

GUMED Sphumetle Gambo II 18 January 1994

Education in S.A. (with the president)

EIOSA

Today education is given a lot of names, some call it a key, door, weapon etc, but lately it seems like someone has changed all the locks, the doors that were once opened are now closed, metaphorically speaking our education is like diluted petrol, it now only produces a few flames lighting our Sacred country (South Africa) not so bright anymore. Also living no one to blame with a lot of faces left in shame.

People who are supposed to be devising our educational ways don't do so, but what they do very well is giving us names like "People at grass level" which is not wrong at all because just like cows, the only time they use grass is when they need to feed their stomachs, what I'm trying to say is that people on top seats only go on grass levels just to reap votes that they never sow from the first place.

All they come up with is a chain of strategies that they test on us learners, Now since when is it allowed to test something that you are not sure of its safety on another human being? but who am I to judge? because with the education they are giving us, only a few lawyers are produced let alone judges but I guess they think that space vacant for only the guy upstairs.

The country's economy is dropping while the failure rate is escalating, losing the job opportunities subsidizing and yet again no one is left to be blamed they all turn up right on the public eye.

Funso O. Schumakele
George 11th
18 January 1999

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There's a saying that says "When the bulls fight, it the grass that get affected" now do you think that really fair? When you want me to vote for you, you and the media make alot of promises and when you elected, I don't see you anymore all I hear is the media telling me about your fights in the parliament and yet again I ask my self "Who am I to judge?" I guess promises are like rules and hearts they just have a tendency of being broken.

I think it about time they come up with one perfect strategy that will benefit everyone not only the people at crests. because after all it us the learners that taste the bitterness of the not so sweet fruits that fall if the people at peak levels fight. from The the distance you may think you can cross the river but once you get close you sink, all I'm trying to say My dear President is that you should try going back to the grass level and maybe you could come up with a better strategy because O.B.E didn't do it and N.C.S is also not doing a better job at all.

Being given this opportunity is very Jubilant and I think I was as sincere as you would've liked me to be because I'm not only talking for my self but I'm also talking for that not so lucky learner in the rural areas and also for other South African learners because since South Africa is not that rich economically, I don't think we should keep the change. It about time we as learners get change in our education.

The Education in South Africa

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Education the process of learning in South Africa mainly categorized in three sectors, primary level, secondary level as well as tertiary level has improved a lot in the past few years and a lot of changes has been made, however the bare fact is that the quality of education in South Africa is worryingly low compared to other countries.

The government has of-course placed a lot of systems and still is carrying on trying to improve the quality of education in South Africa, of which by the way has resulted in a few changes there and there. The racial differences in South African schools is not as stark as it was years ago, I mean we now have multi-racial schools, a lot of public schools have been improved too, yet our performance as the learners is not that impressing. If I remember, early this year primary schools were tested on their Mathematics skills of which the results were very terrible but made it very clear in where we South African schools are really lacking. We lack the correct basics from our primary education and when we go to high schools we find it hard to catch up and perform poorly.

When we compare multi-racial schools with other public schools they are way better, not even better ^{but} awesome is a word that describes it well. What is even amazing is the fact that they don't look beautiful on the buildings only but the quality of learners they produce too is amazing. They don't usually perform lower than eighty percent, whereby public schools really perform poor and it is very rare to find schools who reach ninety - percent passing rate in their matric results. And only to find out that these few schools who manage to reach this ninety

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percent often come from rural areas, which are un-resourced by the way. Most of them lack in resources like science equipments, textbooks and worse of all they don't have libraries too, yet at the end of the day perform their very best and ask me on how outstanding they would be performing if they had these resources. The government has improved a lot of schools but however I would recommend it to focus on rural areas too.

The government, private companies, banks etc provide learners with bursaries, scholarships, study loans as well as NSFAS which is very helpful and has made a success in many people's dreams but have you realized the fact that most people don't even reach tertiary levels. To them the matric certificate just means the end of education of which last time I checked education was endless and you learn till you die. People complain that we South Africans don't have enough professional workers like doctors and lawyers of which is very true but then what do they do to sort it out? They just sit down, do nothing but are the first ones to complain, expecting others to carry on learning while they are also nothing in life. After completing matric they just become desperate for jobs and forget all about tertiary levels yet at the end of the day these jobs don't even last them for long.

