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Students' Insight and Understanding of the Notion 'Decolonisation of the Curriculum in Higher Education' At the University Of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg

By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Social Science in
Sociology

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DECLARATION

This Masters by research thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of **Master of Social Sciences in Sociology** (Post-Graduate Programme) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, Sindiswa Ndamane declare that;

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“I drew a lot of strength from my people, when I say my people I mean the down trodden, the ordinary masses of our people” – Winnie Madikizela-Mandela

It would have never been possible without the drive of these words. All that we do we do it for our people. Without God on my side it would have been a very difficult journey. To family I would love to thank my mother Nokuphila Ndamane, my brother Ndabenhle Ndamane, my sister Samukelisiwe Pearl Ndamane for their prayers emotional, social and financial support through my academic life, and not forgetting Imbali Sibiya my niece, as she would say *“ngiyabonga bafethu.”* To the church and leaders nabazalwane without the prayers it would have been very difficult. To my colleagues especially those who were close to me since first year undergrad whom we cried, laughed and shared heart-warming experiences with thank you so much for the peer-support and all the motivation I needed when I could no longer find mine

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ABSTRACT

The #FeesMustFall protest in South African Universities in 2015 and 2016 saw students raise, amongst their concerns regarding the nature of the higher education curriculum and the inability of some students to afford higher education. In terms of the former, students called for a decolonised higher education curriculum. In spite of the growing calls for decolonisation, there are contestations about what decolonisation is and how it can best be implemented in the country's higher education institutions. In addition, cumulative evidence affirms that some students have little or no knowledge of what decolonisation means and are rather absorbing populace or rhetorical stances (Oelofsen, 2015). This study investigates students' understanding of the meaning of a 'decolonised curriculum'. This qualitative study employed in-depth face-to-face interviews with fifteen students across different Colleges at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. The sample of participants included two student organisations leaders and thirteen student members of these organisations. Thematic analysis was used to report key findings. Paulo Freire's concept of critical consciousness and Steve Biko's black consciousness has been used to understand the factors that shape students' ideas and notions of the decolonised curriculum. The study shows that students acknowledge the challenges in the implementation of the decolonised curriculum in universities. Using more African based authors rather than western authors in the curriculum is one of the ways it can be transformed. The language was also identified as critical to debate on the curriculum. Students believe that if the curriculum is taught in South African indigenous languages, academic performance would improve. Renaming the university infrastructures and facilities also becomes the main proposal from students who claim that they do not identify with individuals whose names are used to label university buildings. Students recommended that the renaming of the buildings be taken into consideration because it is highly associated with decolonisation of the curriculum and university. Participants recommended that more formal dialogues should be conducted between academics and students. Students also need to do more research on decolonising the curriculum so that they can avoid rhetorical arguments and stances.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

#FMF	#FeesMustFall movement
ANC	African National Congress
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BC	Black Consciousness
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DOE	Department of Education
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
EFFSC	Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
NFAT	National Framework Agreement on Transformation
NP	National Party
NTTT	National Task Team on Transformation
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
SADESMO	South African Democratic Students Movement
SASCO	South African Student Congress
SASO	South African Students Organisation
SGLD	Student Governance and Leaders Development
SRC	Students Representative Council
UCT	University of Cape Town
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WITS	University of Witwatersrand
YCL	Young Communist League

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Oelofsen (2015) states that decolonisation is the transformation which colonised countries go through when they become independent politically from their former colonisers. It is also defined as a paradigm shift from a culture of denial to the making of space for indigenous political attitudes and knowledge systems as they arise, thereby shifting cultural perceptions and power relations (Regan, 2017). Decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education, in South Africa, has become one of the main points in the discussion on transformation in higher education institutions. These matters dominated during the 2015 and 2016 #FeesMustFall campaign in South Africa.

In the post-apartheid South African, the curriculum in the universities is still mainly Eurocentric and androcentric deep-rooted in the oppressive colonial rule, apartheid dispossession, looting, and humiliation of Africa and its people (Heleta, 2016). The transformation efforts is yet to be translated into any significant shifts in the structure and content of the curriculum (Department of Education, 2008). The research study aims to examine students' insights and understanding of the notion of decolonisation in the context of transformation of higher education.

