Fostering National Inclusion in South Africa through Social Movements: The Role of Visual Arts Education Practices

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Abstract: This study examines the development of a collective historical memory and the relevant obstacles that hinder harmonious symbiosis in the socio-culturally and economically heterogeneous South African society through social awareness, mutual acceptance, assimilation, and integration. By analysing the role of three renown social movements, namely #FeesMustFall, #RhodesMustFall, and #BlackLivesMatter, the study explores their inclusive potential through their unifying dynamics as well pedagogically, their thematic introduction in the Visual Arts class especially their impact on teachers'/learners' interaction. The subject matter is approached from three critical angles: a) nationally, by an analysis of the controversial concept of *collective historical memory* in the South African cultural and historical context; b) educationally, through a pedagogical examination of the #hashtag platform inclusive dynamics for organising constructive social movements, attracting public participation, evoking social empathy, and facilitating open communication; and c) pedagogically, by assessing the educational role of Visual Arts approaches in developing critical thinking and creativity, and socially relevant to collective national consciousness. This includes understanding social awareness of community needs, engaging in collective protests for social justice and equality within the South African socio-historical context. To assess the collective influence of the #hashtag approach and its power to transform and innovate the South African educational system through an inclusive approach, the research discussed existing studies from a critical viewpoint. The findings bring to the fore the advantageous contributions as well as potential obstacles social media may cause to social movements, highlighting the urgent need for South Africa to foster a cohesive social exchange between different societal groups and dismantle the deeply-rooted barriers in the historically fragmented society. The dynamics of activism, information dissemination, and collective behaviour in the digital age of nowadays are central issues in understanding the intersection of social movements, social media, and socially relevant arts education. Additionally, promoting inclusion through the integration of social movement knowledge into educational curricula (such as History, Sociology, Communication, and Languages) can prepare and empower young individuals to critically engage with societal issues and contribute to positive social transformation.

Keywords: #hashtag; Collective historical memory; Media; Social awareness; *Us* and *Them*

Introduction

South Africa fosters a heterogeneous, multi-socio-cultural, historically deeply segmented society, highly diverse in culture, language, and religion. This colourful diversity, labelled *rainbow* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1931–2021), to develop its collective national identity requires a different approach to a 'shared by all historical memory', typically applied in a homogeneous state-nation. Consequently, as a young democracy since 1994, the process of creating a collective historical memory regarding social awareness, mutual acceptance, assimilation of the unfamiliar and integration with the different 'other' proved an almost impossible task.

Understandably, for South Africa to build a harmonious social symbiosis between *Us* and *Them* and break down the imaginary walls in the South African historically deeply segmented society (Anderson, 1991, 36-46, 70-71), it cannot adopt the same strategies as homogeneous, socio-culturally state-nations conventionally established in Europe since

the 18th century. In Europe, collective historical memory is critical for developing sentiments of national consciousness, identity and devotion. Therefore, to express its multi-faceted socio-cultural structure, South Africa has built its new nation's collective national identity, adaptable by its multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-lingual population, on global aspirations, such as human rights principles and a social justice-based value system rather than on national exclusive characteristics. *Mutatis mutandis*, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000), striving for a shared future grounded in common principles, had to unite countries based on values transcending national boundaries, yet acknowledging the collective historical memory of deep wounds caused by WWI and WWII.

Educationally, History instruction in South African schools "supports citizenship within a democracy" by teaching learners to uphold "the values of the South African Constitution" and assist others "to understand those values" (DBE, 2011a:8). By instilling an understanding of the values enshrined in the South African Constitution and encouraging learners to uphold these values while assisting others in comprehending them, the curriculum aims to cultivate active and informed citizens. Furthermore, the History Curriculum reflects "the perspectives of a broad social spectrum so that race, class, gender and the voices of ordinary people are represented" (DBE, 2011a:8). However, deep socio-economic and socio-cultural discriminating wounds remain unhealed, delaying, thus, the development of an equally shared collective historical memory. Therefore, this study examines the role of social movements in developing the collective historical memory in South Africa by analysing #FeesMustFall (#FMF), #RhodesMustFall (#RMF), and #BlackLivesMatter (#BLM) and assessing their unifying dynamics. Their thematic introduction in the Visual Arts class in 2020 and their impact on teachers'/learners' interaction renders this study critical from educational and artistic viewpoints. Pedagogically the initiative has proved realistic and well targeted; since social movements derive from civil society, learners who frequently emanating from such a milieu might impact their educational environment and vice versa. This study hopes to bring further this 2022 manifestation in the Visual Arts classroom by incorporating the relevant social issue into the curriculum, to help learners better understand what to expect when they complete their secondary education being thus better prepared for real-world encounters.

