

Employing a discourse analysis technique to analyze teacher's sexuality/Aids discourses in Cape Town.¹

M. Noor Davids

University of the Western Cape, Bellville, Cape Town, South Africa.

e-mail: davfamily@mweb.co.za

1-Introduction

This paper focuses on the importance of the teacher's identity as one of the factors that influences the oft-reported failure of HIV/AIDS educational intervention at schools. The mediation of sexuality/AIDS education by educational policy and teacher's² professional identities has been underscored as a significant factor influencing the outcomes of sexuality/AIDS education. Given the devastating effects that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is having on the population in Sub-Saharan Africa where the AIDS pandemic is posing unprecedented challenges to government and civil society, a better understanding of HIV/AIDS education at the classroom inter-face, could possibly contribute towards the development of improved intervention strategies.

The paper locates the problem of HIV/AIDS education in the present school system that replaced apartheid education. I will refer to the general trends in HIV educational research and argue that my study attempts to respond to some of the epistemological and methodological gaps identified in HIV/AIDS educational research. As a culturally based study, I intend to focus on the discourse of one cultural group in South Africa, namely the Muslim teacher, as an illustration of the gap that presently exist between educational policy and practice of sexuality/AIDS education in schools.

My hypothesis is that the school's curriculum is mediated by the teacher's multiple identities and (re)positioning. The teacher's identity is constitutive of a hidden history

¹ This paper is written in the context of my doctoral study entitled; "An analysis of sexuality/AIDS discourses of Muslim teachers in Cape Town, South Africa."

² The terms "educator" and "learner" are used in the South African educational policy statements, but I am using the terms "teacher" and "pupil", inter-changeably.

of sexuality, that influences diverse sexuality/AIDS educational discourses in the classroom.

I developed a theoretical framework to explain the nature of sexuality/AIDS educational discourses by using some of Foucault's concepts such as the repressive sexuality hypothesis, power, knowledge and discourse.

I argue for sexuality research to be culturally based, and to be researched by a pragmatic use of mixed methodological approaches. As knowledge claims are epistemologically and methodologically based, the need to become aware of the value and limitations of present approaches becomes a critical concern if our understanding of the cultural influence on sexuality is to be better understood.

2-The context of HIV/AIDS education

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest cases of HIV infection in the world. Globally there are an estimated 47 million people infected with HIV and sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 70%, i.e 28 million of the world's infection (UNAIDS, 2003). Within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region³, the countries that have the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates among the adult population are Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland (UNAIDS, 2002). The major mode of HIV transmission in sub-Saharan Africa is heterosexual (UNAIDS, 2001). A high prevalence of sexually transmitted infections, unsafe sex and multiple partners remain the most common causes of new HIV infection rate in the region (UNAIDS, 2002). About 5.6 million South Africans, the majority of whom are in the economically active group, are currently living with the virus (Shisana, et al, HSRC, 2005).

³ The SADC region is made up of 14 countries, which are in close proximity to one another. The region is economically and socially intertwined. There is also a political interlink between countries. The interdependence can be traced to historical ethnic conflicts, with certain ethnic groups and clans from the South migrating to settle in the areas over the Limpopo, today known as Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Later the interdependence was caused by economic migration, with many men from Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia migrating to South Africa and Botswana in search of work in the gold and platinum mines. (Zungu-Dirwayi et al, 2004;12)

What came to light in a recent study on the health of our educators (2005) is that not only do children drop out of school because of HIV/AIDS, but also that school managers and education policy-makers are said to be dying of AIDS, posing major challenges for the supply and demand of teachers as well as educational interventions and behavior change of teachers and pupils. The 2004 prevalence rate among educators in public schools was 12.7%, which is almost the same as the national average percentage (ibid, 2005).

We find ourselves in a situation where the educational sector, which is the most important intervention avenue for the prevention of HIV and AIDS, is also affected by the HIV pandemic in almost the same way as the nation on the whole. The epidemiological realities of HIV infection in the education sector cannot ignore the need to approach the question of sexuality/AIDS education inclusively and creatively, as both teacher and pupil should be recognized as being at risk.

