Prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa

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By
Senezelo Sopatro Mbhele

SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR OLIVER MTAPURI

DATE: 27 February 2020

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE   ……………………………….

ABSTRACT

The Decolonial curriculum is a contested global education discourse debate on the how best to cater for previously disadvantaged population groups to access and excel in higher institutions of learning. The global view that there is a relationship between education and human prosperity is a pillar on which the calls for a decolonial curriculum lie. With the increase in student protests, political conflicts and economic crises in most countries, students are struggling to access university education, and to successfully undertake and complete their studies. In the most recent cases in South Africa, students have taken to the street to register their anger against the South African government for the slow progress of transformation in universities. Reviewing literature on the South Africa 2015/2016 #FeesMustFall University of KwaZulu-Natal student protest, this study sought to explore the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities. The research focused on factors that facilitate the effective implementation of a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to the current curriculum and the role that student activists play in shaping the discourse of decolonial curriculum debates and implementation. As such, a desktop qualitative literature review approach was used to analyse students' sentiments on a decolonial curriculum, against the background of the #FeesMustFall protests. No primary data was collected for this study. Grosfoguel's Model of Coloniality theory and three strategies for decolonial education guided this study. Findings suggest that the there is great need for an accelerated approach to a decolonial curriculum in SA universities in order to deal with inequalities, social injustices and human rights. The changes of the current university establishments would address the colonial injustices brought up by apartheid. In order to minimise the negative effects of inequalities in current university curricula, it is recommended that students, universities, religious leaders, communities, non-governmental partners and the government should work together in implanting a viable and sustainable decolonial curriculum in all universities and other institutions of higher learning.

DECLARATION

The Registrar Academic
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban
South Africa

I, Senezelo Sopatro Mbhele (Student number 961107132), declare that the thesis titled: Prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa is my original research.

1. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

2. The graphs and other information entailed have been acknowledged.

3. This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced.

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4. This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CCWG: Curriculum Change Working Group

CSVR: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

DHE: Department of Higher Education (South Africa)

EFFSC: Economic Freedom Front Student Command

FMF: #FeesMustFall

NSFAS: National Students Financial Aid Scheme

RMF: #RhodesMustFall

SA: South Africa

SRC: Student Representative Council

UCT: University of Cape Town

UFS: University of Free State

UKZN: University of KwaZulu-Natal

UNW: University of North west

UP: University of Pretoria

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CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the general background of this research, the research problem and the preliminary literature review. The issue of colonial legacies and post-colonial education development in South Africa has been an issue of contested debates among many scholars and researchers. According to Hofmeyr and Buckland (1992), the apartheid education policy was discriminatory, based on race and culture. It favoured Afrikanerdom, whereby Afrikaans was championed and elevated to the medium of instruction in all learning institutions. As such, some scholars believe that there is need for decolonising education in South Africa. However, **a** decolonial curriculum is a global phenomenon, especially in Africa. This is supported by Zembylas (2018:2) who believes that:

> *The colonial structures of African universities have been critiqued for decades now, certainly prior to the latest and current movements such as seen in South Africa, especially* #FeesMustFall*.*

When South Africa became independent, there were great expectations from the majority blacks that education would be transformed. However, there are also great concerns for unmet socio-political and economic needs almost 25 years after the dawn of democracy. The academic language policies have been inclined towards Afrikaans and English. However, Nudelman (2015) argues that post-apartheid SA embarked on transforming universities in all major structural and demographic spheres, but paid little attention to linguistic reconfigurations, thereby allowing Afrikaans and English to dominate indigenous languages.

The main contestation in the SA higher education sector is what the nature and aim of education is, and which language of instruction should take the lead role. A lot of money and resources have been channelled into higher education, without much focus on the prospects of how to transform the education system from apartheid legacies. Despite the South African government having a role to play in higher education development and transformation, in essence the 2015 #FeesMustFall (FMF) protest let the government know that universities were demanding institutional transformation, and this study focuses on the role that student protests have played in South African higher education's quest for transformation. Prospects for a decolonial curriculum in South African universities will be expounded in this dissertation.

1.2 Background to the Study

According to Fanon (1963), decolonial education is a reconfiguration of the academic landscape so as to create a new establishment. Furthermore, Fanon (1963) argues that Africans must change how they perceive their culture. Fanon (1963:10) postulates that if universities are decolonised, African epistemologies will be elevated and promoted to the benefit of the economic and social emancipation of indigenous people. This is what most African liberation struggles fought for. In SA, the 1955 Freedom Charter, elaborates that:

> *Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit.* (Kgatle, 2018:1).

The charter has a strong resonance for students fighting the apartheid regime for equal education opportunities for all, which, according to many decolonial scholars, has not been fully realised Faines (2014). As such, according to Davids (2016), universities must move forward the decolonial struggle, because they have an academic constitutional role to champion socio-economic, political and epistemological transformation.

On the other hand, Prinsloo (2015) argues that the curriculum must embrace African culture and knowledge in order to reconstruct the colonial hypocrisy. As such, this reconstruction process becomes the only way for Africans to regain their dignity. Therefore, universities must be transformed to redress the colonial injustices. Ngwena (2018) supports this when he notes that African values and their languages create pride and a good sense of self-worth. Thus, the curriculum should reflect those values. This also means that the curriculum should reflect their existing intelligence and geospatial knowledge.

Becker (2012) states that decoloniality entails geographic reconfigurations of beliefs, values, perceptions and knowledge which Africans are taught. Europe must not be the only fountain of epistemic enunciation for the world, especially Africans. Becker (2012) adds that Africa must not follow the knowledge production of the West. Instead Gegan (2016) argues that Africa must change its view about the current education, beliefs and values and must develop its knowledge based on its values, beliefs and needs.

On the same note, Mbembe (2016) postulates that the decolonisation processes used by other nations can be used by African academics and professionals around the world to recreate justice and equality. Prinsloo (2015 cautions that African scholars must be vigilant and resilient in expounding that African knowledge must be the central fountain of academic content in African universities. Furthermore, Prinsloo (2015) posits that Africa's current socio-economic, education and political systems are in the hands of racists from the colonial past, and therefore it is imperative to urgently change the universities, which are agents for the production of culture and values. For instance, Premesh and Lalu (2009) believe that most South Africa universities' staff and student establishments are currently agents for white supremacy, where being black symbolises inferiority. According to Premesh and Lalu (2009:56), as most universities are agents of white supremacy, they classify university students based on how well they articulate and express themselves in English or Afrikaans. This needs to be changed and challenged, as witnessed during the #RhodesMustFall nationwide university protests. Prinsloo (2015:5) concurs with this when he writes that higher institutions of learning must not be static in the colonial past, and as such must embrace robust ideological and transformation debates.

1.3   Problem Statement

The study looks at the impacts of political, social and economic factors on the prospects of a decolonial curriculum in SA universities. The aim of this research is to get an insight and examine the prospects of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa universities. The research uses secondary data to seek answers to decolonial curriculum questions from a student's point of view. In this study, decolonial education is considered a determinant to create equity and social justice for the previously disadvantaged black majority in South Africa. The country has achieved some progress in the development of university education and infrastructure, however issues of language and financial exclusion have come to the forefront, championed by students themselves. Many researchers have focused on the need for decolonial education, with little attention on its prospects against the backdrop of the 2015 hashtag #FeesMustFall (FMF) student protest. A hashtag is:

> *Any word or slogan with a # symbol in front of it and defines the topic for a tweet which is useful for creating and clustering subgroups of people on Twitter who share something in common.* Kywe, Hoang, (Lim and Zhu, 2011:339).

Garcia (2019) researched decolonial scholars and focused on the critical and decolonial contemporary discourse of transdisciplinary action as a knowledge paradigm. Aldawood (2018) emphasised decolonising human rights education, where he focused on the pedagogical approaches of human rights for academics to understand how they are aligned with and informed by, and incorporate or utilise decolonial theory. The research by Aldawood (2018) presented the way in which decolonial theory explores the ways in which Eurocentrism, sustained by colonialism and coloniality, has resulted in an epistemology of human rights that ignore and exclude subaltern voices. This study, however, aims to find out the impact of student protests on decoloniality in universities. There is little knowledge on the aspect of students' views of how the SA government has designed and implemented decolonial education policies, hence the need to explore the prospects of a decolonial curriculum in the post-apartheid era.

1.3 Motivation for the study

The legacies of apartheid on South Africa education, politics, economy and social life cannot be unchallenged by many scholars, who still believe that there must be concerted efforts by the current government to redress past injustices. Heleta (2016:1) notes that:

> *Since the end of the oppressive and racist apartheid system in 1994, epistemologies and knowledge systems at most South African universities have not considerably changed; they remain rooted in colonial, apartheid and Western worldviews and epistemological traditions.*

For instance, a lot of these practices are seen in the legal, economic and education systems of South Africa. This study investigates factors that influenced the struggle against colonial education during the fees must fall campaign. This campaign also sought to obtain free education in the post-apartheid period and overall it was also a fight against western knowledge and its production and re-production in contemporary institutions of higher learning. It also sought to investigate how decolonial education accommodates local knowledge production and its mainstreaming into the current curriculum.

In 2015/2016 SA witnessed a great number of student uprisings, according to the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) (2016). The drive was for free access to higher education for all deserving students Lewis and Hendricks (2016). Students were tired of financial exclusion due to high university fees. The theme of student uprising was #Fees Must Fall CSVR (2016). Furthermore, students also questioned the usage of the English

language, at the expense of their mother tongue. This was witnessed at the University of Pretoria, where students questioned why the university was spending a lot of money on maintaining Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, yet the language catered only for 17 per cent of the student population who speak Afrikaans South Africa History (2016). During the time of the decolonial education campaign and the Fees Must Fall campaign, the researcher was working as a school teacher in Cato Manor in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. This student movement triggered the researcher's interest in studying about the possibility of free higher education and a decolonial education system in the country. As such, the idea of involving the African content in the curriculum was very interesting. The researcher's viewpoint concurred with Morreira (2015:6), who observes that:

> *Decolonial thinkers argue that modernity is predicated upon coloniality, and that one product of modernity has been the creation and maintenance of the kind of knowledge that is considered legitimate.*

However, Quijano (2007) explores decoloniality in the context of what he calls a 'colonial matrix of power', which consists of patriarchy, racism, knowledge, authority, and the economy, and he strongly believes that the colonial matrix of power still exists despite the end of colonialism.

1.4   Main Aim

The main objective of this study is to obtain an in-depth understanding of the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities.

1.5   Aims and Objectives

1.5.1   To investigate the factors that facilitate the effective implementation of a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to the current curriculum.

1.5.2   To explore the role of advocacy in facilitating a decolonial curriculum.

1.5.3   To assess the feasibility of a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to a colonial curriculum in universities.

1.5.4   To assess the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities.

1.6 Main Research Question

What are the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities?

1.7 Key Questions

1.7.1   What factors facilitate the effective implementation of a decolonial education?

1.7.2   What is the role of advocacy in facilitating this curriculum?

1.7.3   How feasible is a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to a colonial curriculum at universities?

1.7.4   What are the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities?

1.8 Organisation of the Dissertation

This research is made up of five chapters. Chapter One outlines the background and key research questions of the study. It also presents the motivation for the study regarding a decolonial curriculum; its prospects, opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, the aims and objectives of this study are also outlined. Chapter Two reviews the literature on the research topic. It discusses the decolonial curriculum in the context of global, African and South African education systems. Chapter Two also explores the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are vital in unpacking and understanding the prospects of decolonial education in South Africa. Chapter Three presents the research methodology. It highlights the study context, data collection methods, sampling, sampling strategy, the limitations of the study and the ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents the study findings and interpretations, and Chapter Five provides the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.9 Conclusion

The chapter presented a broader background within which the research was conceptualised, and provided the reasons why such a study was deemed necessary. The focal point of the study is

to explore the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities. The background of the study highlighted some important points on these issues. The following chapter discusses the literature for a decolonial curriculum.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter presents relevant literature related to the study topic on the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa. This chapter reviews global findings and gaps in the current literature on decolonial education.

2.2   Context of Decolonial Education

According to Fanon (1963), decoloniality entails reconfiguration of a violent past in order to create a new system. Fanon (1963) further argues that prospects,opportunities and challenges of decoloniality is a historical process which should be redressed in the context of historical form and content. It is therefore important to explore decolonial education from three perspectives: a professional (vertical decoloniality view), social (horizontal decoloniality view) and personal (pragmatic decoloniality view), Khoja-Moolji (2017); Zembylas (2017); Maseko (2018). There is a contested argument by some scholars that colonialism in the juridical-political sense ended in Africa, but the legacy of colonialism is systematically rooted in many academic institutions where students, academics and workers are oppressed and exploited Grosfoguel (2007). Mbembe (2016) asserts that decoloniality involves the geopolitical reconfiguration of the present socio-economic way of life, that is still embedded in the colonial past. As such, decolonial education aims to redesign Euro-centric knowledge to Afro-centric knowledge. Berker (2012) postulates that the decolonial mindset started after European colonisation in the Andres region, whereby indigenous American people were forced to accept the West as the main source of knowledge. For instance, European renaissance universities were introduced with little regard for the language and culture of the indigenous people.

Central to Fanon's (1963) and Prinsloo's (2015) arguments is the fact that colonisation dehumanised Africans. As such, Prinsloo (2015) believes that transformed and Africanised universities can transform Africans' knowledge and culture. Decolonial education must embrace the concept of Africanness, defined by Ngwena (2018:1), as a way of:

Making of Africa in colonial discourses and the making of an African race and African culture(s) and sexuality(ies) in ways that are not just historically conscious but also have a heuristic capacity to contest nativism from the outside as well as from within.

Africanness promotes geospatial knowledge and intelligence of all who were born and live in Africa, by enhancing their pride and good sense of self-worth. This is against the backdrop that colonialism took away from Africans their humanity and traditions. Becker (2012) states that decoloniality must recreate African knowledge rather than rely on western epistemology. Africa must believe in itself, and do away with the notion that Europe is superior to the rest of the world. Gegan (2016) believes that most African countries' universities use European generated knowledge that is not relevant to their needs. Becker (2012:3) notes that:

The modern geopolitics of knowledge was grounded in the suppression of sensing and the body and its geo historical location [and] the foundations of knowledge were and remain territorial and imperial.