1.2 Rationale, Background and Outline of Research Problem

The focus of this study is on the University of KwaZulu-Natal students in Pietermaritzburg, specifically those who participated during the historic #FeesMustFall protest in 2015 and 2016. It was guided by the researcher's particular interest in the rise and determination of a movement to decolonise higher education/universities. The interest was also triggered by the impact of the current educational system on students and the model of education this system holds for South African higher education. I wanted to explore the insights and understandings of the students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, as it is where the protests initially began in the province which also led to students being arrested. I wanted to examine their conceptual understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' and uncovering the challenges they witness, the issues of implementation and the discussions they believe could be furthered within the university.

The study will contribute to the ongoing conversations on decolonisation of higher education and curriculum in South African universities, including a focus on factors in higher education

like, racism, sexism, the academic and financial exclusion that might arise during the data collection. Struggles that are faced by students, in particular, the black African students regarding their experiences in attaining education will be discussed. The role that was played by colonialism and apartheid into developing the current educational system in South Africa is very important to be addressed. The results reported in this research study may not be generalised to the wider population, for instance, other South African universities. The study, however aims to make a contribution to the ongoing discussions in this research field.

The study investigates students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education' at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. The focus is on students' protests that took place in almost all the South African universities in 2015 and 2016. The first generation born after the end of apartheid began to call for decolonisation of the university (Naicker, 2016). The protests were mainly triggered by the #RhodesMustFall at the University of Cape Town on the 9th of March 2015 (Pather, 2015). This is where the Cecil Rhodes statue was vandalised as a call to decolonise the university (Pather, 2015). An investigation into students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education' is important, rather than investigations based on abstract theorisations by media and intellectuals.

Dladla (2011) states that the schools and universities as they currently exist in South Africa were originally founded by the European coloniser. Under these circumstances, the Native Africans were ruled and gradually admitted into schools (Dladla, 2011). At the same time, they experienced the expropriation of the land and natural resources. The poverty and lack of livelihood and survival opportunities saw Native Africans being pushed into employment (Dladla, 2011). The history of education in South Africa is important for understanding transformation in the decades to follow up to 1994 (Rakometsi, 2008). Systematic analysis of progress leading to transforming education in South African historical and educational perspective has not been carried out by academics (Rakometsi, 2008).

Vorster (2016) states that the academics who have been educated and have work under the traditions of the western educational institutions would not produce the indigenous African perspectives. This is because they have been trained to produce western knowledge rather than acquiring skills for the production of African indigenous knowledge. Knowledge produced in the western perspectives might, therefore, not contribute to decolonisation of higher education institutions (Vorster, 2016). It is vital, thus, to examine whether it is

appropriate to reconsider what is taught and how, and what it means to decolonise the curriculum and higher education (Vorster, 2016).

‘Decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education’, has become one of the focal points in the discussions of transforming South African higher education. Research conducted into the #FeesMustFall student movement has found that the issues of decolonisation and transformation were central themes promoted by those involved in the protests (Sekhotho, 2017). Students in these protests also needed others, for instance, academics and non-academic staff to participate in transforming the universities (Kamanzi, 2016). In their struggle for decolonised higher education, students have pushed this far to reach this goal (Kamazi, 2016).

Writer (2016) states that students want decolonised education because they believe that the current education system is based on racial exclusion. The structural inequalities that exist were maintained during apartheid, manifested in the 1953 Bantu’s Education Act (Writer, 2016). The Act was designed to prevent the liberation of the black youth, therefore keeping them in the same situation as the generations before them through intimidation and institutional discrimination (Writer, 2016). According to student leaders, the education system in South Africa is not designed for the interests of the black community but preserved for the status quo of colonialism (Writer, 2016). It is important for students to contribute ideas without much influence by academics or media on the on-going discussions on higher education\university transformation. Students will independently build their critical thoughts and resolutions on decolonisation of the curriculum.

Naicker (2016) states that the inspirations to decolonise curriculum began at a formerly white institution (University of Witwatersrand) with a document entitled ‘WITS Transformation Memo 2014’. The memo was published by a group of post-graduate students at the University of the Witwatersrand’s Political Science department at the end of 2014. The memo states that the slogan ‘Free Decolonised intersectional Afrocentric Socialist Education’ comes from a deeper political economy evaluation which protesting students are expressing (Naicker, 2016).