To this end, the research has approached three crucial fields of human action arts, education, and society, behind one common goal: to contribute to developing a stronger South African democratic society. Purposefully, the study has been guided by the following questions:

- Can social movement awareness enhance collective historical memory?
- Can national coherence be constructively developed through the arts in South Africa?
- How can visual culture approaches incorporate pedagogically social movement awareness into the South African educational system?

Contextualisation

With the hashtag #BLM, created by three black women activists, the movement started in the United States in 2013. Protesting the systemic violence vigilantes and the state inflicted on black communities, the movement aimed at building black local power (Wilkins, Livingstone & Levine, 2019, p. 790). In this context, the murder of George Floyd by police officer Derek Chauvin in 2020 was captured on video and caused an uproar when it was shared worldwide via social media (Hill et al., 2021). Understandably, in South Africa, the #BLM protest had an enormous socio-political impact due to the history of apartheid and the persistence of racial discriminative attitudes. Characteristically, a Visual Arts teacher was dismissed from Pinnacle College after she threatened her learners to re-enact the event that led to Floyd's death if they did not hand in their artwork on time (Makhetha, 2020). Due to significant social movements' manifestations in South Africa, such as #RMF, which dealt with issues of racism, and #FMF dealt with politico-economics, reflected in the country's educational field, it is helpful to know how they have affected Visual Arts classes.

Social movements frequently become entangled with Pan-African ideals. Pan-Africanism is a philosophy promoting unity and oneness in Africa. Pan-Africanism aims to liberate Africa from its colonial past and create a united African continent (Malisa & Nhengeze, 2018, p. 2). In this unifying historical context - wherein South Africa has its fair share of specific socio-cultural issues, the selected three social movements can be justified as characteristic paradigms.

Why Visual Arts education?

The Visual Arts classroom has been chosen because aspects of the Visual Arts Curriculum are familiar to social movements. According to the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (CAPS, 2011) of the *Department of Basic Education* (DBE, 2011b:8), a social movement is a collective conceptualisation that frequently involves groups of people. Educationally, thus, Visual Arts focuses on the interaction between the individual and the collective and how to understand better the communication code between the imaginative, inter-intellect of a creator and the external aesthetic and expression of the conceptualised intelligence. Furthermore, to develop their critical thinking in a Visual Arts classroom, learners must observe, analyse, and assess historically established art forms, movements, and processes in their contemporary socio-political framework from a comparative viewpoint.

In the South African socio-cultural context, these established Visual Arts educational approaches and aims are most valuable because people use many visual cues to respond through direct participation or indirect support of the related social issue (Steyn, 2018). The Visual Arts textbooks cover some resistance artworks that emerged in South Africa in the 1970s after the Soweto uprising. They focus on resisting apartheid and celebrating African strength and unity. Since many social movements have inspired resistance arts, therefore, updating the book with newer examples is essential (CAPS, 2011; Louw, Beukes & van Wyk, 2014).

Since social movements mostly occur as a response to broader problem-related situations, to become pedagogically essential and meaningful, these movements should be included in the educational curricula. This inclusion will help learners quest the meanings of artworks in the context of actual events. Consequently, to foster a more just and inclusive society, Visual Arts as a strong means of communication allows learners to better engage with their artistic work in response to the quest of the world around them. Incorporating social movements into the education system, thus, will provide learners with acquired knowledge on addressing unfair or unjust situations affecting society. If learners understand the nature and role of a social movement, they can use it to constructively raise their concerns through arts (Steyn, 2018).

Defining collective historical memory

After the creation of nations in 19th-century Europe, collective cultural/historical memory has been systematically cultivated by each country's educational system. This nationally inclusive and internationally exclusive concept has been sustained by three ideologies: religion, fatherland, and family, especially after the French Revolution in the 18th century, and its inspiring motto *Liberté*, *Égalité*, *Fraternité* (Présidence de la République, n.d.). Nowadays, national celebration days commemorating politico-economic (1 May) and national freedom revolutions (25 March in Greece, 14 July in France) are applied globally, frequently with the participation of military and school parades. Noteworthy, in South Africa nationally celebrated dates are labelled as follows: 16 December, *Reconciliation Day*; 21 March, *Human Rights Day*; 26 December, *Day of Good Will*; Monday after Easter, *Family Day*.