According to Becker (2016), Africa produces and promotes western academic or religious literature, thereby promoting the colonial master's way of life. This means that blacks regard western knowledge as superior to local knowledge. Becker (2012) further argues that recognition of the geo and body politics of knowledge is the main platform to analyse and identify the main recipients of knowledge and its causal effects.

2.3 Factors that Facilitate the Effective Implementation of a Decolonial Curriculum as an Alternative to the Current Curriculum in Universities

The dominant idea of curriculum used in universities across the world is based on the factory model of education developed by Frank Taylor (1911). Le Grange (2016:7) explores the term curriculum in the context of universities by elaborating the concept propounded by Taylor (1911),

Taylor's emphasis on designing industrial systems to achieve specified products is reproduced in the objectives-driven curriculum models of Franklin Bobbitt (1918, 1928) and Ralph Tyler (1949), and more recently manifested in outcomes-based approaches to ... education curriculum .... Bobbitt, Tyler and Biggs represent curriculum as a simple, tightly coupled system in which it is both possible and desirable to closely align what students do in order to learn with intended learning outcomes and how they are assessed.

However, Le Grange (2016) believes that curriculum entails the planned stories that universities tell students about their past, present and future. Furthermore, Aoki (1999), cited in Le Grange, argues that curriculum should not focus only on the planned (curriculum-as-plan) but also on how it is lived (curriculum-as-lived) – how the curriculum is lived by university students and lecturers. Legitimating the curriculum-as-lived measures how seriously university students are experiencing the current university curriculum. As such, curriculum is a plan for learning, which follows a schedule of a student's education process.

On the other hand, education is a whole process of learning, which includes all related subject matters. Drawing from the context of the United States of America, Marshal (1995), cited in McIntush (2000:419) believes that

> *Education is a contested term in our culture not just because our nation long ago accepted public schooling but because we link education to a range of positive values and assumptions about what will benefit both individuals and the nation.*

Khoja-Moolji (2017) asserts that emerging global mounting social and economic inequalities, displacement, dispossession, and climate change calls for scholars and educators in the field of international education to explore resistive and reparative decolonial curriculum that advocates for different futurities. With reference to Pakistan decolonial education campaign, Khoja-Moolji (2017) further elaborates that decolonial praxis can be the main driver for such intellectual and pedagogical redresses as it deconstructs dominant forms of intellectual productions which is heavily aligned to Eurocentric epistemologies.

2.3.1 Indigenous knowledge and indigenous intellectuals and curriculum

The need for total liberation on the African continent must be understood in the context of liberation from bondage by the colonial past experiences in the familial, educational, religious and political domains. Unfortunately, most liberations manifest themselves violently, for instance, through violent student protests. Koopman (2018) concurs that university students across South Africa protested violently in 2015/2016, demanding a decolonised education system that incorporates indigenous knowledge into it, for instance, the usage of local languages as the medium of instruction. Prinsloo (2016) argues that Africa is designed in the colonial and racist image which, unfortunately, continues to dictate and shape current realities. This is structurally imbedded in universities who have the obligation of molding Africa's

political, social and economic landscapes that represent the aspirations of indigenous people. Prinsloo (2016) also argues that it is important to transform universities. Koopman (2018:1) postulates that transformation of universities must occur in the context of African philosophical thinking that has been in existence for many years before decolonisation.

Mbembe (2016) observes that decolonisation is used among indigenous academics and professionals in those countries where decolonial education models are existent. As such, Prinsloo (2016) argues that African academics must champion a decolonial curriculum and they must get rid of putting Euro-centric knowledge at the centre of all major studies. He further argues that this will be the beginning of re-shaping African dignity. However, the argument propounded by Koopman (2018) is that both indigenous and western knowledge can be equally incorporated into curricula, for instance, with the need to recognise traditional medicines and healers in the nursing, medical and public health curriculum. According to Carrolisin et al. (2017:497):

> *Curriculum refers to content (what is taught), process (how teaching takes place) and context (the ethical and moral practices of teachers' work). Curriculum is a symbolic process that reproduces existing relations of power.*

This supports the point that it is beneficial to Africa to transform the current curriculum. Wynter (2016) views that Africa is still entrenched in the epistemological injustices of colonialism as it mainly promotes the western bourgeoisie concept of capitalism at the expense of the African man, thus consequently promoting colonial power relations in areas of authority, sexuality, knowledge and economy. As such, Berker (2016) believes that decoloniality is the main delinking tool from colonialism to modernity.

2.3.2   Equality, human rights and humanity

Carolissen et al. (2017) argue that inequality in South Africa's universities is highlighted in the Education White Paper of 1997. Race, class, gender and the apartheid geospatial system negatively impact on how blacks access and perform in universities. Carolissen et al. (2017) further argue that perennial service delivery protests also highlight social inequalities, poverty and the slow pace of transformation in higher education and broader society in post- apartheid South Africa.

Premesh and Lalu (2009) assert that humanity is indispensable for thinking of the way out of the legacies of authoritarianism, and as such universities are authoritarian as they impose

European knowledge on indigenous people. Koopman (2018) refers to the 2015 #RhodesMustFall university student protests, which demanded the demolishing of Cecil John Rhodes' statues in all public institutions, as the epitome of colonialism in Southern Africa. Premesh and Lalu (2009) further highlight that universities are segregatory against black students. Some universities' language policies are discriminatory, for instance, where Afrikaans becomes the only medium of instruction, which automatically disqualifies blacks.

Desai and Sanya (2016) argue that South Africans must regain the indigenous knowledge and prominence that has been pushed to the periphery of socio-economic life. McKittrick (2015) believes that working as a collective is the only tool to fight the legacies of colonialism in universities. Ultimately, these authors argue that it is not acceptable that one race group controls the world resources and curriculum while others depend on it. In her thoughts, colonialism presents a situation where a colonial master owns and controls activities and thinking in colonies. Klikauer (2014) believes that being human is a praxis, which refers to an act of engaging, applying, exercising, realising or practising ideas. According to Leibowitz (2016), there is hegemonisation of knowledge whereby a particular knowledge unique to each race group is not covered in western dominated literature and practise. As such, geopolitical knowledge must be featured in curricula that will help in storing and reserving it for future generations and it also serves as a heritage for those people who own it Leibowitz (2016). However, Desai and Sanya (2016) do not elaborate on the detailed content of a decolonial curriculum.

2.3.3   Race and social constructs

Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) assert that colonialism alienated, marginalised and discriminated against black students and staff, thereby promoting white supremacy and black inferiority. According to Premesh and Lalu (2009), universities inculcate the idea that human beings are stratified based on race, thus to be human is to be white and that signifies academic and professional competency, efficiency, scholarliness and trustworthiness. Pillay (2005),cited in Prinsloo (2016) argues that universities must be dynamic and ideologically inclined and embrace the new political dawn in most African countries. Universities must be centres of African renewal, innovation, subversion and debate to erase the legacies of colonialism, and academically empower the majority. Wynter (2016) supports the idea by asserting that even races are a social construct that are created by humans. Therefore, the manner in which humans view the concept of black people must be changed and reconstructed. For instance, Smiley and

Fakunle (2016) cite an example in the United States of America where discriminatory court rulings fuelled racial violence during the post-reconstruction era between 1865 and 1867.

Blackness became synonymous with criminality. However, Wynter (2016) does not mention how this deconstruction will take place since power is still in the hands of whites who constructed it. Blacks are still viewed as an inferior race when compared to other race groups. Wynter (2016) views this as a manufactured thinking reflected in colonial education and it thus needs to be deconstructed.

Desai and Sanya (2016) argue that race and gender are also lodged in the body whereby black people's knowledge has been undervalued and therefore there is a need to deconstruct this negative view so that both race and gender receive equal recognition. No racial groups must be exalted over other race groups, but rather must complement each other for the case of making the world a better place to live in. Desai and Sanya (2016:5) support this by saying:

> *That while individuals may not explicitly experience other genres of human, each individual is interwoven in and with the other. Curriculum must educate towards deep and active interconnectivity.*

This suggests that there is one human race and that races work hand and hand, therefore there is no need for gender and racial discrimination in society, and education can be used to fight against any form of discrimination. The decolonial curriculum presents a platform where this interconnectivity can be displayed and practiced.

2.3.4   Hierarchical order of humanness

Wynter (2016) argues that the Christian conception of man is overrepresented as the way of being human through a hierarchical order of humanness. According to Sholarin et al. (2015), human beings, also referred to as man, are yardsticks on how society is viewed.

Therefore, universities in Africa should reconfigure this construction of man and humanness. Carolissen, et al. (2017) argue that reconstructing the discipline of psychology is a response to calls for decolonising the field of psychology to align with black people's way of life. For instance, there were many black psychologists and local psychology textbooks produced who mainly express dominant white hegemonic practices.

Nudelman (2015) observes that SA universities are primary agents of neoliberal systems, where competition and individualism are prominent, with little attention to the needs of the poor. It used to be very difficult for black students to enter university, let alone finish a degree. Statistics

on student progress in contact classes between 2001 and 2004 show that black students struggled more than whites, Indians and coloureds South African Department of Higher Education (2008). Letseka and Maile (2008) indicate that the success rate for black students in 2001 was 65 per cent, compared to 85 per cent for whites. However, it rose to 70 per cent for blacks in 2004 and 86 per cent for whites Letseka and Maile (2008). These figures suggest that there are many challenges that affect black students, most of them attributed to socio-economic and language issues. Carrolisen at al. (2017) further argue that it is these debates and the shortcomings of the anticipated change since the 1980s that are resurfacing through calls for decolonisation of the curriculum of community psychology. According to Suffla and Seedat (2015), decolonisation in community psychology challenges Euro-American knowledge production. This is highlighted by Makhubela (2016:5), who posits that indigenous psychology should promote local psychological culture.

In decoloniality debates, there is more focus on the analysis and disruption of hegemonic power dynamics in the community for transformation purposes. However, Makhubela (2016) further argues that not all contemporary concepts and methods of community psychology support this perspective of transformation. Bond et al. (2016) believe that a decolonial curriculum is not unitary in its aims and practices because complex pluralities and fluidities of representation exist across different communities.

Lucket (2016) views the debate outlined using a 'de-colonial gaze' as indicating that it is morally justified in the post-apartheid era to re-construct academic content and material that will recover and build black studentship for holistic self-identity, and academic achievement. In order to achieve this, government has a constitutional mandate to roll out a decolonial curriculum with dialogical engagement, thereby showing a political will to establish an ethical academic society. Lucket (2016:424) also believes that curriculum changes must focus on the source of knowledge production. In fact, the argument posed by many African decolonial scholars is that knowledge production must be transformed and include indigenous people's aspirations, cultures and beliefs. According to Mbembe (2015), a transformed education would draw on research that focuses on deconstruction of the historical development of the disciplines during the era of colonialism. As such, using a de-colonial gaze entails that any universalising of academic content is not defensible. There may be a few elements in colonial education that can be used to spice up the decolonial curriculum. This is further supported by Lucket (2016), who argues that not everything that the colonial curriculum has is bad. Instead African scholars need methods to read, challenge and expand them. Lucket (2016:425) elaborates further that:

Knee-jerk reactions that swing from a supposedly context-free curriculum to stand-point positions asserting that all knowledge practices are relative – consumed by their socio-historical contexts and the subjectivities of their knowers – are unlikely to build knowledge.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) states that even that knowledge owned and written by African writers will better represent the African aspirations.

Morton (2014) argues that the curriculum should be viewed as cultural works that are 'context-laden', as opposed to 'context-determined'. Cultural aspects of the people in a particular geographic area should be included in the curriculum, indicating that the curriculum must be meaningful and relevant to the user, hence decolonial curriculum scholars should be taught analytical skills for debating, critical analysis and challenging and deconstructing of the colonial curriculum. However, Mbembe (2016) argues that because of funding challenges faced by many public schools and universities in SA, this poses a serious pedagogic challenge. Students must therefore be presented with opportunities in a variety of critical thinking-oriented development subjects. Morton (2014) adds that if all equity students are mandated to take additional developmental academic content, there will be financial repercussions. Morton (2014) further argues that in predominantly white universities, black students are considered less intelligent and they are viewed as unable to compete with white students. Morton (2014) attributes this fallacy to the legacies of colonialism and hence provides justification to decolonise university education.

2.4 Feasibility of a Decolonial Curriculum as an Alternative to a Colonial Curriculum in Universities

Wynter (2016) presents a post-colonial theoretical inquiry that applies threads of intellectual projects to scholarship in curriculum studies. She feels that these intellectual projects' insights might urge new potential in educational theorising and practice. Her work is based on anticolonial and decolonial thought. Her work is decolonial and is concerned with epistemology that is shaped by the anticolonial struggle. She urges post-colonial and decolonial theoretical paradigms to draw on anticolonial movement. According to Albrecht (2019:2):

Postcolonial studies have managed to establish and normalize colonialism as an issue exclusive to Western colonial and imperial powers and their non-Western victims.

Furthermore, Wynter (2016) believes that post colonialism has not done enough to emancipate people from colonialism because post-colonial scholars have not addressed the question of

decoloniality, instead they heavily rely on European scholars to maintain an anti-essentialist orientation. Nkomo (2011) feels that postcolonial theory reliance on discursive practices does not fully address material realities in Africa, such as inequalities. Instead, Nkomo (2011:367) argues that post-colonial scholarship lacks:

Authentic and well sustained African input into postcolonialism.

Some scholars believe that two initiatives must be rolled out. Firstly, Desai and Sanya (2016) believe that decoloniality involves the double gesture of re-enactment and relocating of thought in order to get rid of colonial epistemology. For instance, the present-day curriculum is located in colonial thought, and relocating it will help to unmask the present curriculum. Kromydas (2017) feels that the present curriculum has limited scope as it focuses only on western epistemology. A decolonial curriculum is broad and inclusive as it includes vital knowledge of people living in colonies. The second initiative to achieve decolonial education is for scholars to demand and delink themselves from colonial knowledge systems and reimagine the present and future curriculum by infusing local knowledge, language and beliefs (Le Grange, 2018). This becomes the platform for African scholars to develop a curriculum of their own that embraces their geographic knowledge and skills.

Zembylas (2018) argues that a decolonial framework engenders epistemic disobedience because the current knowledge is oppressive to the black community. Eventually, blacks will disobey this decolonial knowledge to seek epistemic rights of the margins, because it is seen as a symbol of colonial dominance.