At school, the teacher is expected to represent society's expectations and ideals with regard to sexuality/Aids education, as s/he fulfils a public function in imparting what is regarded as useful knowledge to the younger generations. The school is often viewed as the place where children are prepared for responsible citizenship, and the teacher is expected to act as a "role model". In the light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, this idealized conception of the teacher is in need of revision as schools and teachers per se, have shown to be in need of the same support as the rest of society.

Attempting at an analysis and understanding of teacher's sexuality/AIDS discourses, it is important to keep in mind a clear distinction between apartheid and post-apartheid education. These two historical educational frameworks provide the context in which the contradictory nature of the theory and practices of schools and teachers stand exposed. The present inequalities in the educational landscape is still largely reflective of apartheid neglect of the majority population despite the efforts of the new South African democratic government's to transform the educational system. An unintended consequence in South African educational transformation appears to be that the

ideological nature of educational reform has led to the widening of the gap between the former historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools (Harley & Wedekind, 2004, 210 in Chisholm).

In a multi – country study between Mexico, South Africa and Thailand the role of the school came under review. In response to the question: “Can school HIV programs change behavior?”, the study concluded that there exist no overwhelming evidence to suggest that school programs in developing countries in fact protect youth from HIV infection.(Stewart, et al 2001:3).

The argument has also been made that the school as an institution has the potential for social reproduction as well as social transformation and the potential role for the schools to play a positive role cannot be denied. Introducing sexuality/Aids discussions as a social concern will be challenging the existing discourses and mindsets and open a necessary dialogue in schools. The HIV/Aids pandemic has created a demand for a pedagogical space at school and society to transform traditional forms of social dialogue about sexuality. The compulsion of this dialogue, traditionally caught up in a mode of repression and social reproduction, is now being challenged to face possible change. I would argue that the HIV pandemic has created “rupture”⁴ in the way schools and society have previously engaged with issues of sexuality. In the context of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the rupture in the public sexuality discourse will challenge the existing norms that governed sexuality beliefs, norms and attitudes.

⁴ Rupture is used to refer to the rapid increase in knowledge and information and the ensuing discourse that emanate about HIV/Aids in the field of research and publications. The use of rupture in this sense influences the dominant sexuality/Aids discourse incisively and profoundly. The second use of the term refers to the epistemological break in the historical stages of society. In this paper I am arguing that the HIV/Aids pandemic brought about a rupture in both sexuality/Aids discourse as well as a moment of rupture and separation with historically perceived stages. Our knowledge of sexuality became ruptured epistemologically as the grand narratives that formed the bases of sexuality/AIDS education became questioned.

In South Africa, the National Policy on HIV/AIDS focuses predominantly on health issues, and insufficiently on issues related to culture and context. The context in which people live has been shown to have a much higher impact on final behavior (Simbayi et al, 2005). Notwithstanding the need for advocacy to agitate for improved educational provision and practice, the HIV pandemic will be better served with a closer consideration for the cultural context in which people's sexual behavior is shaped.

The Muslim teacher's sexuality/Aids discursivity as an expression of a particular cultural type in South African society can be appropriated and abstracted as a unit of research in order to obtain meaningful data of the constitutive nature of a teacher's theory and practice in a cultural context.

The local Muslim teacher's theory and practice is in fact an outward expression of culture that is intrinsically and historically determined and connected to environmental and material conditions. On the basis of discursive research data, I will argue that Muslim teachers are internally differentiated which will dispel the common view that Muslim teachers have a homogenous sexuality/AIDS discourse, and that they are the transmitters and protectors of a monolithic cultural perspective on sexuality/Aids education.

3-The need for cultural-based teacher research

The need for educational research to close the gap between what is available as knowledge and what is lacking, is not only connected with the consequences of policy shortcomings. In fact the misalignment between policy and research practice need to be brought in line so that a clearer relationship between policy, research foci and educational practice in sexuality/AIDS could emerge. The issue of misalignment runs much deeper than the apparent neglect that researchers are accused of and policy criticized for. It involves epistemological and methodological challenges, which the researcher has to confront if new knowledge of peoples' behavior is to inform new ways of teaching sexuality/AIDS education.

