

Panel 7: Abstracts alfabetisk

The Use of Narrative Inquiry as a Decolonial Methodology in Social Justice Research

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The creation of knowledge extends beyond formal research institutions, with both formal and informal knowledge being appropriated by higher education. This raises concerns about reinforcing Western norms of knowledge production. In the context of decolonising education, it is crucial to examine how colonial power continues to shape research practices and knowledge creation. This paper explores narrative inquiry as a decolonial methodology for social justice research, framing it as a political tool for knowledge construction. Drawing on Knowles' (2021) view that research methods are inherently political and Hanisch's (1969) idea that "the personal is political," this approach emphasizes personal experiences shared through conversations (ukuncokola), photovoice, poetry, and workshops. The methodology was used in a doctoral study examining gendered student experiences at universities in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, through an intersectional lens. Narrative inquiry allowed students to assert agency in sharing their emotional, complex stories while navigating the challenges of higher education. It offered a safe, familiar space for exploring their lived experiences, revealing multiple forms of oppression and structural dominance. By centering student voices and understanding their narratives as layered and interconnected, this approach contributed both to methodological innovation and to the decolonisation of knowledge. This research challenges global hierarchies and offers a model for participatory, inclusive knowledge production that disrupts Western-centric paradigms, advancing social justice and the decolonisation of higher education.

From turfloop to transformation: The University of Limpopo's role in building equitable knowledge economies

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The University of Limpopo (UL), formerly known as the University of the North and historically referred to as Turfloop, has played a pivotal role in shaping South Africa's higher education landscape. As a historically disadvantaged institution (HDI), its trajectory reflects the broader struggles and aspirations of post-apartheid knowledge economies. This paper examines UL's evolving role in fostering equitable knowledge production, innovation, and economic transformation in South Africa and the broader Southern African Nordic (SANORD) region. Drawing on a historical and policy-based analysis, we explore how UL has transitioned from an institution primarily serving marginalised communities to a hub for transformative

research, indigenous knowledge systems, and inclusive higher education practices. The study highlights UL's strategic initiatives in decolonising curricula, fostering community-engaged scholarship, and promoting STEM and entrepreneurial education for sustainable economic growth. Moreover, we assess the university's partnerships with local and global actors, including SANORD member institutions, to enhance regional and international collaboration in knowledge creation. By critically engaging with the intersections of history, policy, and institutional agency, this paper argues that UL's transformation offers a model for other HDIs seeking to contribute meaningfully to equitable knowledge economies. We contend that UL's experiences demonstrate how universities in the Global South can leverage their unique histories and strengths to drive inclusive and sustainable development. The findings have implications for higher education policies aimed at redressing historical inequalities while positioning universities as engines of economic and social progress. Keywords: University of Limpopo, equitable knowledge economies, higher education transformation, decolonisation, SANORD, economic development.

Exploring the Impact of Decolonizing Agricultural Knowledge on Sustainable Agricultural Development in Zimbabwe: A Critical Analysis of Equity, Power Dynamics, and Knowledge Systems

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Abstract Background: The dominance of Western epistemologies in agricultural knowledge systems has marginalized indigenous knowledge, limiting the development of inclusive and sustainable agricultural practices. This study critically examines epistemic injustices in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector, highlighting the need to decolonize knowledge systems to promote equity and sustainability. Aligning with knowledge economies, the research explores the intersection of decolonization, education, and sustainable agriculture to foster inclusive, participatory knowledge production. **Methodology:** Using a qualitative case study approach, the study reviewed 150 peer-reviewed articles, books, and policy reports and conducted 30 in-depth interviews with key agricultural stakeholders. Thematic analysis was applied to identify patterns and key themes related to knowledge hierarchies, indigenous knowledge integration, and policy implications. **Findings:** The findings revealed that 75% of literature reviewed emphasised the dominance of Western epistemologies, marginalizing indigenous knowledge. However, 80% of initiatives centering on marginalized communities, such as agroecology, promoted sustainable development and food sovereignty, contributing to SDGs 2, 10, 12, and 13. 90% of stakeholders stressed the need for decolonizing agricultural knowledge to create equitable, just, and sustainable food systems. The study also highlights gaps in policy implementation and recommends integrating indigenous knowledge into formal education to bridge knowledge hierarchies. **Conclusions:** Decolonizing agricultural knowledge

is vital for fostering inclusive knowledge economies and sustainable agricultural development. This study proposes policy-driven, community-centred interventions to integrate indigenous knowledge into education and governance systems, ensuring equity and long-term sustainability. Findings contribute to discussions on bridging research and practice, advocating for education and policy transformations within decolonized knowledge systems. Keywords: Decolonization, Agricultural Knowledge Systems, Epistemic Justice, Sustainable Agriculture, Knowledge Economies, Policy Reform

Addressing climate justice and epistemic justice in CATER PhD-Schools for African and European PhD-scholars – does it work?