2.4.1   Decolonising Knowledge

Baker (2012) posits that decoloniality entails the geopolitical reconceptualization of societal knowledge. This is based on the strong belief that knowledge in Africa and South Africa is Euro-centric, based on the bird's eye view of European systems. A decolonial curriculum needs to show the changing geopolitics of knowledge, whereby the modern epistemological system for learning about the world should not be understood as global and unbound by geo-historical and biographical contexts. This is elaborated on by Baker (2012:1) when he notes that:

> *In order to build a universal conception of knowledge, western epistemology (from Christian theology to secular philosophy and science) has pretended that knowledge is independent of the geohistorical (Christian Europe).*

Mbembe (2016) argues that the curriculum must demythologise whiteness, as has been dealt with successfully at the University of Cape Town by the removal of the statue of Cecil Rhodes

as it is perceived to have belonged to white men who strongly believed that to be black was a liability. As such, Mbemebe (2016) further argues that Rhodes used his political and financial power to entice blacks to believe in white supremacy. Rhodes even made sure that whites remain superior and blacks remain inferior, and the curriculum is the centre where Rhodes' ideas are manifested.

Knudsen and Andersen (2019) feel that Rhodes' statue has no significance on a public university campus in SA, hence there is no need to debate why it should, or should not be removed. Instead, the debate should be about why it took so long to remove it at the #RhodesMustFall (RMF) protest. This is further supported by Mbembe (2016:16) who writes:

> *To bring Rhodes' statue down is far from erasing history, and nobody should be asking us to be eternally indebted to Rhodes for having 'donated' his money and for having bequeathed 'his' land to the University.*

Knudsen and Andersen (2019) further argue that the RMF protest is one of the many legitimate ways in which blacks can reconstruct colonial history. For memory to fulfil this function long after the Truth and Reconciliation paradigm has run out of steam, the demythologizing of the painful past must consider the demythologizing of whiteness and human history Calitz (2018). Mbembe (2016:6) concurs when he writes:

> *Whiteness is about entrapment. Whiteness is at its best when it turns into a myth. It is the most corrosive and the most lethal when it makes us believe that it is everywhere; that everything originates from it and it has no outside. We are therefore calling for the demythologization of whiteness because democracy in South Africa will either be built on the ruins of those versions of whiteness that produced Rhodes or it will fail.*

Mbembe (2016) emphasises the importance of acknowledging black heroes and heroines. He argues that white status in towns and cities and universities needs to be removed. He argues that white privilege and tendencies must be removed if South Africans want to demythologise whiteness. Instead, Leibowitz (2016) believes that the white supremacy which created John Rhodes must be de-commissioned if South Africans are to reconfigure the painful colonial past. All apartheid statues must be placed in museums, however, not underestimating their historical importance in other sectors. This is supported by Lambrechts (2016) who argues that a museum is not a dumping place for waste but an epistemic space. However, Mbembe (2016) still believes that putting apartheid statues in graveyards allows South Africans to move on and reconstruct inclusive public spaces for the new democratic dispensation. Subsequent to that black South Africans can begin to have confidence and strength to create and shape their new

history. History presenting them as humans, not as sub-humans or slaves as colonial history does.

2.5   Public Spaces and South African Identity

Fanon (1963) elaborates on what a public space is by giving what he calls a redefinition of the term. It pertains to common space which does not belong to an individual because it must be equally shared between equals. Calitz (2018) asserts that to decolonise South Africa, public space and architecture needs to be changed now. As such, the renaming of buildings and of public spaces is an urgent issue because about 70 per cent of the land is owned by 13 per cent of the white minority Mbembe (2016). In addition, Mbembe (2016) draws attention to Ferial Haffajee, the editor of the weekly *City Press*, who provides a different viewpoint and is critical of fighting over the past because she feels that because of this focus on the past, South Africa is unable to create entrepreneurial South Africans. Haffajee cited in Mbembe (2016:1) aspires to a future where each South African is an active market actor determined by future markets. However, Mbembe (2016) disagrees with her viewpoint and argues that decolonising the universities in Africa must start with the de-privatisation and rehabilitation of the public space by focussing on the rearrangement of spatial societal relations.

Mheta, Lungu and Govender (2018) assert that the decolonisation of buildings and of public spaces is inseparable from the democratisation of access to community resources. This has to happen if Africans want to achieve total academic liberation that may transcend into economic prosperity and unity, thus the call for South Africa and other African countries to invest in universities' infrastructure, human capital, access and curricula. This goal may not be reached, as South Africa spent just 0.6 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product on higher education in 2018/2019, according to the South Africa National Treasury (2019). There must be more funding for higher education. Langa et al. (2017) assert that access to education is a creation of conditions that allow black staff and students to proudly associate with university goals and programmes. Thus, when students and staff feel like this, their level of confidence and ownership increases and the quality of teaching improves.

All South African universities have a grading system, methods for the legitimate accumulation of credits and acceptable and non-acceptable standards of achievement. However, Wynter (2016) believes that the current standardisation and classification of universities promotes authoritative control of a colonial education system.

South Africa needs to decolonise the systems of management insofar as they have turned higher education into a marketable product. Wynter (2016) argues that the colonised have to ask whether there might be other ways of measuring, counting and rating which escape the trap of everything having to become a numerical standard or unit.

According to Mbembe (2016), South Africans have to create alternative monitoring and evaluation systems because the current ones deter students and teachers from independent learning, void of the scramble for credits. Mbembe (2016) further argues that academic excellence has been reduced to statistical analyses for the purpose of grading. There is a contested debate that there is a need to break the cycle of quantitative assessment that tends to turn students into customers and consumers. The curriculum has to change if the aim of higher education is for it to be redistributed beyond the current human knowledge horizons.

Fataar (2018) believes that classrooms are centres of decolonisation, and that universities cannot keep teaching the way that they always have; teaching obsolete forms of knowledge with obsolete pedagogies. There is a contested view that just as statues that symbolise colonialism have been decommissioned, so too should a lot of the colonial curriculum and teaching methodologies be decommissioned. In order to set institutions firmly on the path of future knowledge, Wynter (2016) argues that there is a need to reinvent the classroom, so that there are no walls and all are co-learners; with universities that are capable of convening the public in new forms of assemblies that become points of convergence of and platforms for the redistribution of different kinds of knowledge. Mbembe (2016) is critical of a teacher-centred knowledge and he believes that all stakeholders must participate in knowledge production.

2.6   Decolonising Universities

Decoloniality of tertiary education is a subject of a profoundly intellectual nature, which is also colossal given the complex nature of the South Africa higher education system. Dreyer (2017:1) states that the transformation of university education has been on the agenda of post independent South Africa since 1994, albeit at a very slow pace, and has only been brought to the fore by the violent student protests in 2015 and 2016. Heleta (2016:1) is aware of this but advocates for non-violent methods of rolling out decolonial education,

> *The movement to decolonise higher education — a coalition of students, progressive academics, university staff and concerned public — must find ways to hold the institutions accountable and maintain*

a nonviolent and intellectual struggle until Eurocentrism and epistemic violence at universities are dismantled.

As such, decoloniality must be viewed in a non-violent and inclusive way.

2.7   Decolonisation or Africanization of Land and Public Spaces

When some African countries became independent, they embarked on postcolonial socio-political, economic and education experiments to decolonise and Africanise tertiary education so as to enhance nation-building, thereby repossessing, if necessary by force, that which was taken away by colonialism Dreyer (2017). Independent African states believe that decolonialism promotes the black majority's innate rights, capabilities and claims made against the minority whites, thereby propounding a notion of black people self-ownership that creates new forms of human dignity. Dreyer (2017) supports this by asking independent Africa not to regard Europe as their socio-economic, political and education model. In fact, there is no need to imitate what Europe does; rather there is a need to promote Africa. However, Fanon (1963) is extremely critical about these experiments as they benefited the middle class which is perceived to be parasitic on the working class, is also perceived to be close to the Eurocentric culture and is suspiciously viewed as lazy, unscrupulous, parasitic and above all lacking in spiritual depth. According to Fanon (1963), such experiments led to Afro-phobia and xenophobia, which he calls inverted racism, as witnessed in Ivory Coast, Senegal, Congo, and more recently in South Africa. Mbembe (2016) believes that Fanon (1963) provides the most trenchant critique of Africanization because very often, especially when the greedy ruling social class is in charge, decolonisation is turned into brutal chauvinism, thereby leading to racism. Instead, Mbembe (2016:97) argues that nationalisation and decolonisation quite simply mean:

The transfer into native hands of those unfair advantages which were a legacy of the colonial past.

Mbembe (2016) also argues that in the aftermath of colonialism, the middle class propounded the overall claim to self-determination as a way of preventing the formation of an authentic African national consciousness.

According to Lephakga (2015), colonisation was a fundamental negation of time, which promoted the absurd colonial view that natives were simply people without history who were radically located outside of time, and therefore the colonisers were the only essential human beings with futurity, and Africans' future policy frameworks were to be viewed as a

magnanimous gift of civilization. Furthermore, Austin (2010) observes that the existence of Africans was attacked through colonisation and this facilitated the creation of black nations into European satellites. Colonial violence and plunder became glorified by Europe as a benevolent act, as enshrined in Rhodes' statue and its symbolic meaning of colonialism, especially against the background of post-independence, poverty and inequality. Europeans believed that they were morally justified to colonise others, in this case Africans Abdatista, (2011). According to Mbembe (2016) the colonial legacy is the main reason why blacks are angry; hence he argues that decolonising is a violent phenomenon to redress the past imbalances in as far as land ownership is concerned. It is therefore a contested process that SA finds itself in, as the legacies of apartheid live on.

2.8   Decolonising the mind

According to Ngugi Wa Thiago (1981), cited in Mbembe (2016), post-apartheid Africa needs to decolonise the mind through language. For instance, English was used as a medium to transfer European culture to Africans. Decolonising the African mind through local language usage by higher education is part of a larger political war room strategy. Ngugi (1981, cited in Mbembe (2016) believes that mother tongue use in Africa is the only perspective which can allow Africans to relate amongst themselves, and to the greater world. However, Mbembe (2016) believes that decolonising the mind is an on-going process of 'seeing oneself clearly'; emerging out of a state of either blindness or dizziness.

 Wa Thiongo'o (1981), cited in Mbembe (2016) believes that writing and teaching is the process that promotes decolonisation of the mind, where those colonised write their own subject matter and teach themselves. It is a struggle over what is to be taught and the terms under which education institutions should be teaching. According to Rutazibwa and Shilliam (2018:54), central to the Wa Thiongo'o (1986) writings is the addressing of the questions:

> *What should we do with the inherited colonial education system and the consciousness it necessarily inculcated in the African mind? What directions should an education system take in an Africa wishing to break with neo-colonialism? How does it want the 'New Africans' to view themselves and their universe and from what base, Afrocentric or Eurocentric? What then are the materials they should be exposed to, and in what order and perspective? Who should be interpreting that material to them, an African or non-African?*

Africa must determine the type of academic child and citizen it wants, rather than being dictated to by Europe. Wa Thiongo'o (1981:88) states:

> *Then Africans have to coldly and consciously look at what imperialism has been doing to them and to their view of themselves in the universe.*

In Ngugi's (1981) terms, 'decolonisation' is a project of 're-enacting Africa according to its customs, traditions and norms'.

Ngugi (1981:88) states; Africa has to be placed at the centre. He goes on to say:

> *Education is a means of knowledge about ourselves. After we have examined ourselves, we radiate outwards and discover peoples and the worlds around us. With Africa at the centre of things, not existing as an appendix or a satellite of other countries and literatures, things must be seen from the African perspective. All other things are to be considered in their relevance to our situation and their contribution towards understanding ourselves. In suggesting this South Africans are not rejecting other streams, especially the western stream. South Africans are clearly mapping out the directions and perspectives the study of culture and literature will inevitably take in an African university.*

Ngugi is an African writer who has popularised the concept of 'decolonising'. Mbembe (2016) asserts that today South Africans have to foster the project of a future university in South Africa. However, Mahabeer (2018:2) believes that a decolonial curriculum is rooted in decolonial teacher education, whereby there is need for,

> *A radical dismantling and reforming of apartheid ideas to bring about redress in the teacher education curricula.*

Such practical implementations might be wise to look into as they grapple with what it might possibly means to decolonise the whole spectrum of academic institutions. There is a contested view that colonialism rhymes with mono-lingualism, which brings up the view propounded by Koch and Burkett (2005) that African languages must be central in the teaching and learning curriculum, as one step towards a decolonial curriculum. Africans cherish the ideal of African universities that are multilingual in African languages such as Swahili, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Shona, Yoruba, Hausa, Lingala, and Gikuyu. Decolonising an African university requires a geographical imagination that extends well beyond the confines of the nation-state.

2.9   Coloniality of Power

Quijano (2000a) argues that globalisation is a process that began with the constitution of America and colonial Eurocentric capitalism as a new global power. He goes on to argue that the process of Eurocentrism pronounced colonised people as existing outside of history and knowledge construction and not possessing a history, a coherent culture, and an epistemology

worthy of recognition. Based on this process and belief Europe is the centre of knowledge and knowledge production. Thus, Eurocentrism is dominant in all life in Africa.

Mignolo (2011:80) refers to this origin of Western hegemony as:

> *The epistemology of the 'zero point'. Zero-point epistemology of a colonialist of power 'distorts Indigenous peoples' self-images and aspirations' and leads to internalized oppression.*

Colonialism, therefore, invites decolonial pedagogies that reject structures and discourses associated traditionally with colonialism as relics of the past, as the concepts of postmodern and postcolonial can imply Marzagora (2016). According to critical educator De Lissovoy (2015:102):

> *This means starting from outside the discourses of Eurocentric reasoning, and even its familiar dialects of revolution and recognizing the historical dignity and generativity of indigenous communities, the poor, and the excluded.*

Baker (2012) argues that the Eurocentric concept of modernity, and therefore modern teacher education, is based on a foundational 'myth' that 'the idea of the history of human civilization as a trajectory departed from a state of nature and culminated in Europe'.

