

Research on RPL (PLAR) in SA

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Developing policy

Period	Purpose/Questions	Source/researchers	Theoretical/political influences	Type of research	Major output
Early 1990s	To put RPL on the post-apartheid education agenda	Trade unionists, ET experts, various international donors, National Training Board	Australian educationists and unionists, CBE	<i>Consultation</i> with international ET and trade unionists	Contributions to policy discourses
1995	To develop a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) based on unit standards, with RPL as a key principle	'Progressive' educationists, National Training Board, HSRC	CBE, Training sector	<i>Workshops:</i> Involvement of experts, drawing on international experience	HSRC (1995)
	To develop policy on RPL	RPL 'activists', SAQA		<i>Visits to RPL initiatives overseas</i>	SAQA policy

RPL as worker emancipation

1996 +	To 'take stock' of RPL To develop clear policies on RPL To develop union capacity	Congress of SA Trade Unions/ National Union of Metalworkers of SA/National Union of Mineworkers	COSATU's policy of "Growth through redistribution" vs "export led growth"	<i>Participatory research</i> on RPL initiatives at NUMSA and NUM	Lugg, Mabitla, Louw and Angelis (1998)
1998	Investigating impact of broader socio-political change on meaning of 'experience' in trade union education discourse	UCT academic and trade union educator: Linda Cooper	Sociology of discourse	<i>Qualitative research</i> Some participant insights	Cooper (1998)
Mid 1990s	To promote the implementation of an emancipatory form of RPL in SA	American academic and advocate for RPL in SA: Elana Michelson	Critical, radical and feminist theory? AE, experiential learning and RPL theorists, mainly US	<i>Advocacy</i> Draws on author's experience as RPL facilitator and academic in NY and running RPL workshops in SA, and on union documents and secondary research	Michelson (various)

Conceptualising RPL...

Mid to late 90s and ongoing	To contribute to the development of RPL policy; to conceptualise the various types of RPL	British lecturer, researcher and research consultant to various projects in SA on adult education and training and RPL from 1993: Judy Harris	AE, experiential learning, sociology of education (Young), Bernstein, Gibbons	<i>Qualitative research and action research, international case studies: lit reviews.</i>	Harris (1998,1999a,b)
Late 90s to date	To develop a conceptual and implementation guide for the introduction of RPL	Harris, other international researchers, SA nurse and adult educators, HSRC	RPL advocacy/feminist and critical race theory (Michelson) Sociology of knowledge and of education (Gibbons, Bourdieu, Bernstein) Empirical cases.	Commissioned international case studies and undertook empirical research in adult education development and nurse education development	Harris (2000) <i>RPL: Power Pedagogy and Possibility.</i> Pretoria: HSRC.
	To explore 'how knowledge, pedagogy, power and identity are understood and enacted in and around the case'	Harris	Bernstein, Foucault	<i>Qualitative case study, accessing adults to a postgraduate diploma in adult education, literature review</i>	Harris (2005)

Conceptualising RPL...

Mid 90s to date	To conceptualise the various types of knowledge in RPL	Academic and policy researcher at UWC, UCT and HSRC: Mignonne Breier	Various AE, experiential, RPL theorists; sociology of Knowledge, sociology of education Basil Bernstein, Harris	<i>Qualitative empirical research, case studies: 'Outsider' perspective</i>	Breier, various from 1997
	To distinguish between recognizing prior experience in adult pedagogy as distinct from RPL per se		Bernstein, Dowling, Ensor, Muller	<i>Qualitative research, case studies of two university courses in labour law</i>	Breier (2005)
	To categorise types of RPL	Osman (JCE/Wits)	Harris, AE and RPL theorists	<i>Lit review/ Theoretical</i>	Osman (2004)

Researching implementation

2000 +	To critique practice/explore curriculum implications of RPL	South African academics (mainly English, historically white universities)	Adult education, experiential, RPL and OBE theory, Habermas, Bourdieu, Beckett (theories of professional practice) Socio-cultural theory	<i>Action research</i> on own programmes, sometime participatory	Cooper (2006, 2008) Lockett (1999); Cretchley and Castle (2001); Osman and Castle (2002) Shalem (2001).
2000+	To research implementation in practice	Breier and Burness		<i>Mixed quantitative/qualitative, Telephone survey</i>	Breier and Burness (2000); Thaver, Naidoo and Breier (2002)
		Motaung	AE	<i>Empirical qualitative research</i> of implementation at Univ. of Pretoria	Motaung (2008, 2009)

Mass scale RPL

2000+	To develop RPL in the NPDE	Welch, Morrow, Buchler, Osman etc	Various, unspecified	<i>Workshops</i>	NPDE qualification (2002)
	To monitor the implementation	Volbrect et al		<i>Site visits</i>	Volbrecht et al
	To critique the implementation of RPL in NPDE	Breier	AE, exp. Learning, RPL, bourdieu, Bernstein, Aristotle and various interpretations of phronesis	<i>Qualitative research at three universities; lit review: "outsider perspective"</i>	Breier (2008) <i>The RPL Conundrum: recognition of prior learning in a teacher upgrading programme.</i> Breier and Ralphs (2009) In search of phronesis.. Recognising practical wisdom in the recognition of prior learning

Various...

	To interrogate conceptualizations of RPL and retheorise practice	Andersson and Harris	Various authors, from various traditons		Andersson and Harris, eds, 2006.
2009 +	To extend research to other sectors, including workplaces??	SAQA UWC: DLL programme UCT: Ad Ed programme and Industrial Health Research Group, Workers' College, Durban Prior learning centre Alan Ralphs	Various South African, Michelson	<i>Qualitative, action research??</i>	??
Missing					
??	Indigenous knowledge systems and RPL	??	[see Odora-Hoppers, 2001, and Seepe 2000 for possibilities]	??	??