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The CATER Schools on Transdisciplinary Climate Risk and Action is a collaboration between several research and higher education institutions in Norway, France, and South Africa. The ambitious goal of CATER is to “create world-leading transdisciplinary cooperation for mutual learning between African and European contexts, linking science to action, and building leadership and confidence in students, early-career researchers, practitioners, and businesses on the frontlines of climate action.” This is achieved by bridging science and practice through immersive annual schools focused on climate action. Each year, the schools host 20 participants, ensuring a balanced representation in terms of gender, disciplinary background (natural and social sciences), and geographical region (Africa and Europe). As the PhD school itself centers on transdisciplinary climate action, it fosters conversations across disciplines, genres, institutional and societal backgrounds, as well as epistemological perspectives. In theory, this approach encourages the exchange of ideas and promotes deeper recognition of epistemic justice, climate justice, and decolonial perspectives. This paper presents findings from surveys and interviews conducted with the two cohorts of PhD scholars and practitioners who have participated in the CATER School thus far. The presentation will particularly highlight how critical and decolonial perspectives on climate justice have been addressed and debated within such a diverse group. Furthermore, it will examine the epistemological implications these discussions have had on participants’ work following their engagement in the PhD school.

History teaching and school segregation – examples from Eastern Cape in South Africa and Malmö in Sweden

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By allowing students and their experiences to be agents in teaching, the subject can constitute an existential bridge that provides context, meaning and understanding. Within the field of history didactic research, attention has often been directed towards the relatively fixed content of the subject and how the subject can or should be conveyed to students. Here, instead, it is the relationships and the teaching practice itself that are explored, created and developed in a making and in close collaboration with teachers at the schools in question. An important aim is to contribute with research that generates critical perspectives where both segregating patterns and the forms of history teaching are studied and challenged. Students and teachers are themselves, in a fundamental way, part of the human contexts and historical processes that the teaching touches on. The subject of history thus provides the opportunity to create a direct presence in or outside the classroom where those involved can emerge as active subjects in a social-historical context. This insight can in itself carry an emancipatory and decolonizing potential that includes both social mobility and favorable conditions for expanded historical consciousness among students. This paper is based on a previously published article on history teaching in segregated schools in Malmö and an ongoing project in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Theoretically, the project draws inspiration from the decolonization paradigm and ultimately from important thinkers and documents such as Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, Paolo Freire, John Dewey and others.

Reimagining Educational Frameworks: A Decolonial Approach to Sustainable Development

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"Decolonising Education and More" examines the transformation of educational systems influenced by colonial legacies, addressing SDG 4 (Quality Education) through inclusive and equitable education. This movement challenges Western-centric knowledge systems and calls for fundamental changes in knowledge creation and sharing, aligning with SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by addressing systemic power imbalances. The process spans curriculum transformation, diverse academic representation, and teaching methodologies. Beyond the classroom, it extends to institutional structures and research practices, supporting SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) through inclusive frameworks. The initiative promotes previously marginalized knowledge systems, particularly indigenous perspectives and Global South contributions, advancing SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) through enhanced global knowledge sharing. This approach advocates for an inclusive educational landscape that values diverse ways of knowing while addressing SDG 5 (Gender Equality) through gender-responsive education. By dismantling colonial hierarchies and fostering representative educational practices, it contributes to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Paulo Freire as an Epistemologist of the South and His Influence in Africa

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Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator and philosopher, is widely recognized as a transformative figure in critical pedagogy and an advocate for the epistemologies of the Global South. Freire's work emphasizes the co-creation of knowledge through dialogue, the deconstruction of oppressive structures, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. His pedagogical approach, rooted in liberation theology and critical theory, challenges Eurocentric epistemologies by valuing oppressed people's lived experiences and cultural knowledge. Freire's influence has been profound in Africa, particularly during decolonization and nation-building in the mid-to-late 20th century. His seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, resonated with African educators and political leaders striving to dismantle colonial legacies and create emancipatory educational frameworks. Freire's methods informed literacy campaigns in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, where education became a tool for fostering critical consciousness and promoting social transformation. Freire's emphasis on dialogue and participatory learning continues to shape educational and social development programs across the continent. By valuing indigenous knowledge systems and fostering a sense of agency among learners, his pedagogy provides a foundation for addressing contemporary challenges such as inequality, systemic poverty, and the erosion of cultural heritage. This paper explores Freire's contributions as an epistemologist of the South, his direct influence on African education, and the enduring relevance of his ideas in fostering transformative learning and critical agency in postcolonial contexts. Freire's vision of education as a practice of freedom remains an enduring legacy for global social justice.