In an article on educational research and HIV/AIDS, Baxen and Breidlid (2004:10) argue that in the South African context, research is limited in scope because the social and cultural context as a discursive field, is either absent or unaccounted for in many of the studies that they scrutinized. Baxen and Breidlid identified three major trends that educational research responded to and three key elements that are left unaccounted for in the research on HIV/AIDS education. They claim that educational research mainly dealt with concerns of **projections** of HIV/AIDS prevalence rates and its impact on the educational sector and society (Johnson, 2000, Cohen 2002, Kelly et al 2000,). These studies focus on how the pandemic would erode the human resources in society and its projected effects on population growth and life expectancies. Johnson (2000) suggests that the education sector firstly needs to acknowledge that HIV/AIDS education is not only about ensuring good life skills and other prevention programs. He (Johnson, 2000) asserts that schools will need to be involved in identifying vulnerable children and in finding ways to enable them to cope under severe circumstances (Baxen & Breidlid, 2004:12). The educational relevance of projections as to how the HIV pandemic may affect the supply and the demand of teachers in relation to the needs of the educational sector is often emphasized. As an example, a study that focuses on HIV/AIDS in South African public schools asserts that 55% of teachers intend leaving the profession for reasons such as low job satisfaction and job stress (Shisana et al, 2005:125). The purpose of these studies is to identify how to reduce the potential attrition of teachers from the education sector in an HIV affected workplace environment.

According to Baxen and Breidlid (2004) the category that focuses on the “**KAP**-type research”,(being **k**nowledge, **a**ttitude and **p**ractice), often recommend ways to develop efficacy in managing or teaching sexuality education (Wood et al., 1997; Levine and Ross 2002; Kelly 2000). Knowledge as a factor that influences behavior change has long been an issue of controversy. The general expectation that education should lead to an increase in knowledge, which should then lead to the desirable behavior change, has been a cornerstone of educational strategies. The fact that behavior change involves much more than just knowledge has, shifted research to question what lies behind the decision-making processes that lead people to certain sexual behaviors. As HIV infection is mainly spread through sexual activity, it is crucial to excavate the

production processes that shape and form the sexualities of individuals. In the case of educators who are teaching sexuality/AIDS education, it becomes necessary to understand the discursive bases on which they think and talk about sexuality.

The focus of educational research on the **impact and outcomes** of educational interventions at schools has also been identified as another area of research (Kaufman 2002; Rivers and Aggleton 1999; Grunseit and Aggleton; Wight 1999; Skinner 2001 Mirembe 2002). These studies assessed the impact of education on risky sexual behavior, the limitations of the school in teaching sexuality education, the impact of education on sexual debut, the correlation between knowledge and its effects on sexual behavior, the gap between the teacher and the youth cultures and the arguments for learner involvement to combat “HIV/AIDS fatigue”. These studies do not suggest a relationship between teacher identity production and educational discourse, but they open up debates around the impact of culture on teaching.

Baxen and Breidlid’s identification of the first gap in research namely the lack of a **critical approach to cultural values**, and how, through this research silence, culture is either misinterpreted as fixed and static, essentialist or conflated with ethnicity and language. As studies on HIV/AIDS education is predominantly quantitative in its approach, the cultural influences are often not recognized as they are hidden from the empirical lenses of the quantitative researcher. Baxen and Breidlid further argue that educational research can contribute meaningfully to the understanding of the discursive fields of practice by asking questions about where and how the production and reproduction of the HIV/AIDS discourses in education are shaped. Future research should focus on a deeper understanding of discourse, which should be viewed from embedded and situated discursive spaces (contexts) where social and cultural practices are negotiated, produced and reproduced (Baxen and Breidlid, 2004: 11).

The second shortcoming in educational research and HIV/AIDS is the lack of knowledge at the “**chalk-face**” level at schools. Here the researchers are alluding to the need to know more about the interactive teaching space in the classroom. Of special

interest would be new knowledge about the nature of the didactical processes and the impact of sexuality/AIDS education on the learners.

The third neglected area of research has been the outcome of the **epistemological and methodological** questions that have driven the research. The dominant medical, economic and political discourses are translated into research activities that are still not responding to the basic issues as to why youth find themselves unable to negotiate safe-sex practices and why teachers are still challenged in teaching sexuality/AIDS education. These questions would open new epistemological and methodological boundaries on educational research in the South African classroom.