The aim of the memo was to express the students’ objections to the Political Science department at the University of Witwatersrand (Dlakavu, 2014). In addition, the memo also highlights the lack of black and African thoughts in the curriculum; hence it states that the academic space is not an unbiased space. Academia in most South African universities has

been used and is still used to serve racialised interests of dominant ideas, classes, and interest in society (Dlakavu, 2014). Drawing from this, the curriculum does not address the needs of communities where most of the black South African students come from but serve the interests of colonialism, apartheid and neo-liberalism.

Baloyi and Isaacs (2015) state that universities, in particular, should be giving directions to their research focus to address the development and social needs of local communities. Reconsidering the racial balance of staff is therefore important to achieve meaningful structuring especially with the academics but, it is still not enough (Baloyi and Isaacs, 2015). White domination is not just based on numbers, it is also about the forms of thinking and the style and content of teaching, thus one of the reasons students call for the ‘decolonisation’ of higher education (Dlakavu, 2014). Students take it into consideration that the university education shapes the way they see the world, which does not recognise the African voices (Baloyi and Issacs, 2015). The Eurocentric notion may continue to be conquering irrespective of racial diversity in the teaching staff (Baloyi and Isaacs, 2015).

1.2.1 Student Struggles in Higher Education

Council on Higher Education (2016) state that just about 19% of 18–24-year-old South Africans are university students. The number of black students in the universities shows that approximately 16% of 18–24-year-old black youth are enrolled in universities (CHE, 2016). The South African higher education system is not only characterised by low participation and failure, but dropout rates also remain high amongst black students. Success and failure in South African higher education remain racially twisted. Black and Coloured students form a meaningfully high number of dropout and failure rates than white and Indian students (Vorster, 2016). Another reason for a high rate of student dropout and failure is that many black African students whose mother tongue is not English or Afrikaans, feel marginalised and excluded from the culture of academia and the university.

Vorster (2016) states that black African students feel marginalised and excluded because the state of the academic knowledge and learning is foreign to them. As argued by Bourdieu and Passeron (1994), academic discourse is nobody’s first language and most of the students have to be thoroughly introduced to the new systems of teaching and learning of the different fields they study. South African universities have developed from the British university style and tradition, the institutional structures, including curriculum and ways of being, still reflect this (Grosfoguel, 2007).

1.2.2 Students on Decolonisation

Hendricks and Leibowitz (2016) state that when students began to question the 1994 transformation, they were asking academics and politicians to revisit the routes to political, social and economic development in South Africa. The students were in view that the needs of the future generation be addressed. Hence students should play a central role in the decolonisation of knowledge (Hendricks and Leibowitz, 2016). Students need to participate in the efforts to revisit how and what is taught; this is because they are also playing an important role in knowledge production contributing in developing South Africa. During this process of inclusion, academics should also explain why certain forms of knowledge and values have been advantaged over others (Hendricks and Leibowitz, 2016). The process will assist with strategies of transforming higher education to become more inclusive to racial groups in South Africa.

Leibowitz (2017) mentions that some universities in South Africa; academics, students and other role-players, have been getting together to explore the suggestions of decolonising the curriculum. Getting together to make these representations, a multitude of different minds that have associated, interacted, combined ideas and feelings makes it effective to have these discussions (Moore, 2010). “A very special intellectuality that is infinitely richer and more complex than that of the individual is distilled in a collective” (Moore, 2010, p.152). Having different parties within universities with their experiences will lead to a more insightful discussion on decolonising the curriculum in higher education.

The #FeesMustFall movement created such an intense debate on decolonisation in universities; as buttressed by some academics and stakeholders (Langa, Ndelu, Edwin and Vilakazi, 2017). The student movements are all devoted to transforming universities into a more inclusive space (Le Grange, 2016). Quoting the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC) Wits leader Vuyani Pambo who said, “We don’t want to treat the symptoms, we want to decolonise the university that is at the heart of the cause” (Le Grange 2016, p.2).