The United Nations (2013:6) documents the effects of contemporary education as:

> *A way of indoctrinating indigenous youth with the dominant culture while denying them access to their indigenous culture.*

This idea is very true in South Africa because books that are used at school are written by Europeans. The United Nations further argues that Indigenous youth in Mexico, Canada, the US, Australia, and New Zealand have extremely high drop-out rates from public schools in comparison to other ethnic groups Tippeconnic and Faircloth (2010); Hopkins (2015). Hence, because multiculturalism and interculturalism are rooted in Western ways of interpreting the world, Aman (2013:284) cautions that:

> *Interculturality in the West may reproduce coloniality by appealing to modernity as a means of achieving global tolerance, as is argued to be the case with other theories of differentiation, such as multiculturalism or cosmopolitanism.*

Vavrus (2002) argues that despite the permeability of trans-historical colonial practices into public education, documented critical approaches toward globalisation and coloniality are rare in teacher education Vavrus (2002); Zeichner (2010). In addition, Vavrus (2002) goes on to argue that higher education institutional resistance in general can impede the incorporation of

a decolonial orientation in the preparation of teachers, as do Nakata, Nakata, Keech and Bolt (2012). Research from Germany and South Africa indicates that a confounding factor is a belief among mainstream teacher educators and education students that they exist outside the effects and practices of coloniality Glock and Krolak-Schwerdt (2013); Le Roux (2014).

Colonial history serves as a framework for understanding history for colonised people. This happens to colonised people long after colonial liberation. Cardozo (2015) notes that even when a nation such as Bolivia makes a national commitment to decolonise teacher education, a history of embedded conservatism and coloniality in teacher education programmes can remain an institutional barrier. Cardoso (2015) argues that with substantive collaboration between governmental officials and indigenous and non-indigenous decolonial educators, however, more accurate representations of indigenous cultures, histories, and identities in the school curriculum can occur Dei (2011); Nakata et al. (2012); Hopkins (2015). Although such collaboration remains uncommon internationally, an example of a decolonial approach is a New Zealand teacher education programme where steps were taken as an equity approach to incorporate the culture and Indigenous language of Maori populations into the curriculum Cochran-Smith et al. (2016).

Penetito (2009:298) explains this change in orientation as part of a decades-long process of an:

> *Emerging consensus about Maori education that is as much about the healing of past and present injustices as it is about forging paths for a new and better future.*

As the Maori example suggests, Indigenous language restoration programmes globally are 'profoundly linked to issues of educational equity' McCarty and Nicholas (2014). Other examples of language restoration as an aspect of decolonial teacher education are the Mohawk in Canada and the US, Hawaiians in the Pacific region, and the Hopi and Navajo in the US southwest McCarty and Nicholas (2014). According to Deyhle and Comeau (2009: 271), one of the more robust movements toward a decolonial teacher education is in the US state of Montana, where a rewriting of the state's constitution in 1972 impacted the school curriculum:

> *The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and is committed to its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity*, Deyhle and Comeau (2009: 271).

In 1999 the Montana legislature codified the constitutional intent into the American Indian Education for All (IEFA) law Deyhle and Comeau (2009). Hopkins, et al. (2015) argues that a challenge for Montana teacher education has been a demographic condition where most

teachers are white and non-Indigenous, and their reactions have ranged from hopeful regarding the possibilities of the IEFA to 'considerable anxiety, if not outright resistance'.

Decolonial teacher education is best understood overall as a relatively recent 21st-century development. Madden (2015:2) international review of 23 studies of decolonialism in teacher education revealed a developing commitment in teacher preparation responsiveness "*to the educational needs of Indigenous students and communities*".

In this comprehensive review, Madden (2015:3) identified:

> *Four pedagogical pathways that reflect the diversity of theories and approaches being utilized to engage teachers in university-based Indigenous education: 1 'Learning from Indigenous traditional models of teaching'; 2 'Pedagogy for decolonizing'; 3 'Indigenous and anti-racist education'; and 4 'Indigenous and place-based education.*

According to Hardee et al. (2012:217), critical multicultural and decolonial education exists in a curricular borderland of:

> *Pedagogies in creating classrooms where social justice is the foundation and deconstruction of dominant ideologies is the goal.*

Acuff (2018) argues that the fusion of decolonialism and critical multiculturalism can offer theorists and practitioners a set of critical lenses to envision future teachers capable of deconstructing standard epistemologies and challenging institutional systems of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class, as do De Lissovoy (2015) and Madden (2015). According to Mbembe (2016), curriculum in colonies should focus only in decolonial education. Mbembe (2016) also views multicultural and post-colonial education as accommodative to some traits of colonialism. He thus feels it should be replaced by anticolonial education.

Acuff (2018) believes that teacher education approaches that incorporate critical multiculturalism and decolonialism can serve the development of teachers who can work alongside historically marginalised young people. She believes that this can be done regardless of their specific socially produced identities. The intention is for them to resist and overcome the oppression these students regularly experience in and out of schools.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

There is a general view that some researchers assume that concepts are self-explanatory and whose meanings are peculiar to everyone. However, concepts are abstracts and one can only attach a meaning from the context in which they are presented Mbhense (2015). According to Mngomezulu (2015), defining concepts puts both the reader and the author at the same level of understanding. It is within this view that the following segment defines constructivism theory, modernity, coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being.

2.10.1 Constructivism theoretical framework

The rationale behind choosing constructivism is because constructivism is emancipatory. Since constructivism is emancipatory the research paradigm will assist the investigator to have a better understanding of the study of the decolonial curriculum. The struggle in a decolonial curriculum is a struggle for emancipation. Emancipation from a long history of colonial rule is a redress for human rights. Colonial rule came with colonial education. Thus, the struggle for colonial emancipation is also a struggle against colonial oppression or the struggle for a decolonial curriculum. Amineh and Asl (2015:9) assert that:

> *The main objective of inquiry for constructivism is emancipation from oppressing discourses, power and the unmasking of the way power is used in all of society sites (postmodernism, post structuralism).*

Since the main objective of constructivism is emancipation from oppressing discourses, the investigator also investigated how constructivism influenced student protests.

> *As a popular instructional paradigm, constructivism encourages experimental learning, hands-on learning and collaborative learning and is well adopted in the education domain,* Giridhavan (2012: 733).

Since this study focused on decolonial education, the researcher explored literature on the #FeesMustFall students protest and how students used it to justify decolonial education. The socio-economic development of a nation relies on the youths and education, hence the need to explore how the state can create a conducive environment to advance emancipation. This is supported by Altbach and Teferra (2004:22) who assert that:

If SA is to succeed economically, culturally and politically, it must have a strong post-secondary sector: academic institutions are central to the future as higher education is recently recognised as a key sector to development.

Giridhavan (2012) argues that a decolonial curriculum is a perfect strategy for a learner-centred approach in education. This study incorporated a constructivist approach into the traditionally teacher-centred learning. Constructivism states that a new student learning process allows learners to construct the knowledge themselves through collaborative effort in a well-designed project. Olusegun (2015) argues that when students encounter new learning phenomenon, they reconcile it with their previous ideas and experience. Many decolonial scholars use constructive theory to justify that students are active creators of their own knowledge.

However, Suhendi (2018) argues that social constructivism is a social construct that shapes the community's liberal values, for instance, values students seek and how they construct them. Suhendi (2018) further asserts that constructivism entails rediscovering how rational considerations are utilised in collective human enterprises and situations. Alijoham (2017) posits that a socially constructed behaviour presupposes a non-socially constructed reality in societal norms and values.

Constructivism principles bring up the view that colonial education needs to be deconstructed since its owners, the colonisers, see no problem in it. Giridhavan (2012) posits that post modernism advocates an intertextual approach to international relations and argues that without deconstruction of education there might be no question of ethics, identities, politics or responsibility. According to constructivists, progress is not based on what other theorists say but also primarily on what political actors do. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013 cited in Seroto, 2018) the brutal form of colonisation is the epistemological one which is deeply embedded in learning institutions and discourses that direct modern-day life. Seroto (2018) posits that colonisation of the mind destroys and undervalues indigenous people's religion, education and history. The researcher investigated whether this idea of progress shaped the students' behaviour or not.

2.10.2 Modernity/coloniality theory

The theory, developed by Mignolo (2007), propounds that modernity and coloniality are inseparable. According to Tlostanova and Mignolo (2009:132):

Conceptually, coloniality is the hidden side of modernity.

Coloniality is constitutive of modernity, and in decolonial studies there is no modernity without coloniality. This research used Grosfoguel's theoretical framework of coloniality, looking at the "coloniality of power; coloniality of knowledge; and coloniality of being" (Seroto, 2018:1). Figure 2.1 displays the three pillars of coloniality theory.
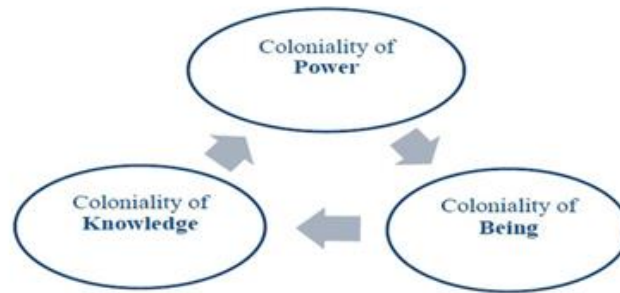
Figure 1: Grosfoguel's model of coloniality. Source Seroto (2018:1)

2.10.2.1 Coloniality of power

According to Quijano (2000), beings get different opportunities depending on their ontological rank and race. The coloniality of power is enshrined in capitalism and globalisation, a modern form of colonisation (Seroto, 2018). Therefore, coloniality of power can be a tool to investigate the hierarchies of the current geo-political systems, for instance, why there is religion, racism, patriarchy, Euro-centricism and capitalistism. According to Grosfoguel (2000), coloniality of power can be used to understand how apartheid used Christianity to colonise the consciousness and the minds of Africans to accept and uphold the white race's hierarchisation of power. According to Fricker (2007), colonisers used power to create or preserve a white supremacy social order. Understanding of coloniality of power is vital in exploring a decolonial curriculum because there are different education opportunities in South Africa.

2.10.2.2 Coloniality of knowledge

Colonisation and apartheid left many socio-economic, political and education legacies in the world, Africa and South Africa. The coloniality of knowledge relies on Descarte's motto '*Cogito ergo sum'* (I think; therefore, I am), which expounds whites, heterosexuals, the able bodied and males as legitimate thinkers (Grosfoguel, 2012). Therefore, according to Ahmed

(2019), decoloniality of knowledge fights against patriarchal and heteronormative racist assertions about knowledge and challenges the Euro-centric and Euro-American proliferation of knowledge. As such, decoloniality of knowledge becomes the voice of reason to fight the objectification of blacks, especially against false narratives about Africa. Decoloniality of knowledge seeks to talk about the feel-good-stories about a black man, instead of seeing him as an object of study Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), cited in Seroto (2018). Descartes' motto, 'I think therefore I am' is now turned on its head and recast as 'I am, therefore I think'. Experience and positionality in the real world thus render all of us knowers, from different vantage points, armed with the ability to reject lies from anywhere, peddled as truth to deny some people their humanity. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), coloniality of knowledge explores the impact of colonisation on knowledge production, which is aligned to the colonial education system Seroto (2018). Dei (2012) argues that the western education system in Africa was used by colonisers to wipe out the indigenous from mainstream existence and position them as objects. As such, coloniality of knowledge explores how and why indigenous knowledge has been neglected by academic institutions Grosfoguel (2013). This is vital as this research focuses on why student protests were centred on language issues; on why English still dominates the academic space, at the expense of local South African languages.

2.10.2.3 Coloniality of being

Coloniality of being focuses on the dehumanisation or the disintegration of being, which relies on René Descarte's '*Cogito ergo sum*' (I think, therefore, I am), which firmly asserts: 'I conquered, therefore, I am' or 'I possess, therefore I am", if one recognises the genocide, epistemicide and pillaging of resources that accompanied the western colonial project Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013); Nyamnjoh (2016).

Wynter (2003) posits that coloniality of being explores the lived experiences and effects of colonialism on indigenous people's minds, sovereignty and denied self-pride. According to Seroto (2018:1):

> *The coloniality of being produces the ontological colonial difference, deploying a series of fundamental existential characteristics and symbolic realities.*

Coloniality of being explores the traits that give a human being his, her or their ontological density, as propounded by Lushaba (2017), who believes that decolonisation is a reclaiming of African integrity of being.

In this research, coloniality of being was used to explore how the colonisers portrayed indigenous people as objects.

2.11 Conceptual Framework

2.11.1 Strategies for decolonial education

According to Joseph (2010) and Zavala (2016), there are three inter-dependant major strategies in the decolonial curriculum, namely counter/storytelling, healing, and reclaiming. Figure 2.2 below presents these strategies.

Figure 2: Three strategies for decolonial education. Source Zavala (2016:1).

2.11.1.1 Counter/storytelling

Decolonial education is made possible through rational and reflexive artwork, dialogue and reflection processes which involve naming indigenous people's social worlds Smith (2013). According to Zavala (2016:3), dialogue challenges coloniality and it also enables the formerly colonised to:

> *To understand their present situation as encircled by colonialism and its structural arrangements and cultural logics.*

Colonialism imposed language and knowledge systems on indigenous people; so dialogue becomes the main tool to erase the colonial past and rekindle as new people engage. Therefore, storytelling was vital for this theory, as it was used to explore how students conducted dialogues through social media, such as twitter, to express their lived experiences of coloniality.

2.11.1.2 Healing

Colonialism deculturised indigenous people and alienated them from their communities, languages, religion, culture and land. And because of this it is vital that governments, civic societies and academic institutions initiate social healing and psychological healing Mitchel (2016).

Healing as a praxis challenges dominant, western notions of education as a cognitive activity, asserts Zalava (2016:4).

There is a need to explore decolonial education using the psychological and spiritual lens, because it gives the indigenous people an opportunity to reconnect with their past and create pathways for the future.

2.11.1.3 Reclaiming

Colonialism decimated people's cultural practices, languages, identities and land, but democracies brought new hope to reclaim these lost elements. As such, reclaiming is a strategy in the decolonial curriculum that aims to recover what was lost during colonialism Kaunda (2015). Zalava (2016:5) further elaborates that reclaiming

> *… Brings ancestral knowledge together with local, indigenous knowledge in the development of decolonial spaces.*

Reclaiming was vital for this research as it analysed some initiatives that promote indigenous knowledge, such as the call by students to use local languages as the medium of teaching and learning.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the history and development of the decolonial curriculum, against the backdrop of colonialism in the United States of America, Asia, Africa and South Africa. Shortcomings in the current decolonial policies were identified and discussed. The state of the university education system in South Africa was also discussed. South Africa seems to have realised the need for a decolonial curriculum, especially after the nationwide student protests in 2015/2016 under the banner #FeesMustFall (FMF). However, the university education system in South Africa is highly dependent on financial funding from the government, thus if it commits itself to the realisation of a decolonial curriculum, the curriculum will become a reality. The chapter also discussed the theoretical and conceptual frameworks used in this research.