Ever since corporal punishment was abolished in schools, the late coming rate, the absenteeism rate etc has increased drastically. What is even worse is that the passing rate too has dropped slightly. Ending corporal punishment in schools was really meant to protect the learners at school, but however it seems as if it has made matters worse as it has encouraged learners to do as they wish and turn schools to what they wish because obviously they know that at the end of the day nothing gets done to them.

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Punishments like detention has been put in place but then I would say they are not helping at all because learners still carry on behaving wild at schools where else when corporal punishment was still legal learners were scared to come to school late, be absent and even failing a test because they know that they will be in for a high jump.

Education in South Africa is of-course one of the most lacking in the world right now, but however it might turn into a success in the future if not only the teachers and the government put drastic measures into account. "If every man would sweep his own door step the city would soon be clean", by this quote I mean that if everybody, the learners, teachers, government and parents too involve themselves our education in South Africa will go very far.

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President Jacob Zuma invites you to tea, what would you tell him about education in South Africa?

South Africa has a three tier system of education starting with primary school, followed by high school and tertiary education in the form of (academic) universities and universities of technology.

In 2010, it had 12,3 million learners, 386,000 teachers and around 48,000 schools-including 390 special needs schools and 1,000 registered private schools. South Africa has a concept of public and private schools. They vary according to character, size, quality of education and financial advantages. Both are promising, most schools are funded by the state. The private schools are funded by fees.

Quoting what Nelson Mandela said in his book "Long Walk to Freedom": "Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farmworker can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another." If analysed clearly it proves that rural schools are different from urban schools and they are using what they have and given-rural schools do make it, though they lack facilities. They produce the best results. Through responsible leadership, they promote harmony, creativity and a sound work ethics within the school community.

It is a known fact that wealthy schools have better facilities and attract better teachers than schools in poor communities. The department of education is so worried about -

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the standards of poorer schools and yet it doesn't do anything proactive to attract better quality educators. It continues to provide new facilities all the time. New facilities without properly trained and experienced staff to administer them, is just as good as throwing money down the drain.

The evolution of education from the Outcome Based Education to the National Curriculum Statement has also caused great confusion to both teachers and learners and also the school community. The change in terms, like subjects to learning areas, teachers to educators also confuse people who learnt in the previous years and makes it hard for parents to help their children with assignments and homeworks.

Mr President, schools in rural schools lack support staffs like clerks, cleaners, groundsmen and securities. However, urban schools have about five of these - rural schools have one clerk administering atleast 2,000 students in one school, which makes it difficult for the school to keep records of what they have achieved and their goals. Lack of cleaners leads to the cutting of learning hours and health risks because learners have to clean their classrooms and school ground, as a result of this, absenteeism, children getting sick and missing school to go get medical attention.

Schools are being vandalised at night because schools are given only one security guard that works during the day. On off days learners and teachers are left unsecure, threatened and unsafe because of what might happen at anytime.

The department of education keeps introducing these new learning areas, but to whom? Because the teachers in rural areas are

underqualified or not at all qualified and what for? Because there are no facilities (poor infrastructure, classrooms, textbooks, materials, furniture) to support the newly introduced subjects.

Quoting from the president's 2011 State of the nation address, you said: "We are making a difference in education, as evidenced by the significant increase in the matric pass rate last year, and the interest displayed by the youth in education around the country." We all are as a nation proud of the class of 2010 for making us proud and hoping the next year's to come results will be as better.

The year 2010 was tough for matriculants because there was not only the FIFA World Cup, which cut off school time for a month and also a three-weeks long teachers' strike. And number of learners also went on strike soon thereafter. This affected teaching and many learners were left behind with the curriculum. But when the matric results were released on January 2011, there was a hype around the rather high pass rate of 67,8 percent - the highest matric pass rate in more than three years.

The government after being given the work that must be done, they decided in 2009 to focus on five priorities. One of the five is education and the government claims to have done well on these priorities even though their processes are slow and not so visible in some communities and we are hoping to see these processes speeding up especially on education because it is one of the sectors that are in crisis here in South Africa and especially to rural communities.