Based on facts combined with collective cultural legacies of oral traditions, customs, and social and religious ethical/value systems, collective historical memory has been carefully incorporated into educational curricula of the new state-nations in Europe, formulating the sentiment of *nationalism* that methodologically has prepared citizens of a nation ready to die defending the above mentioned factors; according to Heller's definition (Webster, 1981, p. 1505):

> "nationalism is loyalty and devotion to a nation; esp. an attitude, feeling, or belief characterized by a sense of national consciousness, an exaltation of one nation above all others, and an emphasis on loyalty to and the promotion of the culture and interests (as political independence) of one nation as opposed to subordinate areas or other nations and supranational groups".

As a matter of fact, having identified strong sentiments of ethnic/'national' sentiments of inclusion and exclusion especially on battlefields in Middle Ages, in order to distinguish between the term nationalism with its recent meaning and the term nationalism in its infancy, historians have labelled the latter 'national consciousness', 'latent nationalism', or 'incipient nationalism' (Sansaridou-Hendrickx, 2007).

Simultaneously, historical-cultural memory has cultivated a ladder-based mentality unifying the *We* versus the *Others* regarding superiority and uniqueness (Sansaridou-Hendrickx, 2005). However, Marxism-based theories promoting economic versus historic/ national/ethnic/cultural divisions and borders, proved too weak to stop wars between nations, even nowadays, i.e., in the former Yugoslavian wars (1991–2001) and the ongoing Russia–Ukraine war.

From a Jewish viewpoint, selected as associated with the newer Asian state of Israel (1948), and as such it has manifested its national dynamics in many fields, Gedi and Elam (1996, p. 37) argue that,

> "*nation*, *tribe*, *society* are general names whose sole substance lies in their actual members who share common myths, traditions, beliefs, etc. This is the only sense in which a nation or a society can be said to exist, but never as a separate, distinct, single organism with a mind, or a will, or a memory of its own."

This statement echoes the dominant theoretical viewpoint of Anderson (1991) on the imagery of boundaries between communities in the mid-90s, that all boundaries between humans are products of imagination (Anderson, 1991; Sansaridou-Hendrickx, 2005, pp. 129–131). With some irony, Gedi and Elam (1996, p. 42) note that "the term collective memory becomes interchangeable with the more distinguished historical memory". According to the authors, "collective memory is a fabricated version of that same personal memory adjusted to what the individual mind considers, rightly or not, as suitable in a social environment".

This view marks a shift on how history conventionally has viewed *memory* because it applies more scepticism about its accuracy. "There is no mystery here; the mechanism of collective memory and the mechanism of personal memory are one and the same and located in the same individual mind. 'Collective memory' is but a misleading new name for the old familiar 'myth' which can be identified, in its turn, with 'collective' or 'social' stereotypes. Indeed, collective memory is but a myth" (Gedi and Elim, 1996, p. 47).[1]

From our viewpoint, the above arguments indicate the power of the term *collective historical memory*, as it describes a familiar and influential pool of cultural and information shared by members of established, institutionalised as 'legitimate states', globally and diachronically through national education systems. These critical views would have more value if the term *historical* were replaced by another, solid enough, yet flexible, to allow room for individual, self-consciousness development, which until now appears to be puzzling. To our view, the problem lies not in using the term *historical* but in finding the best pedagogical way to train, stimulate, and support individual critical thinking in rational decision-making, responsible citizenship, empowering learners to engage with history in a meaningful, critical and reflective manner. This viewpoint is especially relevant in democratic societies, whereby individual freedom of choice entails responsibilities. Given the critiques of the terminology of *collective historical memory* and its implications to individual consciousness development, one might propose a more meaningful pedagogical approach to education too.

Collectivity through social hashtag activism

Specific social movements or hashtag (#)[2] activism in post-apartheid South Africa, such as #FMF, #RMF, and even #BLM (originating in the USA), significantly affected South Africa's educational system. These activities were about specific ideologies and goals that touched on the country's historically sensitive issues concerning socio-economic, educational, and racial inequalities. Spread via social media platforms, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, these movements gained popularity in South Africa in 2015-2016. Since social media has demonstrated its capacity to mobilise activism, it has frequently been used as an open platform for more extensive and substantial collective actions in social movements (Wilkins, Livingstone & Levine, 2019, p. 786). Therefore, a social movement in a democratic society can be defined as a collective mobilisation initiated by people who share common interests and consider their aims critical. Since social movements are reactive, they can only be sustained regarding their reference to a specific and broadly emotionally shared circumstance or issue (Walters, 2005, pp. 1–2). If there were no appealing reaction to such a movement, the cause would fail its aim, the manifested issue be irrelevant, and the planned action could not be referred to as a movement with undeniable dynamics.