CHAPTER 3:RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented an overview of the history and development of the decolonial curriculum and the theoretical framework which guided this study - the modernity/coloniality theory. This is the theory that was used by the researcher to explore other literature in terms of locating the study in the broader theoretical context. This chapter presents the research method used by the researcher. The chapter also discusses the process of data collection used in this research. Additionally, the chapter presents some of the ethical issues encountered during this research.

3.2 Research Design: Qualitative Approach

According to Kaunda (2012), a research methodology gives a set of procedures and techniques a researcher uses to collect data. Pathak (2008) also asserts that a research methodology is a tool used to assess research techniques used to address the topic at hand and to give reasons and solutions for the study. This study used a case study design and adopted a descriptive qualitative approach.

> *Qualitative research analyses data from direct fieldwork observations, in-depth, open-ended interviews, and written documents. (Patton, 2005:1).*

The researcher used a qualitative approach because it is a naturalistic inquiry that explores in-depth understanding of social phenomena in their natural environments, so as to get the direct experiences of the research population as meaning-making beings in their daily lives.

3.3 Research Paradigm

The researcher used the constructivism paradigm. Rodwell (2015) explains that constructivism explores how social practice can influence behaviour and it pays more attention to language and communication to interpret meaning. It explores the value of people's perceptions and allows the researcher to consider the worldview of his sample Matambo (2017). Furthermore, Dasgupta (2015) contends that constructivism leaves room for different forms of possible

interpretations by recognising that social realities are dynamic, because people always construct their lived experiences based on the prevailing context. This is true in this research, as different sectors of students have different opinions about the decolonial curriculum.

3.4   Study Area

The study analysed documents that relate to UKZN students' protests, that includethe FMF and #RhodesMustFall (RMF) protests. UKZN was formed in 2004, from a merger between the University of Durban-Westville, formed in the 1960s as the University College for Indians on Salisbury Island in Durban Bay and the University of Natal, founded in 1910 in Pietermaritzburg, UKZN (2016). UKZN has five campuses: Howard College, Edgewood, Westville, Nelson Mandela and Pietermaritzburg. However, most document analyses focused on the Howard College campus protest. Figure 3.1 below shows the aerial view of Howard College.

Figure 1: UKZN Howard College. Source: UKZN (2016)

3.5 Data Sampling and Collection

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a suitable research documents for analysis to determine parameters of a population Babbie and Mouton (2001). Additionally, Babbie (2005) explains that sampling techniques describe the process of selecting subjects for a study to understand a larger collection of these subjects. There is probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling entails the probability of considering each element of the selected document for analysis through systematic and stratified random sampling. On the other hand, non-probability sampling refers to the case where the probability of considering each element of the population in a sample is unknown. This study made use of judgmental sampling. Judgmental sampling entails the judgment of a researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample, Babbie (2005).Judgemental sampling made conducting the study less time consuming, as eliminated inappropriate documents that were analysed. More so, judgemental sampling method allowed the researcher to choose relevant documents appropriate for the study.

In addition, in this research, secondary data was gathered and used to describe details about students and students protest events that occurred. However, when conducting qualitative research, the data that was obtained was in the form of documents, notes and images. When data was collected from various sources, it was sorted and analysed in order for the findings of the research to be better understood and the research report presented to its audience. Data allows the researcher and the audience to understand a research phenomenon and expand existing theories Neuman (2006).

According to Mayring (2015), there are two main approaches to qualitative data analysis: the deductive approach and the inductive method. The deductive approach uses a predetermined framework to analyse data because the researcher imposes his adopted theories on the data and then uses these to analyse the data.

Roberts (2004:143-144) highlights eight steps used to analyse textual data, which are:
>   1. The researcher must get a sense of the whole data by reading all the propositions carefully.
>   2. The researcher should thoroughly analyse one document at a time and may pose the following question: "What is this document about?"

3. Thereafter the researcher must make a list of all topics and cluster together similar topics.

4. Abbreviate the topics as codes and write the codes next to the appropriate segments of the text.

5. Extract the most descriptive wording for the topics, turn them into categories and the group the categories to show interrelationships.

6. Decide on the abbreviation for each topic and code them alphabetically.

7. Categorise data into components to perform a preliminary analysis.

8. Where necessary, recode your existing data.

This research adopted these steps for document analysis, as the tool to analyse the data collected for this study.

3.5.1 Document analysis

Olison (2012:169) defines document analysis as:

> *One of the core techniques of research analysis and involves the researcher reviewing existing documentation in order to gather information they need in order to more effectively address their research questions.*

The investigator in this study investigated the decolonial curriculum. Furthermore, Bowen (2009) goes on to define document analysis as a very common method of collecting data because it relies on the compilation and analysis of existing organisational records, documents and information. The Fees must fall campaign took place in 2015/2016 and information about it is recoded in newspapers, videos and academic journals. The researcher compiled data on decolonial curriculum text books, records, biographies, newspaper articles, internet articles and research articles by other researchers (journals).

Bowen (2009) argues that document analysis can be either quantitative or qualitative, depending on the source of information. The examples of sources of information are written documents, photographs, posters, maps, databases, videos, and audio recordings. This study reflected that variability by examining a wide range of different documentary sources that were or could have been used in this qualitative research. The study explored the criteria for evaluating each of the above sources.

3.5.2 Tips for document analysis

When analysing documents (in whatever format), Life Changes Trust (2014) suggests always remembering to ask who wrote the document, determining the audience for the article, and determining what purpose the document is written for. This helps the investigator to explore more about the nature of the phenomenon being studied; in this particular study the decolonial curriculum. This helps the researcher to understand that any document has a particular audience and purpose. The research should generate a research question that highlights the main focus for the research. Furthermore, Wesley (2010) propounds that a researcher should also familiarise himself with the context within which the documents were written. This helps the researcher to generate themes that will guide the collection of data.

3.5.3 Qualitative content analysis

Patton (2002:434) argues that:

> *The researcher has an obligation to write and report their procedures.*

This means that they must observe their own processes and analyse and report on the analytical process. Creswell (1998) believes that the process of data analysis and interpretation can best be represented by a spiral image, a data analysis spiral. He goes on to explain that the researcher moves in an analytical circle rather than using a fixed linear approach. He argues that the researcher finds himself starting off with a text and ends off with a narrative. In this study the investigator read decolonial documents and fees must fall documents**.** Qualitative content analysis as a strategy for searching for categories in collected data lies at the heart of the coding approaches that are often employed in the analysis of qualitative data. This is supported by Mayring (2004:162):

> *The aspects of text interpretation, following the research questions, are putted into categories, which were carefully founded and revised within the process of analysis.*

According to Schreier (2012), qualitative content analysis is ideal to analyse large amounts of verbal data collected through interviews or focus groups. Codes are defined using the main theory for the research. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), directed content analysis is where the theory (Constructivism Theoretical Framework) is used to derive and define codes during data analysis. Yin (2009:85) states that coding represents the operation by which data are broken down, conceptualised and put back together in new ways. Yin (2009) goes on to

argue that it is the central way by which theories are built from data. Selective coding is a process of selecting the core categories, validating those relationships and filling in categories that need further refinement and development. Secondly, this research adopted summative content analysis, whereby keywords in the documents were derived from the interest of the researcher and the review of literature Elo and Kyngäs (2008).

3.5.4 Pros and cons of document analysis

Using existing information is relatively cheap, its easily accessible and often free. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is non-reactive, as they remain unchanged by the researcher's influence. On the other hand, document analysis is inconsistent and inflexible as most of the information may be limited to what is currently available Wesley (2010). More so, there is limited restrictions on ethical considerations, such as confidentiality.

3.6 Trustworthiness

According to Rule and John (2011:106), trustworthiness is the main anchor for research, and:

> *Conducting sound, defensible research in the quest to improve knowledge and practice in education and the social sciences should be a goal for all researchers; irrespective of the research tradition they embrace.*

Guba and Lincoln (1985) posit that the trustworthiness is achieved through transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability.

3.6.1 Transferability

Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2007:147) define validity as:

> *A measure that does what is intended. This means that a measure should provide a degree of fit between the conceptual and operational definition of the construct, and that the instrument should be usable for the particular purpose for which it was designed.*

Blanche, Durrhein and Painter (2007:152) and Yin (2009:85) posit that reliability refers to the dependability of measurement instruments, and is the extent to which the instrument yields the same result on repeated trials. Reliability and validity focus on the data that is consistent and reliable. Reliability deals with accuracy. It asks a central question, with what accuracy does the measure measure what it is intending to measure? The investigator structures his study to answer these questions.

Rule and John (2011) argue that transferability in qualitative research methodology is an alternative to generalisability of the study. This desktop study and its findings are not generalizable to all other situations. However, lessons learned in this particular study and particular setting can be of value to other decolonial scholars, and this can be regarded as transferability.

3.6.2 Validity

Validity looks at the end result of measurement. The principal question is whether the investigator is really measuring what he intends to measure or not. The investigator focuses on validity i.e. data that is representative of a true and full picture of what he is trying to investigate. Leedy (2005: 97) argues that:

> *Internal validity represents the freedom from bias in informing conclusions in view of the data.*

3.6.3 Credibility

Guba (1991) argues that in qualitative research, credibility is the first aspect that must be established. He goes on to argue that credibility asks the researcher to clearly link the research study's findings with reality in order to demonstrate the truth of the study's findings. Thus, the investigator will link research findings with the South African realities in education to demonstrate the truth. Denzin and Lincoln (2017) assert that credibility focuses on triangulation which involves using multiple data sources, observers or theories in order to gain a more complete understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Guba (1991) explains that triangulation is used to ensure that research findings are robust, rich, comprehensive and well developed. Since triangulation uses multiple data sources, the investigator will use data from a variety document.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Denzin and Lincoln (2017) argue that confirmability refers to the level of confidence that the researcher's study findings are based on the narratives and words in the documents, rather than potential researcher biases. He argues that confirmability is there to verify that the findings are shaped by a qualitative researcher method used to establish the confirmability of the research study's findings.

3.5.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity refers to the attitude that a qualitative researcher adopts when collecting and analysing the data. A qualitative researcher must look at his or her own background and position

to see how these influence the research process. That is selecting the topic, choosing the methodology, analysing the data, interpreting the results, and presenting the conclusion. Harding (2002) asserts that in order to achieve reflexivity a researcher can keep and maintain a reflexive journal: a diary where he or she reflects on what is happening in the research process, with regard to the research process and interests.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This research was a desktop study; hence the researcher did not apply for ethical clearance. Instead, as per the University of KwaZulu-Natal research protocol, the researcher applied for a n Exemption from Ethics Review, and was granted it, protocol reference number 00004231. However, the researcher conformed to all research ethics, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity requirements.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research methodology that was used in conducting this desktop study. The chapter provided the reasons as to why a qualitative research methodology was used to conduct the study. Ethical concerns were also discussed and were kept up throughout the study. The next chapter will discuss the research findings and interpretations.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4. Introduction

In this section, the findings of the study are presented, and the themes are featured. The chapter mainly focuses on the findings of the study on the prospects of a decolonial curriculum in universities. The study sought to establish and obtain an in-depth understanding of the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South African universities, specifically UKZN. The presentation of findings is done on the basis of the secondary data collected from documents, journals, books, newspapers and the internet that focused on the 2015/2016 FMF student protests, as explained in the introduction, literature review and research methodology chapters. Themes that developed from the data collected are highlighted and analysed, based on the literature review and the theoretical framework for the study. In this chapter collected data is given meaning according to the research questions and the findings are discussed in line with the research objectives and research questions of the study. This is supported by Mouton (2001), who notes that research results may also depend on the research objectives and the amount of data collected.

4.1 Thematic Discussion of Results

According to Azar (2006), one of the biggest mistake researchers commit in their discussion is exaggeration. He advises that researchers must acknowledge that they are speculating and furthermore, must not stray too far from the research data. However, in this research discussion the information presented was supported by various secondary data, the theory, conceptual framework and the research methodology.

4.2 Presentation of Themes

This section presents the thematic analysis obtained from the secondary data that was analysed. The research questions were the baseline to inform the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the secondary data that was analysed. The themes are presented in Table 4.1 below:

Table 1: Research themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes

Justifications for a decolonial curriculum	• **The need for a decolonial curriculum for liberation / academic freedom through revolts against liberal capitalism** • **Black South Africans feel alienation** • **Assimilation of black students into the academic system** • **Spirituality and education are inseparable** • **Human rights and social justice for the poor black students**
Hindrances to a decolonial curriculum	• **Institutional failure to prioritise a decolonial curriculum breeds unrest and destruction** • **Colonial matrix of power**
Enabling environment conducive to a decolonial curriculum	• **Sympathy, empathy and support from academics**

4.2.1 The need for a decolonial curriculum for liberation / academic freedom through revolts against liberal capitalism

What was noticeable and stood out in the liberation of South Africa was both the tragic and complex nature of protests for better academic opportunities for blacks. Although South Africa had a smooth transition from apartheid to democracy in 1994, the country struggled to nurture an inclusive education system. However, the country embarked on black economic empowerment, at the expense of black education empowerment.

Most literature asked if South Africa was doing enough for the majority to attain education and economic freedom. Decolonial education was seen as a vehicle for their liberation in their struggle. Free, decolonised education was seen as a starting point as some activists, especially those from the Economic Freedom Student Command (EFFSC), argued that their demand was

not for a 0 per cent fee increment but for free, equal and quality decolonised education. One student activist explained the importance of this call for free, decolonised education:

> *This is an important call which is rather coming too late, especially 24 years after the attainment of democracy in South Africa. [It] is something that really was supposed to have been addressed way long [ago]…And once again it shows, like in any other society, that it is up to the youth of any given society and time – [they are] always at the centre of articulating some of the problems that might be bedevilling any given society. This talks to some of the issue that was not resolved post the transition in 1994 and is the question around education, access and not only just about access but also around the curriculum, the decolonisation of that curriculum* (Langa et al., 2016:15).

