of belonging, self-esteem, and academic performance (Subreenduth, 2013; Soudien, 2004). In some cases, these microaggressions escalate into overt acts of racial harassment, such as racial slurs, physical altercations, or the defacement of property with racist graffiti.

Racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa's education system have been a longstanding issue, with the apartheid regime's policies of enforced racial separation having a lasting impact on the country's schools. One of the key areas where these issues persist is in the former "Model C" schools, which were previously reserved for white students under the apartheid system.

The term "Model C" refers to a category of public schools that were established during the late apartheid era in the 1990s. These schools were designed to provide a higher-quality education than the typical public schools, but with the caveat that they were still segregated along racial lines (Soudien, 2004). The Model C schools were given greater autonomy and funding than other public schools, and were able to charge higher fees, which effectively excluded many Black and other non-white students from attending. Even after the end of apartheid in 1994 and the official desegregation of the education system, many former Model C schools have continued to struggle with issues of racial discrimination and inequality. One of the key challenges is the persistence of racial imbalances in the student populations of these schools. Despite the legal requirement for schools to be racially

integrated, many former Model C schools remain predominantly white, with a small number of non-white students (Lemon & Battersby-Lennard, 2011).

This racial imbalance is often the result of a combination of factors, including the historical legacy of apartheid, the socioeconomic status of the surrounding communities, and the admissions policies and practices of the schools themselves. Many former Model C schools have been accused of using covert or implicit admissions criteria that effectively exclude non-white students, such as requiring high academic achievement, a strong command of English, or the ability to pay high school fees (Battersby, 2004). The persistence of racial segregation in former Model C schools has also been linked to broader patterns of residential segregation and socioeconomic inequality in South Africa. Many of these schools are in historically white, affluent neighborhoods, which makes it difficult for non-white students from lower-income areas to access them (Lemanski, 2006). In addition to the issue of racial imbalance, former Model C schools have also been criticized for perpetuating and even exacerbating racial discrimination and prejudice within their walls. Studies have documented instances of racial harassment, microaggressions, and other forms of racial bias experienced by non-white students in these schools (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008).

One of the key factors contributing to this problem is the lack of diversity and representation among the teaching and administrative staff of former Model C schools. Many of these schools continue to be staffed primarily by white educators, who may lack the necessary training and cultural competence to effectively support and advocate for non-white students (Soudien, 2004). The issue of racial discrimination and segregation in former Model C schools is a complex and multifaceted problem, with deep roots in the apartheid era and ongoing challenges in the post-apartheid context. Addressing these issues will require a comprehensive and sustained effort on the part of policymakers, school administrators, educators, and communities to promote true integration, equity, and inclusion in the education system.

One potential approach to addressing these issues is through the implementation of more robust and transparent admissions policies and practices that prioritize diversity and equity. This could involve setting explicit goals for racial representation in the student body, providing targeted support and resources for non-white students, and actively recruiting and retaining a more diverse teaching and administrative staff (Battersby-Lennard & Lemon, 2011)

Another important step is to address the broader socioeconomic factors that contribute to racial segregation and inequality in education, such as through investments in affordable housing, public transportation, and community development in historically marginalized areas (Lemanski, 2006). This could help to create more equitable access to educational opportunities and reduce the barriers that many non-white students face in accessing former Model C schools.

It is crucial to address the issue of racial discrimination and bias within the schools themselves, through comprehensive training and professional development for educators, the implementation of anti-racism and diversity curricula, and the creation of safe and inclusive school climates that celebrate and support the diversity of the student body (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008).

In addressing the issue of racial segregation and discrimination in former Model C schools will require a multifaceted and sustained effort, drawing on the expertise and collaboration of a range of stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, community leaders, and civil society organizations. By prioritizing equity, inclusion, and diversity in the education system, South Africa can work towards a more just and equitable future for all its citizens. Racial segregation and discrimination in schools have been persistent issues in many countries, even after the implementation of policies aimed at promoting educational equity and integration. One such example is the case of "former Model C schools" in South Africa, which highlights the challenges of addressing the legacy of apartheid in the education system.