According to Niesz (2019, p. 223), the knowledge obtained from reactive movements in a democratic country should be considered a source of critique, interpretation, collective social identity building, and reformation or innovation. Thus, from a causal reasoning point, this power to bring social change, gains historical significance. To scholarly sustain such empirically acquired knowledge, especially in the South African democratic[3] environment, the best place to determine how these social movements affect society must be the educational system, and certainly from a critical pedagogical viewpoint. Actuality, awareness of social problems, and consequent collective reactions have already

[1] On the integration of legends and factual information see Steyn, R. 2019. Gudit, a Jewish Queen of Aksum? Some Considerations on the Sources and Modern Scholarship, and the Use of Legends. *Journal for Semitics*, 28, 1-16.

[2] A hashtag, denoted by the symbol #, is a label used on social media platforms to facilitate discovering information centred around a particular theme or subject matter. Associations can effectively employ hashtags to connect with their desired audience and aid members in sorting through information. Source: Association Adviser (accessed on 06/16/2021).

[3] For more on the constitution in the framework of the established *democratic principles* in South Africa, please refer to https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-1996-1

been applied in Visual Arts teaching/learning processes at higher educational levels (Steyn, 2020; Steyn & Sefotho, 2021).

Consequently, due to their impact on South African society, the #FMF, #BLM, and #RMF movements are studied as research paradigms in the Visual Arts secondary school environment. Since learners must be trained to think creatively and critically, and in the context of community needs, analysing a social movement involving the youth's reactive aspect should help better understand its pedagogical impression. Thus, this study's framework is centred around three interacting forces that are crucial in South Africa's art education process:

- Power of social media in collective social protestation
- Dynamics of art in the development of social inclusion
- Development of social pedagogics through art education principles

Inclusive role of social movements

In the context of our research aims, relevant sociological studies must be critically analysed. Porta and Diani (2006), who analysed social movements through recurring questions, focus on consequent social changes, dimensions of conflictual collective actions, enhancing national identity, and dense informal but powerful networks. Noteworthy is the remark of the two authors that the initial goal of a single protest is related to a specific issue; the underlined purpose can also extend to other issues and fields of concern (Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 21). This remark is crucial, especially in the South African socio-historical context. Heffernan (2018, p. 436), in his book review on the work of Booysen (2016) and Jansen (2017), mentions that the concerned protest movements known as *Fallism* originated at universities and have marked one of the most significant cohesive protest movements since apartheid's ending. According to Heffernan (2018, p. 434), reading Jansen's and Booysen's works together is crucial, as they offer different perspectives on student protests, including their causes, goals, and results. Paul Garton's article on #*Fallism* (2019) discusses the phenomenon collectively defined by #MustFall and other protest movements. This study is central to this research because it mentions two terms that can be used as an umbrella concept for relevant movements under discussion. According to Garton (2019, p. 407), *Fallism* defines a broader movement expressed through #RMF and #FMF and aims to decolonise and promote Africanism in the tertiary education system. It forms a global backlash against the westernisation of Africa's development. In *The Rise of Fallism*, Ahmed (2019, p. 5), referring to the different meanings of the phenomenon, states that *Fallism* creates a platform for communicating the experiences of black people at a university of liberal thinking by hosting the decolonial theories that emerged from the Rhodes statue incident (9 March 2015). Ahmed (2019, p. 146) states that *Fallism* frequently refers to various student movements using the #RMF and #FMF hashtags. Jansen (2017), a former vice-chancellor for the University of the Free State, explains that the #FMF movement started due to financial exclusion and cultural alienation. According to Jansen, the #RMF or #FMF movements had no responsible leaders due to the anonymity maintained in social media. Jansen interpreted this movement as a "collective group leadership" case, i.e., everyone was the leader. His professional identity might have given him a biased viewpoint.