1.2.3 Africanisation and Transformation in Higher Education

In relation to the decolonisation of the university, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande in his speech at the Higher Education Summit held in October 2015 called for the Africanisation of universities (Le Grange, 2016). He mentioned that all universities should remove all the problematic features of their apartheid and colonial past

that haunt the universities (Le Grange, 2016). At the conference, Dr. Blade Nzimande asked universities to look more intently into the question of decolonising the curriculum. The minister made a proposal which may be like that of the University of Cape Town, where he appointed a central curriculum committee to coordinate the decolonisation of the curriculum (Le Grange, 2016).

The Higher Education Summit (2015) declares that the emerging voices, mark an important and remarkable moment in the history of democracy. A moment in which universities, for the first time, are being pressed by open-minded voices to gain greater courage and vision to transform themselves and their surroundings (Higher Education Summit, 2015). This is happening approximately 21 years since South Africa's first democratic elections. A better image of the ability of the South African Constitution; to become advocates for a more socially-just and equal social and economic order becomes possible (Higher Education Summit, 2015).

Research Aims and Research Questions

The study aims to explore how a sample of students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, understands the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education.

- How is the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education' theorised and conceptualised within contemporary academic literature?
- What are student's insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education'?
- What are the interpretations of student political organisations about transformation and decolonising the curriculum in higher education?
- In students' view what are the challenges and opportunities to decolonising the curriculum and higher education?
- What policy guidelines would need to be introduced, implemented and in which areas of higher education?

Research Objectives

- To explore the notions of 'decolonisation' of the curriculum, universities and higher education' in written/spoken about or theorised and conceptualised within the contemporary academic literature.

- To investigate the students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education.
- To investigate the interpretations by student political organisations on decolonisation of curriculum in higher education.
- To find the students' views on challenges and opportunities the decolonising of higher education and the curriculum would bring about.
- To explore the introduction and implementation of policies for decolonising higher education and in areas it should happen.

1.4 Methodology

A qualitative exploratory design was used in this research study (Townsend and de la Rey, 2011). "Qualitative research methodology can be defined as a research method which helps to uncover how and why individuals behave and think in certain ways, including their experiences and attitudes" (Neuman 2006, p.102). It is mostly used to examine issues relating to the ways in which individuals organise, relate to and interact with their societies (Burns and Grove, 2003). A qualitative research methodology is a systematic subjective approach used to look into life experiences and situations to give meaning (Burns and Grove, 2003).

Mgqwashu (2016) states that qualitative research methods are then suitable: this is because the study is focused on gathering information by asking questions about perceptions, behaviours and attitudes of students from different student political organisations (Mgqwashu, 2016). In this regard, the realities surrounding their perceptions on the decolonising of the curriculum with a focus on universities and higher education. Using this method, researchers should be able to empathise with the research participants to provide accurate second-hand participant accounts and experiences (Mgqwashu, 2016). The method used also allows the studying of influential realities constituted by subjective perceptions and underlying codes of social meaning and expression (Mgqwashu, 2016).

The research methodology used, have permitted the in-depth examination of the University of KwaZulu-Natal students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' is based on their understandings, perceptions, and experiences. This has led to understanding the influence and engagements students have concerning this notion. The organisation, collection, and interpretation of the data will help in finding the initial motives behind student protests. The input of student political organisations will also be of great

significance as they lead these protests. The data extracted can contribute positively to the ongoing higher education transformation discussions in South African universities and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

The research study used purposive sampling, which is non-probability. Its method relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting units that are to be studied (Miles and Gilbert, 2009). The researcher ensured that the participants selected fit the selection criteria, such as members of the student political organisation, students who participated in the #FeesMustFall protest, and students studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

