

Inclusion and Exclusion-Rural Teachers and Learners’ Experiences: Cases in the Free-State Province

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ABSTRACT Rural schools, by nature and because of their contexts, are different from urban schools. These schools are situated in rural contexts where resources are scanty. The process of rural depopulation in South Africa has given rise to the phenomenon of teacher and learner migration from rural areas to urban areas which are closer to resources. However, teachers and learners from rural school often experience difficulties in adapting or being included into urban schools. The present paper analyses and contextualizes the inclusion and exclusion experienced by teachers and learners who move from rural schools to urban contexts. Qualitative data was collected through case studies by means of unstructured interviews with teachers and learners. Five teachers and ten learners participated in the study and were purposefully sampled. Inductive analytical framework was used to analyze data. Among the findings of the study was that teachers and learners from rural schools find it difficult to integrate socially in urban schools, that the different ways by which the two types of schools function creates constraining effect on learner and teacher agency. The major findings were that teachers and learners feel excluded from the urban school community as they have not been socialized adequately to occupy space as members of the new school community. It is therefore recommended that to enhance inclusion of teachers and learners from rural into urban schools a comprehensive preparative programme needs to be put in place which can address change in teaching and learning, dealing with attitudes, handling new school management systems, adapting and socializing learners and teachers within the new school culture.