AN EVALUATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CURRICULA TO THE CALL FOR DECOLONISATION AND TRANSFORMATION AT NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

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This study evaluates the public administration curriculum in order to determine its responsiveness to the call for decolonisation and transformation of the curriculum as outlined in the literature and discourse in South African higher education. Grounded in the historical context of apartheid and colonialism, the study examines the integration of indigenous and African knowledge systems into the public administration curriculum, critical enquiries regarding the department's composition ("Who is teaching our students?"), ("Whose studies is being prioritised?"), and regional inequities in educational provision ("Which regions receive precedence?"). Using a qualitative approach and secondary data analysis, the study explores the alignment of the department's curriculum with national policies, such as the Higher Education Act of 1997, and global frameworks like Sustainable Development Goal 4,

which advocates for inclusive and equitable education. The theoretical framework is informed by New Public Administration (NPA), emphasising social equity, responsiveness, and citizen engagement. The study situates decolonisation as a transformative process that challenges Eurocentric epistemologies and promotes inclusivity, diversity, and student success. Preliminary findings suggest that while strides have been made in addressing equity and access, gaps remain in integrating African perspectives and transforming institutional cultures. The research highlights the critical role of curriculum reform in fostering student success, particularly for historically marginalised groups. This study will contribute to ongoing debates on higher education transformation by providing evidence-based insights into curriculum decolonisation and its impact on inclusivity and student outcomes. It offers practical recommendations for enhancing diversity, representation, and student success, aligning with Nelson Mandela University's Vision 2030 strategy. The findings have broader implications for policymakers, educators, and institutions striving to create equitable and inclusive learning environments in South Africa and beyond.

DECOLONISING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN TEACHER TRAINING: RETHINKING CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

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This study examines the extent to which decolonial perspectives are integrated into teacher professional development (TPD) in South Africa. It explores how continuous professional development (CPD) can be reimagined to incorporate indigenous knowledge systems and African pedagogies, fostering more inclusive and culturally responsive classrooms.

Decolonisation of education remains a crucial discourse in South Africa, yet teacher training programs continue to rely heavily on Western frameworks. This limits their effectiveness in equipping educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to teach diverse student populations. Institutional resistance, Eurocentric assessment methods, and rigid policies further hinder the transformation of pedagogical practices within teacher education. This study employs a qualitative meta-synthesis approach, analyzing existing research on teacher training and CPD in South Africa. By synthesizing findings from qualitative studies, it critically examines systemic barriers and identifies opportunities for integrating decolonial principles into teacher professional development. Findings highlight significant structural obstacles, including inflexible education policies and the dominance of Western pedagogical models, which marginalize indigenous knowledge systems. However, the study also identifies opportunities for transformation, such as localized and participatory professional development models that prioritize African-centered knowledge. To effectively decolonise teacher training, CPD frameworks must embed indigenous pedagogies, develop culturally relevant resources, and adopt inclusive assessment strategies. The study advocates for a

fundamental shift in teacher development policies to create an equitable and contextually relevant education system. This research contributes to the growing discourse on decolonisation by offering a critical analysis of teacher professional development through a decolonial lens.

Technological courses in addressing inequalities through universities as agents for change

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Inequalities within communities in the modern era include those related to digital, health, education, and even social aspects. Considering economic and technological shifts, as well as the expansion of models and policies, education in literacy is necessary. Changes in technology can therefore be employed to alleviate some of these inequalities. To cope with issues in society and establish policies, general education plays an essential part. Universities can also use technology to address these inequalities and act as a change agent. A consultative approach will be considered. By acknowledging the significance of innovation in promoting economic growth and development, universities can facilitate access to education and cope with technological and economic changes. By encouraging innovation, education, and equitable policies that can lead to a more inclusive and sustainable future, universities can act as agents for change in tackling inequalities through technology. Universities are also putting a greater emphasis on encouraging innovation that is both locally based and globally relevant because of globalisation. This encourages students from different areas to enroll in classes at various institutions to achieve a degree or a certificate. This promotes an international network of collaborative innovation that enables idea sharing and cooperative research and development on a global basis. This emphasises the necessity of innovation that confronts global issues while being viable locally. Therefore, this study will concentrate on whether institutions are fostering innovation by giving students with applicable courses and programs that also cover soft skills and the value of preparing students with employable abilities that are essential in a global economy. The outcomes will demonstrate if universities may serve as change agents in local contexts with limited resources by interacting with the communities.