The lack of research around cultural values and the lack of the knowledge at the classroom level can be ascribed to the dominant epistemological interests and methodological approaches to sexuality research. My contention is that the pedagogical processes at the classroom level are mediated by the multiple nature of the educator's professional identity, which also constitutes the educators' individual history of his/her sexuality. A meaningful approach to sexuality/AIDS education should attempt at going beyond the dominant epistemological and methodological framework and research practices, a challenge that is still largely unfronted.

4-Responding to the epistemological and methodological gaps

The dominant message that emerged from the studies done in educational research on HIV/Aids is that society has not developed a comfortable way for sexuality discourses to become part of the normal things that people talk about in their daily lives. In the field of teacher education, sexuality education has only recently been introduced as a compulsory module as part of the school curriculum and in teacher training. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has brought about a rupture in sexuality/AIDS education and is an integral part of educational policy and curriculum. Given the proliferation of the rate of HIV infection amongst all sexually active sections of the population, society often

turns towards schools to intervene, expecting positive outcomes from education and teachers. It seems that society has not sufficiently come to terms with the fact that sexuality is *not* what is commonly believed to be a purely natural phenomenon outside the boundaries of culture, that our sexual drives are not fixed, and that the history of sexuality is not simply an account of reactions to those basic biological givens (Weeks, 1995:33). The HIV/Aids pandemic has rendered sexually, and potentially sexual active human beings vulnerable precisely because of the uncertainties and complexities about sexuality. The multiple narratives that accompany the phenomena of diverse sexual identities in the public and private domain, must invariably lead to questions of its cultural production and social (re)construction. The need to develop a sociological explanation and an understanding of the diverse nature of sexuality discourses would better serve the educational responses of society in confronting the challenges posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Micheal Foucault employed the notion of a “sexually repressive hypothesis” to describe modern society’s “silence” about sexuality. Foucault’s explanation for a repressed and underdeveloped sexuality discourse is juxtaposed with his notion of an apparent contradictory “incitement to discourse” which Foucault explains as follows:

What is peculiar to modern societies, in fact, is not that they consigned sex to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it ad infinitum, while exploiting it as the secret. (Foucault, 1976:35).

Society is fast realizing that a continuation of silence about sexuality will result in greater social disruption caused by the HIV pandemic. The more society suppresses sexuality, the more society develops means to express sexuality in other forms. Sexuality takes on a private and public discourse and this tension produces a discourse that is diverse and ambiguous.

The conceptual relation between HIV infection and sexual behavior has led to the stigmatization of the HIV pandemic as being essentially a result of uncontrolled and

illicit sexual activity. Sexuality/AIDS education became stigmatized as an area in educational practice that should prevent the spread of the virus as well as protecting the sexual morality of society by suppressing sexual activity. The correspondence between society and school can be explained by looking at how teachers at school are acting upon the social norms and values expected of them. Social relations at schools would include relations between pupils and teachers, teachers and teachers, teachers and parents, teachers and authoritative figures within the school settings extending to the educational and political authorities. Within this social network of educational relations operates an underlying notion of authority and power, which governs the sexuality discourse that shape what can possibly be said and what must be left unsaid.

In this respect, the approach of Michel Foucault, in analysing how power and knowledge shape discourse and social relations, will be employed as a key part of my analytical framework. The role and influence of power in shaping identity, especially those of teachers, are directly linked to the production of discourse. Foucault's understanding of discourse would illuminate the complexities in educational relations and discourse analysis would problematize particular embedded meanings of sexuality/Aids discourse of teachers.