During the apartheid era in South Africa, the government implemented the Model C school system, which was designed to maintain racial segregation in education. These schools were initially reserved for white students, with limited access for students of other racial groups (Soudien, 2004). After the end of apartheid in 1994, former Model C schools were theoretically desegregated and opened to students of all races. However, the legacy of this discriminatory system has continued to shape the educational experiences of students in these schools. One of the key issues related to former Model C schools is the persistence of racial segregation and discrimination. Despite the formal desegregation, many of these schools have remained predominantly white, with students of colour often facing various forms of exclusion and marginalization (Soudien, 2004; Davids & Waghid, 2016). This can be attributed to several factors, including the socioeconomic disparities inherited from the apartheid era, as well as the continued dominance of white cultural norms and practices within these schools. For example, research has shown that former Model C schools often maintain curricula, teaching methods, and school cultures that are heavily influenced by Western and white-centric perspectives (Soudien, 2004; Davids & Waghid, 2016). This can

create a sense of alienation and lack of belonging for students of colour, who may feel that their experiences and identities are not adequately represented or valued within the school environment.

Moreover, students of colour in former Model C schools have reported encountering various forms of racial discrimination, such as microaggressions, stereotyping, and differential treatment from teachers and peers (Soudien, 2004; Davids & Waghid, 2016). This can have a significant impact on their academic and social well-being, leading to feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and reduced academic performance. The persistence of racial segregation and discrimination in former Model C schools is also closely linked to broader socioeconomic inequalities in South African society. Many of these schools are in affluent, predominantly white areas, and the high fees and other financial barriers associated with attending these schools can effectively exclude students from lower-income families, who are more likely to be people of colour (Soudien, 2004; Davids & Waghid, 2016).

To address these issues, various educational reforms and initiatives have been implemented, such as the introduction of policies aimed at promoting diversity, inclusion, and social justice within the education system (Department of Education, 2001). However, the implementation of these policies has often been challenging, with schools and communities facing resistance to change and the need to confront deep-seated prejudices and power dynamics (Soudien, 2004; Davids & Waghid, 2016).

The case of former Model C schools in South Africa highlights the persistent challenges of addressing racial segregation and discrimination in education, even in the aftermath of significant political and social transformation. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the structural and cultural barriers to educational equity, as well as the need to confront the legacy of apartheid and promote more inclusive and equitable educational practices. Racial segregation and discrimination have been longstanding issues in the education system of many countries, with South Africa being a prime example. The legacy of apartheid, which legally enforced racial segregation and discrimination, has had a lasting impact on the education system, even after the end of the apartheid regime.

One aspect of this legacy is the existence of "former Model C schools" in South Africa. Model C schools were a category of public schools that were established during the apartheid era, primarily catering to the white population. These schools were granted a higher degree of autonomy and resources compared to other public schools, which were often underfunded and under-resourced (Soudien, 2004). After the end of apartheid in 1994, these former Model C schools continued to maintain their advantaged status, perpetuating racial segregation and discrimination in the education system. Despite the efforts to transform the education system, the former Model C schools have largely retained their exclusivity and continue to be dominated by white students and teachers (Soudien, 2004).

Another way in which racial segregation and discrimination persist in former Model C schools is through the school admissions process. These schools often use mechanisms, such as language policies and school fees, to effectively exclude students from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly those from historically marginalized racial groups (Zuma, 2017). The high school fees and the requirement of proficiency in the language of instruction (often English or Afrikaans) create significant barriers for many students from low-income and historically disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the curriculum and teaching practices in former Model C schools have been criticized for their lack of diversity and representation. The curriculum often reflects a Eurocentric perspective, with limited inclusion of the histories, experiences, and perspectives of non-white communities (Msila, 2007). This can contribute to a sense of alienation and marginalization among students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Furthermore, the teaching staff in former Model C schools is often predominantly white, which can perpetuate a culture of white privilege and dominance within the school environment. The lack of diversity among the teaching staff can also limit the ability of students from diverse backgrounds to see themselves reflected in the leadership and role models of the school (Soudien, 2004). The persistence of racial segregation and discrimination in former Model C schools has had significant consequences for the educational outcomes and experiences of students from historically disadvantaged communities. Studies have shown that students from these communities often face higher levels of academic underachievement, lower self-esteem, and a greater sense of exclusion and marginalization within the school environment (Msila, 2007). To address these issues, various efforts have been made to transform the education system in South Africa and promote greater inclusivity and equity in former Model C schools. These efforts have included policy changes, such as the implementation of the South African Schools Act of 1996, which aimed to promote desegregation and equal access to education (Zuma, 2017). Additionally, there have been initiatives to diversify the teaching staff, incorporate more inclusive curricula, and provide support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

However, the process of transforming the former Model C schools has been slow and challenging, as these schools have often resisted change and maintained their exclusivity (Soudien, 2004). The deep-rooted legacy of

apartheid and the persistent power structures within the education system have made it difficult to achieve meaningful and lasting change. The issue of racial segregation and discrimination in former Model C schools in South Africa remains a significant challenge. These schools have continued to perpetuate the legacy of apartheid, hindering the goal of creating a more equitable and inclusive education system. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive and sustained effort to transform the culture, policies, and practices within these schools, as well as the broader education system, to ensure that all students, regardless of their racial or socioeconomic background, have access to quality education and equal opportunities.