Vicki Trowler (2018, pp. 132–133), who reviewed Jansen's book, considers the study the first systematic attempt to comprehend university leaders' perspectives. Analysing the author's reflections on those movements, she argues that linking them to events in America makes the South African aspect seem less significant. Trowler (2018, pp. 132–133) highlights that Jansen focused on similar US movements and compared them to South African ones, which is counter-intuitive because the US higher education system differs considerably from South Africa's. Therefore, special attention is requested when comparing the different pedagogical approaches of countries and socio-cultural contexts because the effects of US social movements on South African education are insignificant. However, Trowler highlights that the book is significant because it does not balance out with that of the student's voice but takes on the university leader's view because the movement was leaderless (2018, p. 132). In this context, fallist movements allow for an honest reflection on South African universities to examine how to achieve their mission to the best of their ability. According to Spier (2017, p. 39), a vital part of social movements is collective action, which social scientists regard as a collective behaviour responding emotionally to an event or situation outside their control. This viewpoint explains how crowds behave in social settings, different from the rational and orderly conduct conventionally expected in most educationally advanced societies. Consequently, through social unrest, people can form collective behaviour known as collective action, manifested through protests and mass gatherings, which, if successful, will create a social movement.

#BLM, which started in America in 2013, is another movement that has significantly affected South Africa. Historically, this is crucial to note because it first reached South Africa as a massive movement in 2020 after the death

of George Floyd. #BLM has insisted on creating a culture of participatory democracy within its organisations, avoiding dependence on gender and other hierarchies. The rise of #BLM in the media and policy circles was due to the increasing violent incidents in the black community. While the movement gained widespread media coverage, the founders knew they needed more than a simple slogan to have influence (Clark et al., 2018, pp. 146, 148, 151). As such, the #BLM movement uses a decentralised leadership model, a non-hierarchical approach to organising and advocating social change.

For a social movement to be successful as a collective action requires collective reaction/action, which might occur in numerous ways, as the research reveals. As a vital component of a social movement, Porta and Diani (2006, p. 51) discuss the importance of sharing and partaking in the context of a common culture in collective action. Active collective participation plays on common cultural norms via objects, sound, and imagery to convey a message to which most, if not all, would recognise and relate. Therefore, collective action and culture have a relationship, which can be studied in two ways. For example, figure 1 can be identified as a poster for BLM due to the black fist. After identifying the subject matter, the image makes one think further because it institutionalised racism as a problem regarding George Floyd's case and the people in uniform implementing it publicly, therefore, legitimately. In the image, people are dressed in blue, representing the police force (all colours regarding race and gender under the unifying power of authority); police officers work together, trying to tear down the black fist.

Fig. 1: #BLM fist imagery, Sequoia Bostick. Source: Grzegorek 2020, p.(sp)

Inclusive role of social media through collective action

Collective action forms a big part of social movements because it is required for success. Social media incorporates collective action to obtain momentum. A collective action, which is based on collective behaviour, profits from its decentralised and social media-supported nature. Collective behaviour comprises performing short-term goals and relies on the number of people participating with varying emotional and cultural deprivation levels. These participants need a motivation that will trigger and direct their behaviour unanimously, collectively, and inclusively towards a common goal. Social media has the potential to create such a collective action, as it can create a net-styled information links for organisers to coordinate and direct the participants' actions (Spier, 2017, pp. 110–111). The public perceives social media as a platform to interact and communicate freely as it facilitates individual participation. As Spier (2017, p. 16) explains, to motivate collaboration and multiply participation, these platforms typically used by individuals and organisations can skilfully be managed by applying versions of social media, allowing users to connect to the Internet without being charged with bandwidth approaches. With widespread information and an open call for participation, social media platforms can mediate emotions and moods explicitly and implicitly. Combining positive and negative connoting words, using lower- or uppercase letters and the undertone of the text message can help mediate the user's emotional state. Thus, through multiplication, users can apply other forms of social media to express their emotions and explicitly communicate their thoughts and feelings regarding the content they are reading. As social media platforms become increasingly sophisticated, they can respond to the needs of their users by introducing new features and functions (Spier, 2017, pp. 18, 25).

The above analysis demonstrates the integration of the dynamics of the public's collective will and the fast-growing technological communication means. Understandably, these two sources of power combined can easily lead to highly successful outcomes.

Social movements and education

Social movements are linked with education because they aim to educate people in their surrounding society about the problems they face or encounter around them. Yet, scholarly sources about social movements and specifically the Visual Arts classroom are hard to find. The focus of this study has been on various levels of education.