The above views were echoed by Booysen (2014:12), whose findings before the #FeesMustFall student protest showed that:

> *After two decades of democracy, South Africa has become a vastly different place politically, racially and socio-economically from what it had been at the start of democracy in 1994. Some dreams of 1994 have been realized; others have been frustrated, put on hold or redirected.*

Students felt that there had to be equity in the academic spaces, and they had a strong conviction that political discussions had to be intensified on the issue, otherwise the current ruling government was taking them for a ride. Therefore, students believed that for them to achieve total academic freedom there had to be a revolt against liberal capitalists. This view came up in the study on the #FeesMustFall protest conducted by Becker (2017:2), who believed that:

> *Although the #MustFall protests during 2015-2016 in South Africa intersect with global protests against neo-liberalism, capitalism, social inequality, lack of access to higher education and socio-political alienation, factors specific to the #MustFall protests include coloniality and humanist othering, racism, whiteness, patriarchy, sexism and rainbowism.*

The implication of the above view was that although FMF protests became the turning point on seeking attention from the government, the full effects of the protests still hung on the political will of politicians, academic institutions and the society at large. This fitted well with the proponents of constructivism theory which viewed progress as not based on what other theorists said but also primarily on what politicians did, as their actions and decisions influenced the future of South Africa's higher education sector.

Furthermore, students expressed their anger at colonial names in major infrastructure at UKZN. To them, colonial names were a representation of apartheid. This was echoed in this view by the UKZN Student Representative Council:

> *How do I, in today's South Africa, learn inside a building named after the very people who suppressed our freedom?* (Langa et al., 2016:88).

The above sentiments indicated that FMF at UKZN was no longer limited to the fees must fall agenda; other historical issues were also at play. It laid bare that UKZN was not yet transformed as major buildings such as the TB Davis and Shepstone buildings were deemed to celebrate colonial heritage while reminding black students of their painful colonial past. Such dialogue, through storytelling and a strategy for a decolonial curriculum, was vital as it encompassed indigenous people's social worlds Smith (2013). Manatsha (2014:270) argued that monumentalisation and renaming of colonial buildings and other infrastructure was a contested phenomenon in formerly colonised African countries:

> *renaming Renaming streets may tell a new tale but the old street names also tell a story about the location. There is a need to strike a balance.*

Nonetheless, most scholars believed that monumentalisation and renaming the buildings after local heroes created social cohesion, as envisaged by the South African Geographical Names Council Act No. 118 of 1998 cited in Kumalo (2014). These sentiments were further supported by Calitz (2018) who believed that public spaces and architecture needed to be decolonised too.

In summary most, secondary data analysed in the study pointed out that students felt that capitalist establishments were listening to them but were not addressing their academic needs, hence they felt forced to revolt against liberal capitalism for a decolonial curriculum. Equally the study outcomes unveiled that poor students felt that the post-apartheid government had not fully addressed issues for a decolonial curriculum because they still faced many obstacles at universities. Grosfoguel's theoretical framework model of coloniality theory subscribes to this student perception, as it believes that coloniality of the perceptions of indigenous people on their education and history is best understood through coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being Seroto (2018),

4.2.2 Black South Africans felt alienation
A nation-wide tertiary education fee increment proposal culminated in a wave of FMF protests at UKZN. According to protesting students, it became clearer to them that despite the end of apartheid, black students were not an integral part of the post-1994 educational system. Becker (2017:1) elaborated on this by noting that:

The contesting of humanist white, Western and European frames of reason, excluding the Other and constructing meanings and understandings of humanity and reality, is central to the #MustFall protest.

This was further highlighted by Buttelli and Le Bruyns (2017:1) who believed that:

What FMF [#FeesMustFall protests] reminds and brings to the public debate is that, in most instances, this inequality remains divided along racial lines, where to be black means to be poor. For many black South Africans, it feels as if little transformation has taken place in the more than two decades since the fall of apartheid. These economic factors informed the climate in which both the RMF and FMF protests took place.

The education system had become unaffordable to them and had alienated them Langa et al., (2016:87), hence FMF focused not only on fees but also on decolonising the curriculum:

It is in a way challenging, I mean, the current curriculum – it must accept African culture. And the African experience [must] become the centre when it comes to education because as it stands the system is designed to alienate the African experience… If you are coming from a rural village in the Eastern Cape or Limpopo, and come to this space, you have to learn to exist and to survive in it and to become a new person because the culture that is here is not South African or African; it doesn't accommodate the black child, Langa et al. (2016:140).

The above sentiments suggested that students felt alienated, by language or socio-economic status in the academic space. African culture survives on the spirit of "*ubuntu*", humanity towards others, whereby *Ubuntu* became the sole pillar for African societal life that created cordial relationships between communities and individuals Lefa (2015). However, the situation on the academic grounds spoke a different language as documents indicated that former white South African universities made black students feel like foreigners in their motherland. Students stated that what was happening in these universities was alienating. One student wrote that:

Blacks always have to beg and apologise to be in these spaces. They don't have a feeling of belonging because the structure hasn't changed. You have to die for you to live; you have to lose everything about yourself and learn to socialise yourself again into the culture here. Most of us who have come out tops here, we have lost ourselves as a black child because we are trying to be something we are not; we all trying to be white. We are all trying to learn another culture that is alien to us, because of the system. That is why it is easy for you to move from here to Oxford and you fit in straight away, there is no problem…because you have now assimilated…That is how the system is like right now, that as an African child you have to lose yourself to make it, Langa et al. (2016:156).

ed to be taught in their own language to fully understand their subjects. The majority of UKZN's students were IsiZulu speaking, and they felt that they had to be taught in their mother tongue. The following focus group sentiments were noteworthy:

> *Why is Afrikaans still too common in our universities? We want UKZN to lead by example in making Zulu a medium of instruction in lectures* Langa et al., (2016:86).

Students went further and complained about the whiteness of the academic landscape at UKZN,

> *There are white lecturers, teaching us through a white curriculum… how does this equip a black student who is supposed to be an integral part of the 'Rainbow Nation'?* Langa et al., (2016:86).

The above sentiments from different focus groups suggested that language transformation was vital in universities, otherwise student resentment would increase. Some universities such as the University of Free State (UFS), the University of Pretoria (UP) and the University of North West (UNW) had dual language policies, whereby there were either English or Afrikaans classes. However, in 2016, the Constitutional Court ruled that the dual-medium language policy used at the University of Free State (UFS) before 2016 was racial segregation and promoted racial tensions at the institution. However, there was a contested view that promoting one language at the expense of another was tantamount to campus social cohesion. This was supported by Nudelman (2015:1):

> *The advancement of African languages following South African's transition to a constitutional democracy was important not only for societal transformation but also to enable previously disadvantaged South Africans proper access to education.*

The above sentiments subscribed to the South African Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996) which promotes language rights that include the right to be taught and to learn in the language of one's choice. The FMF revealed that there was a contested argument by students that language-maintained hierarchies of power and privilege. Even though English was the international language for scholarly engagements, it was not the first language of the majority of students. As such, English and its power propelled traditional and systemic hierarchies of power and privilege that manifested through examinations and tests which were viewed by students as gate keeping, exclusive of and discriminatory against most blacks (University of Cape town, 2018). Students believed that the power intersection of language and race was the main platform by which race and class hierarchies could be addressed.

This was highlighted by the coloniality of knowledge theory, and further supported by the Curriculum Change Working Group (2018:48), which postulated that language:

accentuate Accentuates the deficit experienced by many black students whose own cultural capital is not valued as 'currency' to acquire the 'goods' of the university.

Therefore, Knowledge through English was therefore negatively viewed to be a commodity on sale by the culturally superior and this not only demarcated who could not acquire it, but also who could not occupy the space with authority. In a study conducted by Joseph (2010:15), one participant concurred with the notion of language as a barrier to accessing education:

I have witnessed the disadvantage certain students have simply because they are being taught and assessed in their second, third and even fourth language.

The above sentiments about language aligned well with reclaiming, one of the strategies for decolonial education, which aimed to recover the indigenous languages lost during colonialism Kaunda (2015). Language issues divided academic institutions, and as such had to be openly discussed so as to find solutions. The University of Stellenbosch in the Western Cape, where Afrikaans and English dominated other languages, started discussing language issues during the FMF protests.

The #OpenStellies movement reopened the taal debat (language debate) on a campus which is deeply divided between mostly white Afrikaans-tuition students and mostly black English-tuition students. Luescher (2016:23).

Furthermore, some sentiments became personal racial attacks for certain academics who were perceived to be against transformation. UKZN-PMB students cited racism from members of staff and called for their resignation:

As students of UKZN-PMB, we demand that … [name withheld for ethical reasons] ….and all the other racist lecturers leave our institution with immediate effect. Failure to do, we as students shall make him leave. We are giving the University 72 hours' notice to fire ALL the racist staff. UKZN (2016), cited in Langa et al., (2016: 93).

The above demands were a warning to UKZN Management that students were affected by racism and could not tolerate it any further. Students believed that some staff members stood in the path as stumbling blocks to a decolonial curriculum. A study conducted by Joseph (2010:20) revealed that some staff, especially those who were products of a colonial education, were not necessarily the best personnel to implement a decolonial curriculum, as an individual could not dismantle the master's house with the master's tools.

One serious challenge emerging from the study is that the current staff are under prepared and unable to lead a transformation and decoloniality project as they have been educated by a colonial system.

In order to dismantle coloniality, the current Eurocentric epistemology and ontology in universities needed to be transformed and a decoloniality project had to be established, to include counter-story telling in the mother tongue. The usage of indigenous languages in the academic context empowered students while at the same time also boosted multilingualism. The FMF protests revealed that there was an urgent need to accelerate transformation, especially on racial grounds, as noted by Gibson (2017:7):

> *Though [universities] formally 'deracialized,' the formerly white universities remain institutionally white and alien places.*

Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) believed that race and social constructs manifested in universities because of the legacies of apartheid, which pushed blacks to the periphery of the socio-economic and political helm, thus creating white supremacy, which viewed blacks as inferior and made blacks feel alienated. This was also put forward by Fataar (2018:6):

> *Mobilising on the basis of their demand for free education, students across the university sector expressed the need for change in university knowledge and curricula in the light of what they described as their exposure to Eurocentric, racist, and sexist knowledge at untransformed institutions. They argued that such a knowledge orientation is at the heart of their experience of alienation at the university.*

The above views by students fitted well in the context of redressing the past injustices, from young people's points of view. The findings of the study proved that language was one of the hindrances to students' adaptation to university environments. The study findings indicated that language was integral to the acquisition of knowledge, therefore black students, whose mother tongue was not English, were at a definite disadvantage when receiving instruction in English. The research findings equally identified some university staff as hindrances to prospects of a decolonial curriculum in universities.

4.2.3 Acculturation and assimilation of black students into the academic system

The current system required black students to assimilate into a system that was alien to them. They had to learn the language that was used in the university, the values, the dressing and the culture before they even got into the classroom. In a study that sought to understand relationships around the extent to which students classified themselves as marginalised, experienced low maintenance of their own culture and struggled to adjust to university, Jogee, Callaghan and Callaghan (2018) found that female students from poor communities experienced marginalisation at universities. Individual characteristics determined a student's

acculturation, and their personality could also perhaps have determined their cultural adaptive choices, hence they needed to adopt coping mechanisms. Furthermore, students experienced stress:

> *Entry into university can therefore be a traumatic experience, but even more so for students hailing from poor family backgrounds who may experience the university as a comparatively alien social economic environment… Black African first year students in South African universities typically experience communication related problems, adverse effects of financial strain, transport problems, housing related problems and the stress of having to live far from university, amongst others.* Jogee et al., (2018:126).

Students therefore needed to assimilate into a new culture. And when it came to the classroom and the teachers; what they taught in the class and how they evaluated the students was just not designed to accept the African experience or experiences of those black children Langa et al., (2016).

It was for these reasons that (especially) black students at UKZN challenged the colonial educational system that required them to assume new identities in order to be recognised by the system. Even though black students had access to these previously white universities, they could not lay claim to them and call them home. The students' concerns were in line with what Mbembe (2015:6) noted:

> *when When we say access, we are also talking about the creation of those conditions that will allow the black staff and student to say [about] the university: "This is my home. I am not an outsider here. I do not have to beg or to apologize to be here. I belong here.*

4.2.4 Spirituality and education

Religion is vital in human survival, as humanity seeks divine intervention during times of distress. This was highlighted by Buttelli and Le Bruyns (2017:7), who pointed out that social movements like FMF looked up for divine counsel and intervention:

> *The theological reflection and the praxis of the churches can be articulated by and with social movements, building hopes, apocalyptic imagination from the dialogical experience by the emancipatory movements. In fact, if the churches in their manifold forms in society want to have any impact in helping to create a new social, political and economic order, it can only do so by working together, located among and within the social movements that are experiencing something new, something not known and something that we still cannot define with words and concepts.*

Students looked for divine guidance during the 2015/2016 student protests. Religious leaders in KwaZulu-Natal threw their weight behind the UKZN FMF movement, assuring protesting

students that churches supported the students' demands for a better, free education. Reverend Michael Vorster, a past recipient of the City's "Living Legends" award and the Diakonia Human Rights Award, pledged his support to protesting UKZN students at a march held in Durban and he said,

> *I have looked at your memorandum, and that is going to become our agenda as a church. We will ensure that in our resolutions and conversations with government and business, that [your demands] are our points as well* Hamilton (2016:1).

The above sentiments indicated that students were in dire need of assistance to succeed in their fight against the socio-economic obstacles associated with socio-economic exclusion in universities. Students wanted to be self-empowered, so as to escape the jaws of brutal poverty, as noted by Nathane and Smith (2017:117):

> *For the majority of young black people, education is seen as the only way out of poverty. In a South Africa of poverty and inequality, this demand must be taken seriously. These students are calling for education for everyone, not just for themselves.*

According to Kgatle (2018), churches had a socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political calling to help the downtrodden. This, according to Kgatle (2018) was based on Biblical literature such as Deuteronomy 15:7–8, which says that:

> *... If in any of the towns in the land that the Lord your God is giving you there is a fellow Israelite in need, then do not be selfish and refuse to help him.*

Students, especially black students who felt financial exclusion from higher institutions were deemed vulnerable, hence the clarion call by churches to assist them. This was further propounded by Quijano (2000), who noted that coloniality of power explored how and why there were different education opportunities in South Africa.

> *The church in its socio-cultural role should support universities to drive knowledge, which is a key to social and economic development in our globalising world. The church should encourage businesses to use the wealth of their companies to fund tertiary education of South Africa, but they should not be celebrated for stealing resources while destabilising the livelihoods of employees. The church should be a prophetic voice to the government of the day and speak to their wrongdoings* (Kgatle, 2018:7).

Globally churches played a role in poverty alleviation and fighting social injustices. This was further elaborated upon by Oladipo (2000:147):

The church has a strong value-base of concern for poor and marginalized groups which is supported by its Biblical mission and which inspires commitment from its leaders, members and development staff.