Foucault's method of discourse analysis will be used to analyze the nature of teacher's discourse as being socially constitutive and culturally produced. Popkewitz (1987) uses Foucault's discourse analysis as a method of deconstructing cultural codes that can be used to understand the meaning of teacher sexuality discourses. Explaining Foucault's method, Popkewitz suggests that:

Codes of culture are illuminated by an examination of discourse. In the realm of discourse, Foucault is interested in more than the rules and structure of grammar. Our signs, gesture, routines and behaviors carry rules about what is to be considered normal, reasonable, and legitimate. Discourse sets conditions by which events are interpreted and one's self as an individual is located in a dynamic world. Embedded in codes of culture, Foucault continues, are power relations. The notions of power relates not to ownership but to the

understanding of changing social relations and innumerable vantage points from which power is exercised. (Popkewitz, 1987:4)

Taking the position that discourse is saying more than what is being articulated and that it changes within social contexts, Soudien (2001) alludes to the importance of discourse in understanding identity formation. He argues that discourse should be unlocked by interpreting its production. Soudien asserts that;

they (discourse) are not objective descriptions of the world, but are compositions riven with fractures and illogicalities that 'betray' their social constructedness. It is this social constructedness that makes them available for scrutiny, and so permits a reading of their character. Once they are understood as social constructs they can be seen for what they are, namely, regimes of power that shift and change. (Soudien, 2001:103)

Taking the centrality of power and knowledge as part of teacher discourse and identity, Foucault's discourse analytical approach holds significant value in providing a sociological interpretation for the diversity in sexuality/AIDS discourse. I do not intend to give an overview of Foucault's work as part of the history of modern sociological thought. I will rather attempt at appropriating some of the themes and concepts that Foucault used in his work on sexuality and society, as analytical tools in explaining the discourses of human beings in the ordering of society, and how the teacher who holds a position of power and knowledge exercises discourse which asserts an individual's identity.

Identity is shaped socially, and discourse represents an expression of the individual's intentions for action. According to Foucault it is *discourse* that creates systems of possibilities that would make a field of knowledge possible. More specifically, discourse according to Foucault is;

..about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority. Discourses embody meaning and social

relationships, they constitute both subjectivity and power relations... Thus, discourses construct certain possibilities for thought. They order and combine words in particular ways and exclude or displace other combinations (Ball, 1990:17).

Sexual identities of teachers are produced in *mediating social processes* between the self and the discursive and material environment during socialization. Discourse analysis can be used to deconstruct the discursive make up of the teachers in my study. More specifically, I will be researching the sexuality/Aids discourses of teachers to understand the connection between their sexual identities and their educational sexuality/AIDS discourses.

Many scholars have analyzed the work of Foucault from different positions. They may approach it thematically (Bistow, 1999), or they approached his work on the basis of specific books, analyzing the major themes as expounded in his works. It is not always possible to develop a coherent picture of Foucault's work as his approach to the study of society draws upon divergent traditions in Western intellectual thought. For example, he shares the Marxian view of the importance of the material realm in the formation of subjective thought, but he rejects any notion of a structured social order. His work on the nature of *power* goes far beyond the notion of power as a form of domination and oppression. He rather sees power as having a productive side in human relations, which may account for the unpredictable element in human behavior rather than a deterministic way that is associated with the modernist manner in explaining a course of events.² Discourse analysis provides the entry point to understand the suppressed and subjective meanings of an individual's sexual identity.

According to Foucault, the process of "*subjectification*"⁵ occurs when the individual's self concept is formed and becomes the subject. Self-formation has a long and

⁵ Subjectification or subjectivation refers to the Foucauldian notion in which the historical practices of the making of a subject is studied. Truth and knowledge become transposed from the habitus to the subject through mediating processes of subjectivation.

complicated genealogy; it takes place through a variety of operations on people's bodies, on their own souls, on their thoughts, on their own conduct. (Rabinow, 1985:11) The interplay between the discursive environment and the subject produces the possibilities for new discourse and identity. In order for the boundaries to be shifted beyond the descriptive materials that inform us about sexuality and discourse, a closer analysis of the processes that produced particular teacher's sexual identities should be matched with teacher sexuality/AIDS discourse. The "repressive sexuality discourse" and the "incitement to sexual discourse" could then be analyzed within a definite and localized cultural context.

While the school is generally regarded as a place of 'hope' against the pandemic, this view is now beginning to shift towards the view of the school as a critical institution of power, that may have unintended negative outcomes for HIV infections.

Notwithstanding the school as an institution with positive functions for the individual and society, the school may see girls and boys entry as an educational process, and a natural part of socialization, but power relations and gender perceptions and practices may shape sexuality negatively. To explain the suppressive nature of the school in relation to sexuality, the notion of a "hidden sexual curriculum" operates as part of the normal processes involved in schooling. The "hidden sexual curriculum" of the school is embedded in a notion of gender-normativity on which schools generally operate.