In terms of sample size, there were 15 participants; this includes final year students, postgraduate students and all those who participated in #FeesMustFall. This number was a better representation of the organisations/student political organisations that participated during #FeesMustFall, hence from this number of participants, data saturation was reached; choosing these students was based on their participation during the #FeesMustFall protests in 2015 and 2016. The students were able to reflect and recollect their experiences and explain their understanding of key concept. Semi-structured interviews are used when the researcher wants to investigate and better understand the subject matter, and this falls under qualitative studies (Miles and Gilbert, 2009), therefore this was an appropriate method. Interviews were recorded on a voice recorder device and took between 20 to 60 minutes. The interviews were conducted in English and IsiZulu. Chapter four provides more details on the research design and methodology.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Paulo Freire's critical consciousness model and Steve Biko's concept of black consciousness will be used as a frame to analyse students' insight and understanding of the notion decolonisation in relation to curriculum and higher education. Paulo Freire used the model of critical consciousness to explain how individuals needed to fight against oppression and create a world that is safe and good for everyone (Squier, 2016). Steve Biko's concept is the philosophy of black consciousness which promotes group pride and determination by black people in South Africa to rise together from oppression and exploitation (Biko, 2002).

Darder (2015) explains that the concept of critical consciousness by Paulo Freire generally addresses the struggle for change. The moment human beings become critically aware and intolerant of the oppressive conditions in which they find themselves and push towards new

ways of knowing and being in the world (Darder, 2015). Freire's construct of critical consciousness is the root of critical literacy and connects modernist and postmodern theory (Darder, 2015). It affirms the experiences of the students as an important part of the dialogue, where educators do not take for granted the meanings students give to their experiences (McLaren, 1993). The educators should allow students to acquire knowledge that they can reflect upon and shape their experiences (McLaren, 1993).

Freire also explains education in the form of a banking method. Paulo Freire in his influential work strongly condemns banking model of education (Alam, 2013). Learners in this instance receive knowledge passively as empty vessels from the teacher, who supposed to be the supplier of knowledge, in the traditional teacher-centered classroom (Alam, 2013). Freire believes that the banking concept of education or knowledge is a skill given by those who considered themselves to be well-informed upon those whom they considered as knowing nothing (Alam, 2013). The banking model, therefore, gives a representation that education controls thinking and reduces the creative and critical inspirations of the students, and it changes them into passive objects (Alam, 2013).

Steve Biko's black consciousness is a philosophy that was conceptualised by young people who understood the value of education (Dolamo, 2017). The young black people realised that Bantu education was not accommodating their needs, but the needs of the colonial system (Dolamo, 2017). Bantu education was designed and understood by the oppressive government to perpetuate the apartheid agenda which was not in the interest of black people; hence they did not understand this educational system. Individuals who succeed in making a group of people accepts an alien concept in which they are experts makes students' progress in education evaluated by them only (Biko, 2002). The students should therefore constantly turn to them for guidance and promotion, and that undermines students' intellect (Biko, 2002).

Black people can only be told how good their performance is and automatically put efforts to please this powerful, know-all master (Biko, 2002). It is reasons like these that job reservations exist, inadequacy of training in skilled work, and a limited movement around opportunities for black people (Biko, 2002). The oppression black people face each day is not only on an individual base; it is also institutionalised to make it look like a custom in South Africa (Biko, 2002). The black consciousness seeks to get rid of this; black African culture

should be defined in existing terms (Biko, 2002). Black people should interpret the past to the present and form a historical progress of the modern black individual (Biko, 2002).

1.6 Structure of Dissertation

The structure of the dissertation will consist of six chapters.

Chapter one: Introduction

There will be an introduction which will include the background of the study and research objectives.

Chapter two: The Literature Review

Broad literature and discussion of available studies, published work, from local and abroad including University of KwaZulu-Natal policies will be included.

Chapter three: Theoretical Framework

Will explain the conceptual framework used for this study and assess its reliability to the research questions and problem statements.

Chapter four: Description of Research Methodology

An elaboration and description of the methodology and research methods will be covered.

Chapter five: Key Findings and Discussion

A report on the findings obtained during data collection was discussed. The discussion was generated from the findings of the study which were critically examined with the literature review, policy, conceptual and theoretical framework.

Chapter six: Conclusion and Recommendations

The conclusion and recommendations will be drawn from the study as well as offer recommendation and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the literature on the concepts decolonisation, colonisation and curriculum. In addition, colonisation in Africa and South Africa will be discussed. This will include higher education under apartheid in South Africa and decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education. The higher education policies together with the University of KwaZulu-Natal policies will also be discussed. The opportunities of decolonising the curriculum and challenges of implementing decolonised curriculum will be addressed together with other issues.