### **3. Method**

The study is underpinned by the Social Justice Theoretical Framework in analysing the correlation between racism and social justice. This framework is utilised as a lens to understand the complex and varied issues that were examined in the literature review. Racism is the belief that one race is superior to another, and it is a widespread issue that has permeated various cultural institutions, especially educational systems (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Social justice refers to the principle that every student should have equitable access to opportunities, resources, and benefits, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status (Gewirtz, 1998). The presence of racism in former Model C schools in South Africa, which were previously reserved for White children, is an issue of concern from a perspective of social justice. These schools, which were initially created to enforce racial segregation, continue to maintain inequalities, and exclude underprivileged groups, such as Black and other non-White children (Soudien, 2004). Research has shown that these schools often maintain cultural and curricular biases that favour White individuals while ignoring the experiences and perspectives of non-White students (Nkomo et al., 2004). To achieve social justice in the education schooling systems, it is crucial to address the issue of racism at former Model C schools. To tackle this problem, it is imperative to implement a comprehensive approach that include conducting a meticulous and unbiased analysis of institutional rules and procedures. In addition, it is crucial to implement inclusive and culturally appropriate curricula and instructional approaches, as recommended by Enslin (2003). Furthermore, it is imperative to amplify and strengthen the impact of marginalized students in the decision-making processes that shape the educational landscape of the schools (Sehoole, 2006).

#### **3.1 Data collection**

The methodology is qualitative utilising literature review comprising of scholarly sources, e.g., books and articles. The literature review will focus on existing research related to racism in South African schools, particularly former Model C institutions.

#### **3.2 Data analysis**

The researchers systematically evaluated existing research and identified patterns, gaps, and insights that informed their understanding of the prevalence of racism in former Model C schools in South Africa from a social justice perspective. It is concerning that after over 28 years of democracy, racism is still playing out in South African schools. Mpisi and Alexander (2024) in their research analysis concluded that these injustices are seemingly propelled by the notion of 'White privilege'. To them, White privilege are the advantages White people have at the expense of non-White citizens of a country, which is the major source of aggressions that construct the 'other' daily, and which continuously and inexorably inflict the suffering associated with racism.

### **4. Findings**

After apartheid regime and the transition to a democratic South Africa, many former Model C schools are struggling to shed their legacy of racial exclusion and discrimination. Due to racial segregation within these schools much of the student population often remaining predominantly white. Students of colour in in these schools have reported encountering various forms of racial discrimination, such as microaggressions, stereotyping, and differential treatment from teachers and peers.

## **5. Discussion- Conclusions**

### **5.1 Discussion**

The persistence of racism and social injustice in former Model C schools in South Africa is a critical issue that warrants extensive discussion from a social justice perspective. These schools which were previously reserved for the white population during the apartheid era have continued to grapple with the legacy of systemic discrimination and exclusion (Soudien, 2004). Amongst the challenges facing former Model C schools is the lack of

meaningful transformation and integration. Despite the abolition of apartheid policies, these schools have often struggled to create inclusive and equitable environments that cater to the diverse needs of their student populations (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). Studies have documented the prevalence of racial discrimination, microaggressions and a lack of representation in the curriculum and school leadership (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008).

The issue of access and affordability is another significant barrier to social justice in former Model C schools. Due to their historical status as elite institutions these schools often maintain high fees and admission requirements that exclude learners from disadvantaged backgrounds perpetuating the cycle of educational inequality (Lemanski, 2006). This disproportionately affects black and other non-white students furthering and entrenching the racial disparities in the education system (Saff, 1995). The spatial distribution of former Model C schools also contributes to the perpetuation of racial segregation and social injustice. These schools are often located in historically white affluent neighbourhoods making them physically and culturally inaccessible to learners from marginalised communities (Lemon & Battersby-Lennard, 2011). This geographic isolation reinforces the perception of these schools as exclusive enclaves further exacerbating the divide between the privileged and the underprivileged.