The research around gender violence at school, points to the fact that unequal power relations that operate at the institutionalised pattern of socialization, lead to sexual exploitation at school. As for the HIV/Aids pandemic, it poses major challenges in the transformation of present power and gender inequalities that are taken for granted at schools. The HIV/Aids pandemic will not be properly addressed as long as the existing unequal gender and power relations at schools are ignored and reproduced. This particularly morbid view of the school as a site of struggle against the HIV/Aids pandemic is seldom shared in established educational debate and conversations. Raising this debate is imperative in the context of sexuality/Aids education as

illustrated in Foucault's notion of the fluidity of power in a social context. Contending positions of power becomes an expression of discourse and possible changing of social relations. The role and function of the school and the teacher as instruments of power are never static. They are always relational and sequential and bring out the oppressive nature of power relations between teachers and pupils that actually lead to the emergence of the above discourses, which are in fact *new regimes of truth*. Changing positions of power create new possibilities for inter-subjective mediation to produce contending regimes of truth. Regimes of truth change discursively under conditions where the abuses of the pupils become *discourses of power*, thus exposing the actions of the abusive teacher.

Foucault's notion of power is more individualized, recognizing that power is not necessarily negative. It may be "repressive" and may "censor" and "conceal", but power is also productive. It produces reality and domains of objects as rituals of truth. (Foucault in Rabinow, 1984:205). It is the manner in which Foucault applied his notion of rationality and his conceptualisation of history that made it possible for me as educationist to understand the complexities of teachers' sexuality differently from the dominant way in which teachers were viewed. Developing alternative theoretical conceptualisations, which recognize the changing face of the school as a social institution, would go together with the development of alternative methodological approaches that would make it possible for alternative theoretical frameworks to be methodologically researchable. I prefer the use of a pragmatic approach that would seek the most appropriate ways to answer research questions. Recognizing the validity in both the quantitative and qualitative approach to researching sexuality/AIDS educational discourse, I prefer a compromising position on the selection of methodological techniques, as the one extends the meaning of the other.

5-Arguing for the use of a mixed methodological approach.

In her study on Open Schools in South Africa, Christie (1990) made use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. She asserts that the use of a theoretical

approach that assumes the agential role of people in shaping the social world, the materiality and historical specificity of social forms, the relationship of consciousness to context, and a holistic and dialectic approach to social analysis, is compatible with the qualitative accounts of individuals interwoven with the large-scale quantitative accounts that have become part of social consciousness (Christie, 1990:145). As justification for the use of these methodologies, Christie brought out the value of both. She argues that empirical data is not adequate in itself for explaining the social world as the use of both quantitative methods such as the survey and qualitative method such as the interview are useful in explaining their own conditions of existence.(Christie, 1990:146). Christie justifies her use of the quantitative and qualitative methods in terms of their contextual appropriateness to explain a social issue.

My study recognizes the theoretical and methodological tensions between social science paradigms but resolves it by adopting a similar pragmatic position, giving credence to the need to understand and select, more than supporting a particular research paradigm.

The methodological design for this study focuses on how the sexuality and AIDS discourses of teacher connect with the theoretical construction of the Foucauldian notion of a 'repressive sexuality discourse', and 'an incitement to engage with a sexuality discourse'. As a central argument in this paper the claim is made that teacher's sexuality/AIDS discourses are influenced by their identities. While macro and micro discursive social environments shape individual identities, my research does not ignore the potential of the impact of the identities on these environments. This dialectical relationship between teacher identity and the environment and the social processes that mediate and shape these relations, pose methodological challenges that would enlighten aspects of the sexual identities of teachers. The methodological design aims at establishing an explanation of the nature of the relationship between individual identities by studying individual teacher's sexuality/AIDS discourses qualitatively, and by linking those individualize identities with the social context by using the quantitative method of a survey.