Interestingly, according to Grosfoguel (2000), coloniality of power entailed how colonialism used Christianity to partition Africa and to make Africans accept the white race's hierarchisation. Using Christianity to regain African dignity was thus vital to show that moral injustices could not be tolerated in this era of globalisation. The findings of the study suggested that religious leaders could be a voice of reason, and could play a mediating role between students and university management. This is supported by the coloniality of being theory which elaborates the lived experiences and negative effects of colonialism on indigenous people's minds.

4.2.5 Human rights and social justice for the poor and black students

Most documents on student protests revealed the need for emancipation as they felt that colonial education was a violation of their human rights. In their study focussing on UKZN's FMF protests, Grassow and Le Bruyns (2017:1) posited that their research:

Provides evidence from the specific context of FMF at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, which exposes human rights abuses and violence to the dignity of protesting students. To advance a human rights culture within the higher education sector in the context of FMF, the article highlights [their research] the role of theology --- in revealing the problem and promise of higher education institutions in the quest for a more liberating and responsible society.

Human rights were deemed universal and to be enjoyed by everyone irrespective of sex, race, nationality, and economic background. The issue of human rights in relation to a decolonial curriculum was further expounded by constructivism theory that was used in this research to justify the prospects of a decolonial curriculum in SA, and this theory propounded that there was a need for total emancipation from postmodernism and post structuralism in all communities.

Documents stated that a decolonial education system would enable the state to provide social justice. This was supported by Ferrie (2017:1):

The call for free education…. is a call for access to education out of the legacy of colonisation and apartheid, deep-seated poverty, structural inequalities and systemic crime and violence in our country?

Students felt that black people of this country had been oppressed for a long time and this needed to be addressed. For instance, students saw infrastructural development in previously black campuses as a means of social justice. Racial tensions at the UKZN were further

exacerbated by funding cuts, which affected mainly black students Langa et al., (2016). As the numbers of African students admitted into former University of Natal residences increased, management changed their funding and staffing policies Gqaleni et al., (2008). UKZN decided that the residences had to be self-sufficient and discontinued subsidies. During the 2015/2016 financial year, a total of 225,950 university students living in these residences were funded by the government loan system, the National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) (2016). These management changes led to reduced building maintenance, safety and security costs, and a decline in the social and academic life in the residences Gqaleni, et al., (2008). Social justice was determined to be a multi-layered societal issue in SA. According to Masoga ((2019:3):

> Social justice is about dichotomy - absence and presence [and] it is about eradicating the absence and promoting and sustaining the equal presence of cultures, genders, ages and cultural knowledge of all races sharing either local, national or global spaces.

This echoed the sentiments of Langa et al. (2016:13) when they contextualised social injustice as being one of the reasons why students took to the street in the 2015/2016 FMF protest action.

> Students from South African institutions of higher learning have been engaged in the largest student-led movement ever, calling for the radical reimagination of the higher education space. Under the banner of #FeesMustFall, protesting students are calling for, amongst others demands, the decommodification of higher education; racial, gender and class justice; the destabilising of western epistemologies and pedagogies; the reversal of the damage caused by South Africa's neoliberal economy; and the elevation of the self-reliance and self-determination of the black working classes.

The above two sets of sentiments indicated that there was a need for previously disadvantaged Africans and South Africans to be given space to express their knowledge and injustices, so as to realise the reality of social justice, otherwise the "better SA for all" would be narrow and flawed. A critical view by Pillay (2016) was that students who participated in the current education system were legitimising its injustices, because the current system was colonial-inclined, and it hindered students' access into higher education. This was better explained by the coloniality of being theory, which highlighted how colonialism dehumanised and disintegrated blacks, resulting in the need to explore the lived experiences and effects of apartheid on black people's minds Wynter (2003).

On the other hand, students felt that they were alienated based on the quality of the infrastructural development on the different campuses, that were historically designed on racial lines. UKZN's Westville and Howard College campuses were seen as privileged and having

better facilities than the Pietermaritzburg campuses. This was supported by Langa et al. (2016:83):

> *A strong feeling among students interviewed at Durban-Westville is that resources allocated to their campus are inferior compared to those allocated to the Howard College campus, which historically is a former white campus under the University of Natal.*

Before the merger in 2004, Howard College campus, predominantly for white students, had well-developed infrastructure because of the apartheid funding system Chetty and Merrett, (2015). Unfortunately, this was not fully addressed after the merger and students noticed these infrastructural development differences during the 2016 FMF movement at the PMB campus. This was revealed in the following sentiments;

> *As students of UKZN-PMB, we demand that the Big Chill be renovated and be a conducive space for students, just like the Quad in Westville. We reject the double standards of student facilities* UKZN, (2016:2).

Besides the above sentiments, curriculum transformation policies and frameworks were completely invisible (in the eyes of the students) at UKZN. However, Joseph (2010:20) argued that:

> *The key issues in transformation and decoloniality overlap and are sometimes the same. Thus, one could argue that there is a place for both; transformation and decoloniality can be integrated in working for change in the university landscape.*

This was further amplified by Pillay (2017:157) who said:

> *Failure to recall and correct actions from the past subverts the viability of transformed African scholarship as one group if left as a token. This is true for the resistance of black African women in the context of FMF [#FeesMustFall student protests].*

Unless there was equitable distribution of resources on the different campuses, students could feel aggrieved and alienated. The study outcomes simply communicated that by virtue of not implementing a decolonial curriculum, both the government and the universities were violating human rights. As highlighted by the documents studied, the ramification of such violations was that some students failed to accomplish their academic responsibilities on their own because of lack of transformation. This was supported by the coloniality of knowledge theory which acknowledged that racist assertions, and Euro-centric and Euro-American curriculum content for knowledge proliferation amongst Africans had to be done away with Ahmed (2019).

4.2.6 Institutional failure to prioritise a decolonial curriculum breeds unrest and destruction

Students, most of them "born-frees" - those who were born during or after 1994, were the ones who had participated in the FMF protests, according to Gibson (2010). It took courage for those in authority to admit their failure to transform the curriculum, as admitted by the former University of Cape Town (UCT) Vice Chancellor:

> *The call for free, quality decolonial education over the last two years has laid bare systemic failures in the national higher education system. As Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Transformation and Student Affairs at the University of Cape Town, I have been privileged to support work on exploring the possibilities for free, decolonial education at UCT* Feris (2017:1).

Protesting students felt let down by the government in terms of its decolonial curriculum policies, and militancy became their main course of action in order to be heard by authorities.

> *In 2016, the #FeesMustFall movement turned into a violent uprising at UKZN campuses as students felt their voices were not being heard. This led to the shutdown of academic programmes in September 2016 for a period of four weeks* Langa et al., (2016:88).

Losses were felt by both striking students and the university, in terms of loss of lecture time and property destruction respectively. Figure 4.1 depicts some of the aftermath of the protests at UKZN's Westville campus.

Figure 4 Aftermath of FMF protest at UKZN Westville campus. Source: Mnisi (2015).

The above picture shows that students believed that there was no urgency on the part of either the government or the university's management for decoloniality and transformation at UKZN. Protesting students became frustrated and angry, more so when there was no official communication from authorities to acknowledge their grievances. This was collaborated by Engh and Settler (2016:1):

> *Throughout the morning, students were frustrated by the fact that their repeated calls for a line of communication to university management were met with silence. Instead, management circulated a statement claiming that all was calm on all campuses and that they had 'beefed up' security. The effect of this 'beefing up' was palpable when several police vans, including a Nyala [armoured personnel carrier], pulled onto campus. Students reacted with both fear and anger. The strategy, on the part of university management, of 'showing strength' and intimidation signalled to students that their concerns were dismissed and that they would be brought 'in line' by force.*

However, the moral justification for the destruction caused was still a source of much discussion and contention. Documents indicated that some quarters of society viewed violent protests as negative because of the harm they caused. In their research Simpson, Willer and Feinberg (2018) argued that violent protests could attract or deter other activists from joining a protest movement as it deterred other rival activists.

The students' demands may be legitimate, but it is the approach that poses a greater risk to the students' well-being from a physical, psychological and reputational point of view. The repercussions of using dangerous tactics as approaches to dealing with student grievances are dire, not only for individual students but for university campuses and families of the students in the case of injury or death during a protest. We rejoice in the achievements of "fallist" movements such as Rhodes Must Fall and Fees Must Fall, but it is obligatory on all of us to protect both our young people (the students) and the infrastructure in our higher learning institutions Mtengwane (2019:1).

Barnard-Naudé (2017:148) also noted that violence was a detriment to the prospects of a decolonial curriculum:

Endless oscillations of violence and counter-violence, of the replacement of one police logic with another, will not achieve such an improvement / transformation / decolonisation. It is in fact bound to make our situation worse.

Furthermore, one needed to interrogate the professionalism of the South African Police Services and UKZN security personnel because of how they handled such protests: whether students viewed them as sympathisers or instigators. However, Pillay (2017:157) believed that student protests were to be treated in the same way as the pre-1994 SA liberation protests, which were not peaceful, hence she lambasted some university and government authorities for heavy-handedness with student protests:

You [university administrators] are delusional, accusing protesting students of being hooligans trying to emulate your past struggles. You, who moved from dorm-room squatter to a boardroom, demand that suffering be respectable. You ask black people to 'yes Ma'am' and 'no Ma'am' their way through the insufferable… Did you fight to be elite or did you fight to reinvent the system?

The findings of the study revealed that anger had negative implications for students' adaptation. The assertions in the documents researched proved that lack of trust and meaningful dialogue led to militancy. The implication of such violence was dire, both for the student community and university management, due to the losses incurred.

4.2.7 Colonial matrix of power

Female students felt that the Fees Must Fall movement promoted patriarchy, and that their role as women in society was undermined by the movement. This was because their voices were not heard at the leadership level and they were not represented at that level. One female student commented in CSVR (2016:141):

#FeesMustFall was able to push the universities and the state to make certain concessions aimed at achieving free, quality, decolonised education. Despite its successes, [students' protests were] also characterised by patriarchal attitudes and male domination at the leadership level

Therefore, whilst fighting and celebrating the demise of colonialism, it was evident that decolonial scholars needed to be reminded and warned that the colonial matrix of power was still alive Quijano (2007). There needed to be a united front to tackle the scourge of the colonial matrix of power, for instance, gender-based violence in universities. This was highlighted by Safer Spaces (2017:1) who noted that:

In 2016, numerous protests around the country, many of which concerned sexual violence on campus, once again brought the issue of gender-based violence (GBV) at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), to the media's attention as well to the attention of the general South African public.

For women the political emancipation of 1994 did not address gender problems as males still dominated the socio-economic and political spaces. Patriarchal practises were still in existence, and this was a clear manifestation of the colonial matrix of power Quijano (2007). Women thus felt that the decolonial curriculum had to address this patriarchal problem, as this would emancipate all blacks, but particularly black women. This scenario was sadly embedded in the following experience of one female protester at an FMF protest:

I remember the following day we were just going to disrupt the status quo of the university, those women came with doeks and sjamboks in numbers; they came from the OLS gate to say 'we are here to protect our fellow females, they must be given the platform'. I remember we had a mass meeting in the Senate House, by then it was not yet Solomon Mahlangu House. Vuyane and Mcebo attempted to co-chair a meeting with Shaeera and Nompendulo and the women said 'not today'; sadly, the meeting collapsed and they ended up going back to seek the guidance and the leadership of the two comrades CSVR, (2016:67).

This indicated that patriarchal tendencies were still entrenched in people's minds. However, the document review indicated further similarities on the issue of coloniality of power across all public universities in South Africa, especially those termed "white universities". The case of the University of Cape Town (UCT) revealed that:

Coloniality of power finds expression in a manner that is in sync with historical Imperial and Non-Imperial lines, [and UCT] students noted that white academics enjoyed more autonomy in the university than anybody else. There was also a general sense that students in the university are neither seen nor heard, and that their agency is often prohibited, across disciplines. Relational dynamics in doing

knowledge as doing power is felt at the point of first encounter, between student as learner and teacher as knower, and where contestation about the curriculum accounts for both epistemological and social relations of power Curriculum Change Working Group (2018:48).

Key academic posts had to reflect the true demographic representation of society, but this was non-existent in some university establishments. Quijano (2000) postulated that people got different opportunities, depending on their ontological rank and race. As such, employment of key academic staff members had to be done with careful consideration of the necessary affirmative action policies.

4.2.8 Sympathy, empathy and support from academics

Academics at UKZN were suspected of fuelling some of the students' protest activity. Though they denied the allegations, a *Mail & Guardian* article published on 30 September 2016 included an interview with UKZN spokesperson, Lesiba Seshoka, on his thoughts on the matter. He confirmed that the university had received information about academics and students working together to protest, and had investigated the matter.

Some sources at the University of KwaZulu-Natal said they had first-hand knowledge of a group of academics calling meetings with students to organise protest action for the week ahead and these academics were accused by university authorities of being part of the problem for assisting students to destabilise the institution Govender (2016). Govender (2016) added that a UKZN academic was said to have arranged with the university's administration staff to hire a lecture hall so that students could use it to plan their protests.

In a 7 October response to the article, some concerned academics at the university wrote a letter addressing the allegations. They were quoted in Mail & Guardian (2016:6) saying:

> *We, the so-called 'Professors of Protest' at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in Pietermaritzburg, find the article and its front-page presentation in last week's Mail & Guardian offensive and defamatory. As we see it, the article was clearly written by a journalist seeking sensationalist attention, one who lacks understanding of the knowledge industry of post-school education. The suggestion that we, as academic and professional staff, sought to coach students in protest tactics with the aim of destabilising universities is ludicrous.*

As was evident, the academics at UKZN defended their stance in relation to the student protests and berated the media for attempting to crucify them for being educators. External organisations such as the EFF were also accused of fuelling student radicalisation. It was felt

that the academics had to use their coloniality of knowledge to implement a curriculum that upheld and used indigenous languages. Almeida and Kumalo (2018:1) put forward the view that African/black scholars/academics were left out of the knowledge production decision making process and merely occupied the role of apprentice to western experts. By virtue of their academic status at university, they were in a position to fight for better policies that explored a decolonial curriculum for the betterment of black students, especially the poor ones.