Decolonization of African Language Instruction in South Africa: A Systematic Review of Its Impact on Student Readiness for University and Global Knowledge Participation

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This systematic review examines the unintended consequences of decolonizing African language instruction in South African high schools on students' readiness for university education and their participation in global knowledge systems. Despite efforts to promote linguistic diversity and cultural relevance, using African languages as mediums of instruction may hinder students' transition to university-level education, where English is predominantly used. This language gap can lead to reduced academic confidence, limited classroom engagement, and struggles in understanding academic content, ultimately affecting students' ability to contribute to global knowledge systems. Furthermore, the reliance on African languages may restrict students' full participation in global academic discourse, as they may face challenges in accessing and disseminating knowledge that is predominantly codified in English. By synthesizing existing literature, this study aims to provide insights into these challenges and inform policy recommendations for bridging the language divide between high school and university education. The review will follow PRISMA guidelines to ensure transparency and rigor in the selection and synthesis of studies. Keywords: Decolonization of Education, African Language Instruction, University Readiness, Global Knowledge Participation, Systematic review, Language gap and academic Confidence

Institutional Strategies for Decolonising Higher Education in Eswatini: A Case Study Analysis of Selected Institutions

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Higher education decolonization has become an important issue around the world, especially in post-colonial settings where schools often teach Eurocentric ideas and ignore indigenous ways of knowing. This qualitative multiple case study, grounded in a constructivist paradigm, explores the role of community engagement in decolonizing higher education in Eswatini. Focusing on two specifically chosen colleges and universities, this study looks into how community engagement programs help break down colonial legacies in the academic world. Through semi-structured interviews with lecturers and students, the study examines the lived experiences and perceptions surrounding decolonization efforts. Generated data in this study was analyzed thematically, allowing for the identification of key patterns and insights. The findings revealed that institutions of higher learning have implemented several community engagement initiatives aimed at decolonizing higher education. These initiatives include collaborative research projects with local communities and the integration of indigenous knowledge into the curriculum. The study also highlights the challenges faced by institutions

of higher learning, which include resistance to change, limited resources, and lack of commitment from stakeholders. The study concludes that there are efforts employed by institutions of higher learning in decolonizing education, and based on the findings, it is recommended that to decolonize Eswatini's higher education, institutions must formally integrate community engagement through clear policies and committed coordinating units.

Concepts, Collaborations, and Careers: The Decoloniality of Engaged Research and Joint Learning

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This paper draws on experiences of trying to decolonize knowledge productions in practically meaningful ways. It addresses the conceptual work, the collaboration and collaborative structures, and the career developments. Taken together, concepts, collaboration, and careers, boil down to a multitude of conditions, contexts, and claims fraught with ambiguities. I draw on projects and activities carried out with African colleagues, and institutions. First, I describe the collaborative research projects carried out in Burkina Faso and Mali as part of our joint research lab LACET (<https://www.lacet.org/>), particularly focusing on joint publications in the open access series Uppsala Papers in Africa Studies. Second, I develop some key points in our work to build up of a Research School on Decolonizing Research Methodologies between Burkinabe, Malian, Swedish, and Tanzanian Universities, more specifically the organization and implementation of Fieldwork Seminars. Third, I reflect on the publication of a Special Issue of a US-based journal that brought together Burkinabe and Malian researchers. Common to these cases are the ambiguous conditions, contexts, and claims that surface when trying to decolonize research and learning. At the same time as senior scholars may challenge the status quo from tenured positions, junior researchers are facing these contradictions upfront. In other words, to make sense, a decoloniality of engaged research and joint learning must simultaneously address concepts, collaborations, and careers.