Because sexuality is not easily researchable, the selection of the research strategy and methodological techniques form the basis of knowledge claims that may emanate from the study. According to Creswell, (2003), knowledge claims have broadly been based on four epistemological and theoretical frameworks, each with its accompanying methods of data collection. These broad approaches have been identified as positivism, which based knowledge on causal relationships between variables and defends objectivity and reliability as central values. Secondly, the socially constructed knowledge is based on an understanding that meaning is socially constructed within a cultural and historical context and knowledge is based on data generated largely inductively from the ground (Creswell, 2003: 9). Thirdly, advocacy/participatory knowledge claims are focused on bringing about change in practice and seeks to empower and emancipate human beings from oppressive conditions (Creswell, 2003:11). Fourthly, pragmatic knowledge claims is not committed to one philosophical approach and uses a mixed methods i.e quantitative and qualitative techniques. There is no strict dualism between the mind and reality and the mixed method approached is used to gain a better understanding of a research problem. Pragmatists recognize the social and historical context of research and allow space for a postmodern turn, which may lead to the recognition of the active role of the individual in his/her decision-making contexts (ibid, 2003:12).

The reason for my choice of the mixed method approach in studying sexuality discourses lies in the value of both the quantitative and the qualitative epistemology and methodology in creating a broad descriptive picture of the discursive context of the study, as well as obtaining research material embedded in localized and focused analytical categories. I will use the methods in an integral way, showing the positive aspects of the qualitative approach and the value of descriptive data of the quantitative technique. However, weakness of quantitative research is that often the experimental manipulation does not match well with reality (Wiederman, 2001: 11). In the context of understanding sexuality, instead of researching superficially the sexual behavior of teachers by using only the survey technique, interview and other qualitative data is better poised to probing the private meanings of sexuality than the survey may ever be. General descriptive studies may be used as a starting point to talk about sexuality in

terms of sexual behavior, attitudes, beliefs and experiences, but descriptive studies cannot be used to determine anything about relationships among variables or what causes particular attitudes or behavior (Wiederman, 2001:11). I view the use of mixed methodologies in a complementary way, allowing for the best method of data collection to be decided by the questions posed by the researcher.

The limited knowledge that we have about the influence of the cultural contexts on teachers sexuality, influenced the formulation of educational policy and interventions that responded to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Needless to say, present educational policy and educational interventions are far removed from the empirical and even subjective realities of teacher's engagement with sexuality/AIDS education in the classrooms. In the case of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, policy formulation could not be delayed due a lack of knowledge and research in sexuality education. The epistemological framework that dominated educational thinking at the time, became the operational basis for policy formulation and implementation. What further exacerbated the educational South African context was not only the ideological continuities of apartheid education, but the lack of meaningful knowledge and approaches to multiculturalism which resulted in uninformed, homogenous and uniformed policies applied to a broadly diverse, unequal and differentiated schooling system.

Due to the historical background of apartheid education, present South African research is lacking in basic knowledge about culture and sexuality. In a qualitative study (Parker, in Herdt; 1992: 228) on Brazilian culture and sexual diversity, sexuality was viewed as having been molded by diverse social institutions and often contradictory, cultural discourses. A number of cultural frames mapped out the sexual universe of Brazil, defining the range of classifiable categories as "socially acceptable" and others "forbidden". In Brazil the notion of transgression plays upon a culturally defined distinction between notions of public and private conduct. Parker conceptualized an "ideology of the erotic", a configuration based on a folk expression such as "beneath the sheets, anything can happen" or more commonly, "within four walls, anything can happen" (ibid, 1992: 228). According to Parker it is the social and cultural construction of potential practices that allows individuals to imagine them and, perhaps, to integrate them into their own experience (Parker;1992: 236).

These categories that showed up in Parker's Brazilian study on sexual diversity and culture, corresponds with Foucault's notions of Repression and Incitement. Parkers' notion of a "private and public", and "acceptable and forbidden" polarities are shaped in a particular culture and their meanings are learnt from inter-subjective symbols generated in social life. If compared with how I would approach aspects of teacher's sexuality discourse, a qualitative method could facilitate a way in creating access to those hidden sexual categories of teacher identity. These research categories could possibly be identified in the public discourses of teachers.