Walters (2005) discusses how notions at class affect education and the learning about what social movements foster. According to Walters (2005, p. 45), social movements are voluntary organisations bound by various political, social, and ideological societal changes. The movements fight for the human rights of exploited and oppressed people; therefore, they could be incorporated into the resistance art taught in Grade 12 to Visual Arts learners (more on later). According to Walters (2005, p. 55) social movements are action systems relying on integrated and sustained social and political structures to work effectively. The #RMF and #FMF used these structures to gain momentum—they involved the students who understood their struggle and issue. Walters (2005, p. 55) further discusses social movement learning, the process of learning through active participation or through people who are not part of the movement but support the cause. This statement can be seen as a manifest of *inclusion*, since #RMF gained support from students and people with no relation to the University of Cape Town but understood why the Rhodes statue was seen as a symbol of oppression. Walters is a significant source because of how she explains social movements' relevance in the South African socio-political context.

According to Niesz, Korora, Walkuski, and Foot (2018, p. 2), educational settings and procedures are critical in creating and advocating for identities, concepts, principles, and, most significantly, social movements, the focus of this study. Movements are educators because they engage participants in various forms of informal education, such as participation in movement activities and special education (Niesz et al., 2018, p. 2). The #RMF and #FMF movement protests made people more aware of institutional racism and produced knowledge that the public can use. Through participation or even witnessing movements, individuals could acquire reflective education. The above authors focused more on adult education because scholars have primarily focused on it before, and these researchers have made it clear that movements educate the adherents and the broader public. Their work has established that these are powerful tools for social critique and creating new ways of living (Niesz et al., 2018, p. 11). These are valuable tools in the Visual Arts classroom because a learner must be able to take and give critique; they must also be able to critique their work. Learners who cannot do this will only make superficial artworks with no deeper meaning.

From an anthropological viewpoint, Niesz (2019) is relevant because she acknowledges that little research exists on how knowledge is produced through social awareness, circulates through and beyond movement spaces, and how formal and informal education impedes and facilitates this process. Social movements are widely acknowledged because they receive significant socio-political interest. Unfortunately, few studies have focused on this form of gained knowledge regarding educational studies; therefore, these movements are vital to this research and must be examined diligently. Niesz (2019, pp. 223–224) mentions that although education studies focus on collective resistance studies, social movement studies are ignored in education research topics. Even though recently education research is focused more on social movements, their dynamics remain a low-profile field (Niesz, 2019, p. 224). This argument is shocking because social movements provide compelling contexts for examining what social anthropology typically studies in education research.

Social movement knowledge can influence schools in several ways. The Visual Arts classroom acknowledged this by making most of the Grade 12 theory work about social issues. The topic in the Visual Arts syllabus addressing resistance art teaches learners how art can make people aware of issues around them by providing a new perspective. The social movement knowledge about apartheid, for instance, is still taught in schools as it helps learners understand the past. Activity-based learning, which aims to end textbook-centred instruction, reflects the educational dynamics of movements by learning through reality knowledge as encourages learners to engage actively in learning (Niesz, 2019, p. 229). We believe that actively engaging in something the learners feel strongly about would have a better educational effect than only relaying the information from the textbook about what had been done. Social movements, thus, significantly, and constructively can affect the status quo of formal education.

Adult Education through social movements

Fontenot (2005, pp. 3, 45) discusses the relationships between social movements and adult education, focusing on feminism. Adult education is any non-authoritarian and cooperative event where experience is a valued social change or personal improvement agent; therefore, a relationship exists between adult education and social movements, even though the latter does not always have significant adult educational components. On the other hand, those trying to

gain change using movements become knowledge producers because they try to make sense of the world around people, directly to participants and indirectly to observers. To have more meaning to adults' social and personal worlds, therefore, the information gained from social movements must be contextualised through better organised adult education channels.