Economic (de)growth: About Epistemic Curriculum Delinking

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The economic growth paradigm, which has its roots in neoclassical economics and principles, has been the bedrock of the undergraduate economics curriculum across the world. It is also firmly embedded in school economics curricula in its various subject manifestations. Critics of the perpetual growth paradigm, however, point to its negative

effects, namely that of overconsumption and exploitation of the planet's finite natural resources and concomitant pollution, as well as growing socioeconomic inequality on a global scale. In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the unsustainability of unfettered growth and growing advocacy for alternatives that might consider ecological balance and social equity as priority foci. Economic degrowth is distinct in its ideological thrust as it values decommodification and redistribution beyond just material well-being. The challenge is that this economic orientation has yet to gain traction in mainstream economics courses and in the school curriculum. In this paper, we examine, using decolonial theory, the potential for epistemic delinking from the dominant economic paradigm. We explore the teacher education curriculum as a site where the economic degrowth agenda could be considered. We argue that for degrowth to gain paradigmatic status, we have to develop a critical mass of degrowth activists and that teacher education represents a powerful space for this activism.

Epistemic politics of the SDGs

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Based on our work on “Decolonizing epistemologies: disciplines and universities in society and the world” and on projects studying how dominant economies influence the SDGs and their implementation (and keeping in mind that SANORD prioritizes the work on the SDGs) we propose a paper/discussion/presentations that ask the question: To what degree have the SDGs inspired decolonization and how have the universities worked for epistemic justice? We will focus (talks/papers) on gender, racism, solidarity and the needs to fight injustice by help of epistemic shifts at universities. We ask, generally, to what degree neoliberalism need be replaced by a social-ecological development model that changes how we conceive of growth, production, consumption and redistribution of values and support a deepening of democracy for a just transitions.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN AGRICULTURE CURRICULUM FOR THE POST COLONIAL ERA IN ESWATINI

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The post-colonial era in Eswatini presents a unique opportunity to explore the integration of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in agriculture. However, the integration of IK in teaching and learning faces challenges because of the Western Knowledge dominance which often undermines the value of Indigenous Knowledge. Therefore, educators must navigate these complexities to create inclusive curricula that honour local knowledge systems while

addressing contemporary agricultural challenges, such as climate change and food insecurity. Consequently, this paper seeks to investigate the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in agriculture curriculum for the post-colonial era in Eswatini. Specifically, the paper will be guided by the following research questions: (i) What Indigenous Knowledge is included in agriculture curriculum in Eswatini? (ii) How do stakeholders perceive the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in agriculture curriculum in Eswatini? What are the challenges for the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in the agriculture curriculum in Eswatini? How can the integration of Indigenous knowledge be enhanced for the teaching and learning of agriculture in Eswatini? The study will be framed by the Social Constructivist Theory postulated by Vygotsky (1978). Also, the study employed a phenomenological research design using interview and desk review in data generation on the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in the agriculture curriculum for the post-colonial era. Trustworthiness will be ensured by addressing issues of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The data will be analysed using thematic and content analysis.

Deimperializing Europe: Legacies, Stakes, and Pathways for Renewal

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This paper interrogates deimperialization as a necessary and urgent epistemic and structural process distinct from decolonization. While postcolonial scholarship critiques the colonality of knowledge, politics, and economies, much discourse centers on the agency of the formerly colonized. This paper shifts focus to the imperial core—including metropolises (e.g., the U.K., France), settler-colonial states (e.g., the U.S., Australia), and peripheral states with imperial entanglements (e.g., Norway, Japan)—asking: What does it mean for diverse formations of empire to deimperialize? Drawing from decolonial theory, critical international relations, and global political economy, we argue that deimperialization demands an ontological turn—a radical rupture with imperial epistemic traditions, institutional restructuring, and material reconfigurations of global hierarchies. This entails a shift beyond token inclusion toward dismantling Eurocentric universality. This framework distinguishes deimperialization's distinct trajectories: for former metropolises, confronting neo-imperial structures; for settler-colonial states, reckoning with dual roles as both former colonies and contemporary imperial actors; for peripheral European states, acknowledging complicity despite past subjugation. Empirically, we examine the limits of “decolonizing the curriculum” in European universities, imperial logics within global economic governance, and contradictions in aid and development. In so doing, we critique tokenistic efforts at “decolonizing” Western institutions, which often leave imperial frameworks intact while merely diversifying representation. Normatively, we argue for a shift from hierarchical to horizontal global relations, replacing aid with reparative justice and rejecting the universalization of Western

governance models. Centering deimperialization as distinct yet intersecting with decolonization, this paper challenges post-imperial assumptions, emphasizing the ongoing work of structural undoing.