The theoretical assumption of this study is based on the notion of a sexuality discourse that shows repression and incitement. The repressive –incitement polarity is a juxtaposition of sexuality discourse according to Foucault, and as such, should be traceable in the discourses of teachers. In a plurality of quantitative and qualitative methodological techniques, my research design would map a universe of general characteristics of teacher's professional, ideological/religious and sexual identity. This will be followed by an analysis of the particularity of the Muslim teacher as a cultural type to illustrate the discursive diversity and differentiation within the Muslim culture and its correspondence in terms of its diversity and differentiation with the generality of teachers.

The decision to use the mixed method approach lies in the nature of the research question, which recognizes the existence of an external reality as being a superficial conceptualization of the individual, and a deeper subjectivity of identity. Firstly, the consequences of a quantitative approach to the study of HIV/AIDS as employed in the medicalization of sexuality through epidemiological and public health concerns, largely framed the theoretical perspectives and research questions in the past (Baxen and Breidelid, 2004:). These studies led to essentialist constructions of HIV/AIDS, which blinded the research to the diversity of behavioural patterns. From these studies emerged moralistic definitions that maintain that HIV disease is a moral problem and

that the illness does not emerge from a virus. (Levine in Herdt et al, 1992:193). Intervention models were developed to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and these models stripped sexual intercourse of its social, cultural, and psychological meanings and motivation. (Ibid, 1992:196). During the formative stages of the HIV pandemic, these intervention models became the media through which public knowledge of HIV/AIDS were disseminated.

A qualitative approach to aspects of human sexuality such as an understanding the discourses of sexuality/AIDS education may contribute to our knowledge of HIV/AIDS and education. It challenges the epistemological bases of conventional intervention models and aims at developing a more meaningful basis for future understanding of the pandemic. It recognizes the social constructedness of attitudes and beliefs as part of a cultural context in which social interactions take place. A qualitative approach engages in an understanding of the symbolic and the use of language in social interaction. It also employs a technique of self-reflective conduct which is capable of shaping and directing both one's own actions and those of other people.(Levine in Herdt, 1992: 186).

6-Methodological sequence and techniques of the research design.

Firstly, I will briefly sketch the research techniques and the sample target for this design. As a study using the mixed method approach, the research techniques to be employed will be implemented in the following sequence;

1-Qualitative; by conducting focus group discussions in order to identify general impressions that teachers hold in the context of sexuality/AIDS education and identity and to move towards the development of analytical categories to be incorporated in the survey.

2-Quantitative; by using identifiable analytical categories that would grasp teacher's responses in a questionnaire, to be administered in a broadly defined diverse sample of teachers who are teaching sexuality/AIDS education. This data will be analysed and presented in a typological structure so as to identify the similarities and differences in

the teacher's responses to the same questionnaire. A typology is developed by analysing one data type (from questionnaire) that yields a typology (or set of substantive categories) that is then used as a framework applied in analysing the contrasting data type. (Taken from Caracelli and Greene (1993) in Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998: 126).

3- Qualitative; by using the participant-observation in the classroom where the teacher discourses will be recorded in practice. This technique may also require some brief quantitative data that would be easily collected eg a checklist.

4- Qualitative; by using the interviews with five Muslim teachers whose biographical material will frame possible cultural and personal contexts in which sexuality/AIDS discourses become instrumental in showing particular and perhaps shared patterns beyond the sites of research.

Sexuality is a sensitive and mostly subjective aspect of the individual's identity. While the quantitative methodology can be employed to describe the general notions that teachers hold about sexuality, the qualitative techniques can be used to provide a more culturally nuanced meaning of sexuality.

7- Conclusion

This paper captures the research design for the study of sexuality/AIDS discourses in terms of its epistemological, theoretical and methodological inter-connectedness. My choice of research strategy, which is the mixed methods approach and the appropriate data collection methods have been selected as being better able to provide data needed to argue and understand the contradictory and diverse sexuality/AIDS discourses that is presently dominating the educational domain. While an increased knowledge of diverse sexuality discourses may be desirable, I do not imply that a reduction in diverse discourses is needed to engage a fruitful sexuality/AIDS educational process. What is intended is a move towards a more contextualized understanding that would create the

possibilities of discourses in the classroom to become more connected with the real life experiences of teacher and pupil sexualities.

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e-mail: davfamily@mweb.co.za 16 April 2005