2.2 Key Concepts Framing the Study

2.2.1 Colonisation and Decolonisation

Zig-zag (2011) states that the progression of colonisation began with the physical occupation of land and domination of most African indigenous people by European settlers. Religious indoctrination, cultural, social and economic integration perpetuated mental oppression (Zig-zag, 2011). Before colonisation, African indigenous people were free and autonomous nations from other nations oppressing them, however tribal and ethnic wars existed (Zig-zag, 2011). Through colonisation African indigenous people were not free, they lived under oppressive state (Horvath, 1975). Colonialism is then an arrangement of domination by controlling groups or individuals over the place, where domination is closely related to power and economy (Horvath, 1975).

Sommer (2011) mentions that colonialism is whereby one society completely deprives the other of its potential to develop independently. The whole society is controlled and re-shaped in the coloniser's rules, to form a permanent cultural gap between oppressors and the oppressed (Sommer, 2011). It is also the rule of one collectivity over another, with the life of the oppressed being determined, to please the desires of the oppressor (Sommer, 2011). It is also when colonisers take political, economic and social privileges which are denied to those who are colonised, where later the colonised become racially inferior (Go, 2004). Cultural and political oppression, economic exploitation by the colonisers had their impact upon the African populations which has existed for decades (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 1981). To be liberated from this oppressive state; it calls for the process of colonisation to be reversed (Zig-zag, 2011).

Duara (2004) states that decolonisation is a process whereby colonial powers are transferred from institutional and legal control over their territories and dependencies to indigenously based, formally sovereign, nation-states. The process also involves a move from a hegemonic or Eurocentric culture rooted in colonialism and apartheid in Africa to a more inclusive culture (Himonga and Diallo, 2017). Decolonisation, however, is a broad concept that encompasses actions and processes that counteract, reverse, or terminate Eurocentric culture (Collins, 2016).

“Decolonisation is the act of reversing the process of colonisation. It can be said that decolonisation is constructive rather than destructive. The methods of decolonisation are aimed at reversing the destructive effects of colonialism that have been existing and still existing in our societies. Raising consciousness of the oppressive state that indigenous people live in by exposure to a more realistic account of the history and by identifying an enemy that is creating and maintaining that oppression” (Zig-zag, 2011, p.1).

UNESCO (1981) mentions that after colonisation took place, Africans began to complain about the way they were treated by their oppressors and exploiters. The African individuals started to feel that they were oppressed and exploited just because of their skin colour (UNESCO, 1981). For example, this happened through black employees making a demand that they should be treated as human beings and that they should be recognised as workers by their employers and exploiters (UNESCO, 1981). This perpetuated racial segregation which saw white Europeans being superior to black people in Africa.

2.2.2 Curriculum

Higgs (2016) states that the curriculum is designed to ensure that knowledge is carried in a systematic and planned way to instruct a combination of knowledge and skills that are necessary to society. Principles and beliefs relative to learning, understanding, knowledge, disciplines, community and individuality and society are recognised in the curriculum (Higgs, 2016). It also encompasses policies, strategies, plans and infrastructure to support these activities (Higgs, 2016). The curriculum is a comprehensive plan for an educational/training programme to offer better-quality knowledge production to fulfil the rising needs of a society (Pillai, 2017). Curriculum can be described as a multifaceted concept, constructed, negotiated and renegotiated at various levels and in various fields (Pillai, 2017).

Higgs (2016) states that the curriculum reflects the cultural, economic, social and political context in which it is located. Curriculum is created within a wider cultural, social and political order (Higgs, 2016). An understanding of the curriculum cannot easily be accomplished without recognition of these contexts in which it has been shaped (Higgs, 2016). The curriculum should also be understood as a social practice which is concerned with the cultural and social conditions that reinforce the construction of curriculum knowledge (Lockett, 2016).

Msila and Gumbo (2016) argue that the curriculum serves the cultural, economic, political, social and historical contexts the societies operate in. The former conceptualisations are important when considering the nature of a curriculum in South African higher education, to produce African knowledge (Msila and Gumbo, 2016). The conceptualisations also touch on the historical uses of the curriculum in South Africa and the imperative of curriculum transformation (Mgqwashu, 2016). It also includes the market requirements that direct the nature of the curriculum in higher education (Mgqwashu, 2016).