Heidemann (2019, p. 311) mentions that although some scholarships show how popular education is linked with social movement activities and campaigns, social movement scholars have not approached it on their empirical terrain. These scholars have focused on education, primarily on knowledge foundations among activist and situational forms of non-formalised learning. According to the author, social movement scholars must focus on how these movements unfold and operate in formal educational institutes because the approach could provide an understanding of how these settings can function as social activity vehicles. The free spaces of action could connect scholarship on popular education with social movement theory because terms, such as activism, saturate the literature on popular education with the presence of social movements (Heidemann, 2019, p. 313). Free spaces can be called small-scale settings where groups can have socially autonomous interactions, removed from dominant groups and their control, allowing them to produce socio-political challenges that must initiate protest and mobilisation processes. Free spaces can formalise popular education programmes, facilitating social movement activity reproduction. Although the author refers more to adult education, his work is particularly relevant to the Visual Arts classroom because Heidemann proposes that education must be conceptualised into a free, inclusive space for the focus to be on how knowledge-making and learning can rationally influence social movements in society (Heidemann, 2019, pp. 313–316).

Fontenot and Heidemann are critical sources because they actively investigated the relationships between education and social movements, even though their focus was on adult education. Most scholarly papers and articles connecting social movements with education do so on a higher education level. Therefore, a lack of research exists regarding the direct effects of social movements on basic education.

Inclusive role of technology

Combatting corruption

Inclusion through technology can be multifaceted. In her chapter on legitimate state violence, Orlova (2018, p. 174) talks about the Internet as an educational tool for grass-root movements to challenge corrupt practices of law-and-order official application. Orlova (2018) uses Russia as a setting, making this research relevant regarding the link between the Internet and education. The Internet is valuable for social media. Since Orlova discusses the possibilities the Internet can provide as an educational platform, her work becomes significant research in this field. Orlova mentions that despite the lack of formal, relevant education to combat corruption, various social movements and opposition leaders have used the Internet to educate the public about the evils of corruption. Internet chatrooms provide a platform for people to discuss various topics without the concern of being monitored by the government. However, this convenience also comes with a loss of privacy. The Internet has supported different political causes and organised protests across countries. Protest organisers have used social networking sites, such as Facebook, and online platforms as an alternative public space when holding meetings. Despite its positive impact on exposing corruption, the Internet's role in undermining democracy by creating destructive opposition movements for political gain should not be underestimated (Orlova, 2018, pp. 177–179).

Critical use of technology

The above arguments indirectly underline the importance of critical thinking development, a central theme in Visual Arts pedagogical approaches, as most relevant factor for the youth to question, understand and assess the society's destructive motives to resist them accordingly. Ulger (2018) examines the link between Visual Arts education and problem-posed learning, a part of critical pedagogy through critical and creative thinking. The author discusses the creative problem-solving skills required to solve non-routine or complex problems and concludes that creativity is the ability to generate innovative ideas and solutions (commonly called problem-solving skill). This source is seminal because it reveals the association between critical pedagogy and the Visual Arts classroom.

Social movements vis à vis social media

In this discussion, we will explore the impact of social media and hashtags on social movements, focusing on the #BLM movement. Wilkins et al. (2019) analyse the relationship between social media and collective, inclusive action by examining the early stages of the movement and the rhetorical strategies employed by social media in support of it. Since social media is a platform to enhance a movement, the authors become most relevant for this research. Communication and language are essential to advance social change, as they can help individuals and groups to behave

in a manner that furthers a movement's goals. The successful coverage of the George Floyd's victimisation in 2020 by social media has demonstrated how communication can advance a movement through a remarkable inclusive appeal. Given the rise of social media, it is more critical than ever to understand how activists can negotiate the sensitive and subtle aspects of social movements (Wilkins et al., 2019, pp. 786–788). Despite the many contributions social media have made to social movements, limited research has been conducted to examine the rhetorical functions of their activities. Although research in social psychology has focused on how political rhetoric on social media can affect activists' behaviour, it is unclear how it can help preserve the movement's message or prevent its opponents from taking advantage. The authors use the early phase of #BLM as an ideal context for examining the functions of social media as it pertains to managing ally activism.[4] Investigating #BLM, the authors (2019, pp. 789–791) found that activists significantly contribute to the movement through this inclusive appeal, as they try to advance and defend disadvantaged groups. Wilkins et al.'s (2019, p. 799) study shows that these constructions can manage the relations between social issues and identities, and that one of the crucial functions of internet-enhanced action is to regulate social identities and intergroup relations characterised by socio-cultural differentiation.