Some universities, however, had created platforms to create discussions on a decolonial curriculum. For instance, at UCT:

> *The Curriculum Change Working Group (CCWG) was established in 2016 [after the #FeesMustFall student protests] as one of those task teams, to facilitate campus-wide engagements on curricula in ways previously not explored. Three principals were key in establishing the CCWG, in order to safeguard the legitimacy of its work. Firstly, the group needed to be black-led, inclusive and broadly representative, comprising academics and students traditionally excluded from formal institutional structures and processes of curriculum oversight. Secondly, institutional support through the Office of the Vice Chancellor was required, as it was expected that the work of the CCWG would be seen by some in the university as a direct challenge to the authority ordinarily vested in formal institutional structures. Thirdly, the work of the CCWG was to be seen as intimately intertwined with student mobilisation around curricula issues* Curriculum Change Working Group (2018:1).

The main mandate of the CCWG was to create dialogue across UCT, in order to establish strategies for a meaningful decolonial curriculum, so as to establish an envisaged decolonial curriculum framework.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature reviewed, so as to give meaning to the study. The discussions draw information from the theoretical and conceptual frameworks employed to guide the study.

Social change had to be guided by the principle of how change occurred, especially when driven by students, thus it had to be a bottom-up process, where students dictated what they wanted to authorities. This study showed that a decolonial curriculum was more than planning and participation; it was a form of critical situational analysis that ensured a transparent distribution of authority and included students in achieving new insights and solutions. The rate of inequality in South Africa society has had a negative impact on university education. Most of the secondary data examined on the students at UKZN's Howard College detailed that they

faced financial difficulties This was collaborated by Mudhovozi (2012), who explained that a recent study on students' financial needs suggested that many South African tertiary students faced financial challenges as they lived below the poverty line.

The traditional curriculum remained dominated by colonial epistemic logic which alienated, marginalised and excluded the majority. The student FMF protests focused on introducing competing perspectives of knowledge and how different knowledge was valued. This was expressed by the Curriculum Change Working Group (2018:24):

> Curricula have strong links with social practices by underscoring what is valued and legitimated as credible knowledge by society. It is not surprising that in the student protests of 2015 and 2016, the traditional curriculum came into the spotlight, with an explicit focus on knowledge and how knowledge serves to include and exclude. Questions that were raised by students and became the focus of the CCWG engagements across UCT were: What knowledge? Whose knowledge? What gets privileged? Whose interests dominate?

According to this study's findings, a decolonial curriculum was one that was inclusive and socially just, and was a curriculum that was relevant, responsive and reflexive. These findings also indicated that there was a need for open channels of communication between all relevant stakeholders, that included government, universities, students, churches and other religious establishments, and the community at large. According to Nakata (2002) dialogues happened in the spirit of multi-dimensional and multi-directional reconstruction, whereby students found their social identities. As such Nakata (2002:43) believed that reconstruction was a:

> 'Cultural interface', a place of tension, negotiation, rejection, resistance, ambivalence, accommodation, and agency. In this space, marginalised knowledge is in constant negotiation, competes for validity and the right to be located in educational systems.

One of the objectives of the study was to investigate the factors that would facilitate the effective implementation of a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to the current curriculum. Despite the presence of factors that hindered a decolonial curriculum at the transition phase, analysed documents identified facilitative factors that could drive a decolonial curriculum. There had to be protective factors that allowed students and universities to ameliorate support for positive development Theron (2004). The study findings indicated that students also regarded churches as facilitators for the implementation of a decolonial curriculum

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings as interpreted from the literature review in Chapter Two. The chapter also discussed all of the coded themes. Despite the relative political peace in South Africa, the themes in this discussion signified the impact of apartheid education on the new dispensation academic era in South African universities. The discussion highlighted the UKZN SRC's set of demands that was produced in August 2016 to address the students' six main grievances, namely: the need for an improved National Student Financial Aid Scheme online application system; no fee increments of 6 per cent for the year 2017; the writing off of all historical student debts; the construction of disabled-friendly infrastructure and facilities; the dismissal of racist academic staff; and a firm policy on gender-based violence and rape. The university had to furnish evidence of how this was dealt with and provide a clear way of protecting students against rape and other gender-based violence. It was evident from the memorandum that the movement was no longer limited to the fees must fall agenda. Other pertinent issues were also added to the list of demands. All these issues revealed that universities were not yet transformed in terms of dealing with the legacies of the past.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, and the conclusions drawn from the information collected and analysed from secondary sources. It concludes this research and makes recommendations for possible future studies on decolonial education. This chapter provides an overall discussion on the topic and highlights academic deficiencies in the South African Higher Education system. Furthermore, it gives an overview of how the objectives of the research and the research questions of this research have been answered. Lastly, the chapter presents recommendations for future considerations on the current research topic, for decolonial scholars and for other researchers within the broader university education field.

5.2 Objectives Relative to the Research

The aim of this research was to examine the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa. The prospects seem to have outweighed the cons. It has been discovered that there is a need for decolonial education in universities across South Africa. The establishment and presence of a decolonial curriculum will assist in rapidly speeding up full participation of the poor and marginalised students. The creation of indigenous knowledge in the academic space will complete the total emancipation and liberation of blacks from the effects of a century-old colonial bondage.

The aim of this research was to highlight the prospects of decolonial education in assisting with fighting and solving university education in South Africa as well as aiming to predict the possible effect of decolonial education on South African universities. This research revealed that class, gender, inequality, language, racism and sexism were central to the legacies of the apartheid era, hence the need to dismantle them through a decolonial curriculum, as a form of promoting social equity and social justice Lebeloane (2017). This research has responded to all the key questions and the broader decolonial curriculum issues outlined in Chapter One. It was found that there would be many more pros than cons accrued from implementing decolonial education.

From this research, it can be concluded that universally, decoloniality is a form of social justice for the formerly oppressed, and there is a need for more resources and political commitment

from the post-colonial government to facilitate indigenous knowledge that views the western knowledge as collaborative partners, rather than as superiors. Fataar (2018) argues that there must be urgent decolonial framework policy discussions that form a conceptual basis on which university departments, programmes, and course modules are tailored to resemble decoloniality. However, this cannot be fully realised unless there is cooperation and support from academic staff.

5.3 Realisation of Objectives

5.3.1 Objective One: To investigate the factors that facilitate the effective implementation of a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to the current curriculum

This objective was realised because the study found out that the 2015/2016 FMF university students' nationwide protests revealed that the English language as a medium of instruction was seen by students as a hindrance to their academic work. According to most student sentiments, colonial legacies still existed and were structurally imbedded in higher institutions of learning. Renaming of buildings, especially those named after colonial stalwarts, should be treated as an urgent issue. This research highlighted four factors that were effective in implementing a decolonial curriculum in South African universities, which were: usage of indigenous language and knowledge; redressing of socio-economic and academic inequalities; deracialising education; and reconstructing the previously colonised population from Christian theology, secular philosophy and western perspectives.

5.3.2 Objective Two: To explore the role of advocacy in facilitating a decolonial curriculum

This objective was achieved because the research showed that advocacy was central to realising the goals of a decolonial curriculum at UKZN. There were positive benefits from advocacy as it promoted a true African education system, and African identities, beliefs and values. However, it was also found that in some cases some university staff members did not want such changes, hence students demanded that it would be beneficial to dismiss such elements from the UKZN academic employment.

5.3.3 Objective Three: To assess the feasibility of a decolonial curriculum as an alternative to a colonial curriculum in universities

This objective was realised because the study found out that UKZN sponsored a considerable number of intellectual projects regarding scholarship in curriculum studies for black students and academics as this could unmask the present curriculum from the colonial past. UKZN students demanded that the IsiZulu language be given equal status to English as a medium of instruction. UKZN scholars and departments had delinked themselves from colonial knowledge systems by adopting local knowledge, language (IsiZulu) and beliefs in some of the academic work. Furthermore, the renaming of public spaces at UKZN was initiated, as noted in the designing guidelines and policy framework for the renaming of buildings, and enshrined in its naming policy CO/03/0210/09, UKZN (2019).

5.4 Key Findings

The study found out that the use of the English language as the main medium of instruction at UKZN was a hindrance to students' academic progress. As such, there is a need to address the colonial imbalances to address these academic imbalances. It emerged that using local language and local knowledge are two of the main issues that can be used to redress the legacies of apartheid in SA universities. However, African students failed to fully improve their academic potential due to socio-economic issues, such as financial exclusion, shortage of campus accommodation and food insecurity. They failed to concentrate on their academic issues because most of them did not have enough finances to cater for their daily needs, and as such being black symbolised poverty.

The research revealed that black students felt alienated in academic processes and participation. However, the research revealed that for blacks to access some opportunities, they needed to act like white men, for instance, speaking with the 'right accent'.

The other finding of this study was that the students believed that the government of SA's neo-liberal and capitalist policies were not working in the best interests of the students to speed up decolonial education in universities. Furthermore, racism, whiteness, patriarchy and sexism still existed and negatively affected the prospects of a decolonial curriculum in universities.

5.5 Implications for Policy

The findings of this study showed that black students felt a lot of injustices in academic institutions because of the structurally rooted colonial legacies that still existed, and these were

affecting their academic performance and progress. University structures should be altered in one way or the other so as to realign all academic content based on local languages and local knowledge. Poverty was the root of all major challenges faced by students in accessing institutions of higher education. There is thus a need to create and accelerate admission policies that are conducive to the admission of poor students, such as access programmes that factor in students' poor socio-economic backgrounds. Government should consider amending the national students' financial aid (NSFAS) laws by increasing allowances that are in line with current economic situations. At the moment some students believe that NSFAS funding should be increased to cater for the rising costs of food, off campus accommodation and stationery. Alternatively, students need work opportunities so that they can take care of their needs.

5.6 Recommendations

The presentation of the recommendations is the important part as it explores the future university curriculum. Although the researcher touched on prospects of a decolonial curriculum in SA, there is still room for furthering the study by extending it to Africa as a whole, because it suffered from colonialism at great length. As academic universities' socio-economic and demographic scenes vary from university to university in SA, careful and thorough planning and execution is required, even before the onset of implementation of a decolonial education. Academics and students should be properly equipped and well prepared for decolonial education. The FMF student protests in 2015/2016 should be a clarion call to speedily implement decolonial education, to fulfil the pre-apartheid aspiration of total liberation from colonial bondage in economics, politics, education and society.

In consideration of this study's findings and limitations, the number and scope of documents viewed was small and might not include documents with other opinions and perceptions. However, the researcher proposes the following recommendations for further research, which are based on secondary data:

There must be open, meaningful and honest engagement drives for curriculum change. All relevant stakeholders must discuss decoloniality, even in informal structures, so as to raise awareness about why it is important to decolonise the curriculum. Furthermore, this also calls for leadership that is committed to the principles of a decolonial curriculum. However, decolonial curriculum discussions should not be discussed along narrow political party affiliations, otherwise the process becomes a political game where political points are scored

against opposing views. Instead, a professional leadership body should spearhead discussions on the decolonial curriculum. Universities, especially those accused of being against a decolonial curriculum, must create an enabling environment that facilitates the dialogue on decolonial education, as done by UCT with the establishment of the Curriculum Change Working Group.

University assessment methods should be re-conceptualised as a social practice in order to facilitate inclusive learning, for example by adopting multilingual policies.

Key recommendations are made for the way forward for a decolonial curriculum to shift South Africa's political, economic and developmental position from the legacies of an apartheid discourse to a much more student-centred academic framework in a much more inclusive, structurally progressive and humanist manner as brought out by coloniality of being, coloniality of power and coloniality of knowledge. University language policies must be inclined towards local languages as the medium of instruction, and must have equal status with English, as a way of promoting social equity and social justices decimated by the apartheid regime. Government, churches and academic institutions must play a leading role in the development of local academics who should champion decolonial education.

Lastly, students must continue to play a critical and meaningful role to create an inclusive university education system that is non-discriminatory based on language, race, sex, creed or socio-economic status. This research will give policy makers information on how best to make a decolonial curriculum beneficial to both South African communities and students.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research

South Africa has a diverse student population that needs to access university education for sustainable development and economic benefits. There is a need to carry out more research on the prospects for a decolonial curriculum from the university management, lecturers', communities' and government's points of view. Student protests in some South African universities are becoming a perennial phenomenon. As such, research on a decolonial curriculum may be one solution to deal with such incidences.

5.8 Limitations of the Study

According to Atieno (2009), qualitative approach findings cannot be generalised to a more extensive population because the discoveries of the study are not tried and tested to find out whether they are factually noteworthy or not. The documents that were analysed were a small sample of the total literature on the subject and might not include documents with other opinions and perceptions. Furthermore, most of the documents analysed focussed solely on UKZN. As such, the research might not describe the degree to which the conclusions are true for other universities within the country. However, the study findings do provide insights into the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has given a summary of the research by outlining the key questions and broader decolonial curriculum issues which were discussed. The chapter has highlighted that there are positive prospects for a decolonial curriculum, as long as there is political will by the government, and cooperation and support from civil society, university staff and management, and the country at large. Lastly, the chapter has given recommendations that, if used competently, could make decolonial curriculum implementation a success story for South African universities.

The study has attempted to shed light on the prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa, with particular focus on UKZN. The research revealed that a bottom-up call for decolonial education initiated by students can be violent, political and militant, and as such needs the intercession of churches in discussions. Furthermore, language and financial challenges are just some of the hindrances to a decolonial curriculum. Students need to be taught in their local language, and indigenous knowledge should be the cornerstone for knowledge production systems in universities. The study was able to discover all this information using the lenses of constructivism theory and decolonial education strategies as a guide. The study has also contributed to the body of literature on understanding a decolonial curriculum from the viewpoint of university students, especially after the FMF 2015/2016 student protests. The research has explored the facilitative prospects for students' understanding of decoloniality within the university context. More so, this study is among the

few to explore and better understand how students viewed decoloniality during the FMF protests.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance

Mr Senezelo Sopatro Mbhele (961107132)

School Of Built Env & Dev Stud

Howard College

Dear Mr Senezelo Sopatro Mbhele,

Protocol reference number: 00004231

Project title: Prospects, opportunities and challenges of a decolonial curriculum in South Africa

Exemption from Ethics Review

In response to your application received on 3 October 2019, your school has indicated that the protocol has been granted EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW.

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol, e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited.

For any changes that could result in potential risk, an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited.

In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE:

Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.
I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.
Yours sincerely,

Prof Emest Nene Khalema
Academic Leader Research

UKZN Research Ethics Office. Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building. Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban

4000. Website: http:nreseqrch.ukzn.ac.za/Researcb-Ethics/