In mitigating these challenges and promote social justice in former Model C schools, a comprehensive and multifaceted approach is necessary. This may include implementing robust diversity and inclusion programs by revising admission policies to prioritize equity and representation and investing in targeted outreach and support initiatives for underserved communities (Battersby, 2004). In the same vein, critical self-reflection and ongoing professional development for teachers and school managers can help to foster a culture of anti-racism and social consciousness (Soudien, 2004). Thus, the prevalence of racism and social injustice in former Model C schools in South Africa is a complex and deeply rooted issue that requires a sustained and collaborative effort to resolve. By prioritising social justice and equity in education these schools can play a vital role in transforming the landscape of South African society and promoting a more inclusive and just future for all.

Racism remains a persistent issue in many former Model C schools in South Africa, despite the country's transition to democracy and efforts to promote desegregation and integration in the education system. Former Model C schools were previously designated for white students under the apartheid regime, and they continue to struggle with the legacy of racial segregation and discrimination (Horn, 2024). Studies have shown that these schools often maintain a predominantly white student population with black and other non-white students underrepresented (Sujee, 2004). The key challenges facing former Model C schools is the perpetuation of a "culture of whiteness" (Soudien, 2004). This is characterized by the dominance of white cultural norms, values and practices which can create a sense of exclusion and marginalisation for non-white students (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008). This can manifest in various forms, such as the curriculum, teaching methods, extracurricular activities and even the physical environment of the school. Furthermore, there have been reports of racial discrimination, aggressions and even overt acts of racism experienced by non-white students in these schools (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). This includes incidents of racial slurs, harassment and unfair treatment by teachers and other staff members as well as among the student body.

The persistence of racism in former Model C schools can be attributed to various factors including the continued socioeconomic disparities between white and non-white communities, the reluctance of some white parents to accept the desegregation of schools and the lack of effective policies and interventions to address the issue (Lemanski, 2006).

### **Mitigating Strategies**

To mitigate the challenges of racism in former Model C schools, a multifaceted approach is needed. This may include implementing comprehensive diversity and inclusion programs that promote cross-cultural understanding, respect, and a sense of appreciation (Sujee, 2004). Providing ongoing training and support for teachers and staff to recognize and address racial biases and discrimination (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008). Encouraging greater parental and community involvement in the school community to foster a sense of shared ownership and responsibility (Donaldson & Kotze, 1996). Reviewing and revising curricula, teaching materials, and extracurricular activities to ensure they are representative and inclusive of diverse perspectives and experiences (Soudien, 2004). Strengthening accountability measures and establishing clear policies and procedures for addressing incidents of racism and discrimination (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). By addressing the deeply ingrained issues of racism in former Model C schools, South Africa can take meaningful steps towards creating a more equitable and inclusive education system that serves the needs of all its citizens on a sustainable basis.

### **Practical and Policy Implications**

Addressing racism and racial inequities in former Model C schools in South Africa requires practical and policy interventions. Practical steps include implementing comprehensive anti-racism training for teachers, fostering inclusive curricula that reflect diverse histories, and establishing robust support systems for affected students. Policy implications involve enforcing stricter anti-discrimination measures, ensuring accountability for racist behaviour, and promoting equitable resource allocation. Additionally, schools should engage with communities to build a culture of inclusivity and respect. By addressing these issues both practically and through policy, former Model C schools can move towards a more equitable and just educational environment.

The persistence of racism and social injustice in former Model C schools in South Africa is a critical issue that warrants extensive discussion from a social justice perspective. These schools which were previously reserved for the white population during the apartheid era have continued to grapple with the legacy of systemic discrimination and exclusion (Soudien, 2004). Amongst the challenges facing former Model C schools is the lack of meaningful transformation and integration. Despite the abolition of apartheid policies, these schools have often struggled to create inclusive and equitable environments that cater to the diverse needs of their student populations (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). Studies have documented the prevalence of racial discrimination, microaggressions and a lack of representation in the curriculum and school leadership (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008).

The issue of access and affordability is another significant barrier to social justice in former Model C schools. Due to their historical status as elite institutions these schools often maintain high fees and admission requirements that exclude learners from disadvantaged backgrounds perpetuating the cycle of educational inequality (Lemanski, 2006). This disproportionately affects black and other non-white students furthering and entrenching the racial disparities in the education system (Saff, 1995). The spatial distribution of former Model C schools also contributes to the perpetuation of racial segregation and social injustice. These schools are often located in historically white affluent neighbourhoods making them physically and culturally inaccessible to learners from marginalised communities (Lemon & Battersby-Lennard, 2011). This geographic isolation reinforces the perception of these schools as exclusive enclaves further exacerbating the divide between the privileged and the underprivileged.

