

## **Exploring possibilities for decolonising the science and mathematics school curriculum**

**Ronicka Mudaly**

University of KwaZulu-Natal

### **Abstract**

During the past five years, the South African higher education landscape has reverberated with calls for decolonising the curriculum. These calls have been fuelled by students' discontent about financial deprivation, as well as curricula which continue to marginalise historically colonised people. In this qualitative study which draws on tenets from the critical paradigm, we leaned on insights from Southern theory to work towards decolonising the curriculum. We engaged 30 purposively selected practicing science and mathematics teachers to critique and analyse part of the curriculum. The key question was: "How do science and mathematics teachers work towards decolonising the curriculum?" Teachers analysed and deconstructed curriculum materials and leveraged insights from different sources to re-imagine and reconstruct units of work. Findings reveal the theoretical choices that enabled teachers to repaint the curriculum canvass. They developed portfolios of evidence, which included reflections to describe how they transcended prescribed curriculum boundaries, by decentering but not abandoning Euro-Western ideas. The study is significant because it underscores the value of diversity in the science and mathematics curriculum, especially within the Southern context.

**Keywords:** Decolonization, Curriculum, Southern Theory