Discussing the underlying issues that came with the #RMF and #FMF social movements, Glenn (2016, p. 94) mentions that the 2015–2016 student protests were seen as heralding the rise of social media over old media. The #FMF movement quickly spread across various campuses, with many students sharing their thoughts on it inclusively through social media. Some students mentioned that they had been protesting for long. Noteworthy is that their #FMF received media attention only after the well-off students started protesting (Glenn, 2016, p. 85). Furthermore, WhatsApp messages among student leaders at different campuses played a considerable inclusive role in the protests. Media traditions might be critical in shaping student protest movements, in terms of how quickly and widely they are disseminated. Haste can turn the endeavour into a dangerous tool with negative characteristics, such as a critical edge, brevity, a tendency to one-upmanship and rapidity, which could allow a hasty turn to violence by those who become angered quickly through social media (Glenn, 2016, p. 87). The South African student movements of 2015–2016 show positive signs for the role of social media in movements. However, it also revealed the dangers of negotiating with students (Glenn, 2016, p. 94).

Booysen (2016, pp. 108–109) also discusses using social media as a protest tool during these movements. The #FMF spread across 17 campuses in 10 days and used social media platforms as a site for counter-narratives. According to the author, social media platforms were essential for these movements because they provided forums for documenting the protests, a way to spread news about gatherings beyond socio-cultural differences, especially through video and photographic evidence of institutional violence and police brutality. Most significantly, it provided an inclusive platform for students to share their stories, especially with those not directly involved.

In terms of inclusion, social media platforms are primarily used for sharing images and videos, such as Instagram, and provide a carefree way to access and share documentation of events (Spier, 2017, p. 45). Even with the various advantages and disadvantages of information and communication technologies, such as email, telephone and short message services, social media has allowed the protesters to reach different audiences (Spier, 2017, p. 46). In many cases, the dissemination of messages through social media helps people reach a wider, more inclusive audience and gain attention from mainstream media. On the other hand, the rising publishing costs have created a scarcity that has affected journalism. However, the emergence of social media platforms has also created new revenue streams for the profession.

Although removing intermediates from the mix of information available on social media platforms can make helpful information more accessible, it can also threaten its accuracy. Instead, some deliberately distribute fake news and spread false or misinformation to reach their goals (Spier, 2017, p. 125; Zhou, Zafarani, Shu & Liu, 2019, pp. 3207–3208). Even when faced with various barriers, social media can be powerful for activists and movements (Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 21; Spier, 2017, p. 127). The relationship between mass media and social media is complex and paradoxical. On the one hand, despite the various advantages of social media, mass media must be appropriately managed. However, social media has become an alternative to mass media to put issues on the agenda or bypass the gatekeepers (Spier, 2017, p. 127).

Also from an inclusive viewpoint, another critical aspect of social media is that it supports individual interaction (Spier, 2017, p. 111). For instance, by suggesting and deploying hashtags, social media platforms can facilitate sharing of images and other content between users, connecting the users and the content. Hashtags allow users to mark their content and receive recommendations for its use and can be used to support the formation and various statements and

[4] The ability to harness support from privileged groups as a disadvantaged group to acquire successful activism (Wilkins et al., 2018, p. 789)

opinions (Spier, 2017, p. 111). Social media has an unstructured inclusive behaviour that can promote new forms of order and norms (Spier, 2017, p. 112). The platforms' designs and systems support this phenomenon, and the institutions behind them react to them as expressions of an uncomplicated collective behaviour that requires fewer complex strategies. The primary factor influencing its relevance is the number of participants. The number of people who actively participate in the same way on a platform can help determine its relevance; for instance, if a user shares a similar image from the same location, its relevance can be computed. This concept distinguishes them from other information and communication technology platforms relying on user-generated content (Spier, 2017, p. 112).

Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, social movements emerge as powerful and inclusive means due to their collective appeal and the motivating dynamics of the relevant issues in question. Their significance renders them essential subjects to be creatively and critically taught at the South African schools. Moreover, social movements have diachronically been essential factors in spreading public awareness of politico-economic and socio-cultural issues and leading to fundamental socio-political changes and radical constitutional reforms. Additionally, given the rapid development of technology, social media is highly significant in supporting and promoting inclusive social movements through effective utilisation of software and programmes. In the diverse socio-cultural context of South Africa, education faces the challenge of approaching pedagogy through proper teaching/learning interaction to manage and control these most powerful technological skills. Constantly revising curricula and updating instructional approaches becomes crucial in this regard. Finally, from a transdisciplinary viewpoint, the basic principles of Visual Arts teaching/learning content, i.e., developing creative, critical thinking and problem-solving approaches and processes, can be applied in other disciplines, including History, Sociology, Communication, and Languages, to cultivate young members of society capable of critical thinking and rational choices if requested.

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