In mitigating these challenges and promote social justice in former Model C schools, a comprehensive and multifaceted approach is necessary. This may include implementing robust diversity and inclusion programs by revising admission policies to prioritize equity and representation and investing in targeted outreach and support initiatives for underserved communities (Battersby, 2004). In the same vein, critical self-reflection and ongoing professional development for teachers and school managers can help to foster a culture of anti-racism and social consciousness (Soudien, 2004). Thus, the prevalence of racism and social injustice in former Model C schools in South Africa is a complex and deeply rooted issue that requires a sustained and collaborative effort to resolve. By prioritising social justice and equity in education these schools can play a vital role in transforming the landscape of South African society and promoting a more inclusive and just future for all.

Racism remains a persistent issue in many former Model C schools in South Africa, despite the country's transition to democracy and efforts to promote desegregation and integration in the education system. Former Model C schools were previously designated for white students under the apartheid regime, and they continue to struggle with the legacy of racial segregation and discrimination (Horn, 2024). Studies have shown that these schools often maintain a predominantly white student population with black and other non-white students underrepresented (Sujee, 2004). The key challenges facing former Model C schools is the perpetuation of a "culture of whiteness" (Soudien, 2004). This is characterized by the dominance of white cultural norms, values and practices which can create a sense of exclusion and marginalisation for non-white students (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008). This can manifest in various forms, such as the curriculum, teaching methods, extracurricular activities and even the physical environment of the school. Furthermore, there have been reports of racial discrimination, aggressions and even overt acts of racism experienced by non-white students in these schools (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). This includes incidents of racial slurs, harassment and unfair treatment by teachers and other staff members as well as among the student body.

The persistence of racism in former Model C schools can be attributed to various factors including the continued socioeconomic disparities between white and non-white communities, the reluctance of some white parents to accept the desegregation of schools and the lack of effective policies and interventions to address the issue (Lemanski, 2006).

### Mitigating Strategies

To mitigate the challenges of racism in former Model C schools, a multifaceted approach is needed. This may include implementing comprehensive diversity and inclusion programs that promote cross-cultural understanding, respect, and a sense of appreciation (Sujee, 2004). Providing ongoing training and support for teachers and staff to recognize and address racial biases and discrimination (Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2008). Encouraging greater parental and community involvement in the school community to foster a sense of shared ownership and responsibility (Donaldson & Kotze, 1996). Reviewing and revising curricula, teaching materials, and extracurricular activities to ensure they are representative and inclusive of diverse perspectives and experiences (Soudien, 2004). Strengthening accountability measures and establishing clear policies and procedures for addressing incidents of racism and discrimination (Vally & Dalamba, 1999). By addressing the deeply ingrained issues of racism in former Model C schools, South Africa can take meaningful steps towards creating a more equitable and inclusive education system that serves the needs of all its citizens on a sustainable basis.

### Practical and Policy Implications

Addressing racism and racial inequities in former Model C schools in South Africa requires practical and policy interventions. Practical steps include implementing comprehensive anti-racism training for teachers, fostering inclusive curricula that reflect diverse histories, and establishing robust support systems for affected students. Policy implications involve enforcing stricter anti-discrimination measures, ensuring accountability for racist behaviour, and promoting equitable resource allocation. Additionally, schools should engage with communities to build a culture of inclusivity and respect. By addressing these issues both practically and through policy, former Model C schools can move towards a more equitable and just educational environment.

### 5.1 Conclusion

The prevalence of racism and racial inequities in former Model C schools in South Africa remains a significant barrier to the realization of social justice in the country's education system. The persistence of racial segregation, microaggressions, and Eurocentric curricula and leadership in these schools perpetuates the legacy of apartheid and denies equal educational opportunities to Black and other non-white students. Addressing this challenge will require a multifaceted and sustained effort, involving comprehensive diversity and inclusion initiatives, the fostering of inclusive school cultures, the diversification of school leadership and faculty, the revision of curricula and instructional practices, engagement with the broader community, and the implementation of systemic policy changes. By prioritizing social justice and actively dismantling the remnants of racial discrimination in former Model C schools, South Africa can take meaningful steps towards a more equitable and inclusive education system that serves the needs of all its citizens.

### References

- Battersby, J. (2004). Cape Town's Model C schools: Desegregation and the intractable inequalities in South African education. *Perspectives in Education*, 22(4), 103-115.
- Dauids, N., & Waghid, Y. (2016). Teaching and learning in the 21st century: A critical perspective from South Africa. In G. W. Noblit (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.141>
- Department of Education. (2001). Education White Paper 6: Special needs education: Building an inclusive education and training system. Department of Education. desegregated schools. Cape Town: HRSC Press. historically 'white' and 'black' schools in contemporary Cape Town, South Africa. *Geoforum*, 42(1), 20-29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2010.07.004>
- Donaldson, R., & Kotze, N. (1996). Residential desegregation dynamics in the South African city of Pretoria. *GeoJournal*, 39(1), 55-63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00174624>
- Enslin, P. (2003). Citizenship education in post-apartheid South Africa. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(1), 73-83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764032000047513>
- Gewirtz, S. (1998). Conceptualizing social justice in education: Mapping the territory. *Journal of Education Policy*, 13(4), 469-484. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093980130402>
- Horn, A. (2024). Trends in the desegregation of former Whites-only state schools in Pretoria (South Africa): a time-space investigation. *South African Geographical Journal*, 106(2), 144-162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03736245.2023.2227153>  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.#>



Konz, A. J. (2024). A Mixed-method Inquiry into Rural School Principal Perspectives Regarding Inclusion Through Social Justice Leadership. [Doctoral dissertation, Southeastern University]. Fire Scholars. <https://firescholars.seu.edu/org-lead/32>

Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, 97(1), 47-68.

Lemanski, C. (2006). Desegregation and integration as linked or distinct? Evidence from a previously 'White' suburb in post-apartheid Cape Town. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 30(3), 564-586. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2006.00677.x>

Lemanski, C. (2006). Residential responses to fear (of crime plus) in two Cape Town.

Lemon, A., & Battersby-Lennard, J. (2011). Studying together, living apart: Spatially differentiated educational spaces in post-apartheid South Africa. *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, 102(5), 529-543. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9663.2011.00655.x>

Liu, H. (2024). Teaching Race in Business Schools: The Challenges and Possibilities of Anti-Racist Education. *Journal of Business Ethics* 193, 749–764. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-024-05722-y>

Mpisi, A., & Alexander, G. (2024). Reflections on racism levelled against Black learners at Historically White South African schools. *African Identities*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2024.2345339>

Msila, V. (2007). From apartheid education to the Revised National Curriculum Statement: Pedagogy for identity formation and nation building in South Africa. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 16(2), 146-160.

Nkomo, M., & Vandeyar, S. (2008). In search of best practice in South African desegregated schools. *The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 21(4), 387-400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610802731867>

Nkomo, M., & Vandeyar, S. (2008). Thinking diversity, building cohesion: A transnational dialogue on education. Rozenberg Publishers.

Nkomo, M., McKinney, C., & Chisholm, L. (Eds.). (2004). Reflections on school integration: Colloquium proceedings. HSRC Press.

Palma, C., Abdou, A. S., Danforth, S., & Griffiths, A. J. (2024). Are deficit perspectives thriving in trauma-informed schools? A historical and anti-racist reflection. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 57(1), 76-92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2023.2192983>

Pitsoe, V.J., & Vlăduțescu, S. (2024). A Critical Analysis of Foucault's Power and Knowledge in Higher Education Research. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, 11(1), 41-51.

Saff, G. (1995). Residential segregation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 85(3), 418-447. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1995.tb01803.x>

Sehoole, C. T. (2006). Democratizing higher education policy: Constraints of reform in post-apartheid South Africa. Routledge

Soudien, C. (2004). 'Constituting the class': An analysis of the process of 'integration' in South African schools. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 12(1), 77-99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681360400200188>

Subreenduth, S. (2013). Translating social justice within post-colonial tensions: Unravelling the realities of a South African school. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 16(4), 565-585. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2013.817774>

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M.,

Sujee, M. (2004). Deracialisation of Gauteng schools: An analysis of changing racial composition 1990-2002. *Perspectives in Education*, 22(4), 47-57.

Vally, S., & Dalamba, Y. (1999). Racism, 'racial integration' and desegregation in South African public secondary schools: A report on a study by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC). South African Human Rights Commission.

Zuma, B. (2017). 'I'm not racist, but...': Transforming educator habitus in South African former model-C schools. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 2, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/the.v2i0.15>