Glare (2000) states that the word 'curriculum' originates from Latin, which means a running, race, a lap around the track, and course. Curriculum in present-day can be defined as "courses offered by an educational institution or a set of courses constituting an area of specialization" (Merriam, 2009). The curriculum is a means of achieving specific educational goals and objectives (Wen Su, 2012). The curriculum is framed and designed by the administrators and the school employees for enhancement of knowledge and skills amongst the learners and in reaching the needs of the community (Goyal, 2017). Through an improved curriculum, learners not only advance academic knowledge but are able to offer solutions to societal problems and tolerate their living conditions (Goyal, 2017).

The term 'hidden curriculum' is a key aspect of the notion of the curriculum as reproduction, and there is a belief that this notion of curriculum seems to benefit some students more than others (Higgs, 2016). It is not just that some students are better able to interpret the rules of the hidden curriculum and thus achieve success (Nieto, 2007). Hidden curriculum acts as a deliberate form of gate-keeping by ensuring that only certain types of student will be able to use it to their advantage (Higgs, 2016). That is the reason why other students find the curriculum not to be fitting in their needs and of their societies.

Students in higher education are now viewed as consumers of their education, and courses are designed to offer the kind of skills and knowledge that attract students who anticipate having

to compete in the labour market (Higgs, 2016). In this model, the curriculum in higher education has become increasingly influenced by outside interests (Higgs, 2016). Curriculum in education has often been a site of contestation and debate, and that there are various underlying points that emerge which should be recognised in a search of a relevant educational framework for curriculum (Higgs, 2016). Efforts to transform curriculum show the responsiveness of higher education institutions (Higgs, 2016). The outcomes of transforming the curriculum are sometimes incompatible to immediate market needs, they may not produce that is required for the new knowledge economy (Ogude et al., 2005).

The challenge is to come up with a curriculum that works well (Ogude et al., 2005). No matter how systematic the planning or how inventive the thinking, curriculum designs always end up not being everything that everyone would want (Ogude et al., 2005). The power of the knowledge fields, the subject areas or knowledge fields that constitute the foundations of the curriculum have a powerful hold on changes to the curriculum (Higgs, 2016). Academic knowledge has, for example, had a special, almost untouchable, place in the universities that resisted outside attempts to interfere in the construction and design of the curriculum (Higgs, 2016).

2.2.3 Higher Education

Ratangee (2007) states that globally, higher education institutions have seen massive growth in student participation rates over the past twenty years or so. In addition to this growth, there has been an increase in international and national recognition (Ratangee, 2007). Growth brings with it challenges concerning access to, and success in higher education institutions (Ratangee, 2007). Students who want to gain access to higher education are increasingly coming from various educational, socio-economic, cultural, language, and life-experience backgrounds (Cliff, 2003 as cited in Ratangee, 2007). Most of them do not necessarily come prepared for participation in this sector (Cliff, 2003 as cited in Ratangee, 2007). The disadvantaged societies cannot prepare students for educational institutions, because most of them do not have access and improved educational services.

Council on Higher Education (2016) argues that higher education should include possibilities for improving the ways to restore historical and social disadvantaged groups. This can be done through disturbing institutions from their past injustices and setting them on new ways to develop social needs (CHE, 2016). Higher education has the potential to integrate democracy and social justice, and the growth and development in the economy (CHE, 2016).

Their products, therefore, allow every sector from teaching, to private enterprise, to government and influence every level of society (Brown, 2004). The role of higher education is critical to creating a space that allows for a discourse on issues of diversity especially in countries like South Africa, and to facilitate the transfer of this understanding to the wider society (Brown, 2004).

Taylor (2004) states that universities have frequently been regarded as key institutions in the processes of social change and development. The obvious role they have been allocated is the production of highly skilled labour, innovation, technology, and research outputs to meet perceived economic needs (Taylor, 2004). This role may be added, especially during periods of more radical change, roles in the building of new institutions of civil society, in encouraging and facilitating new cultural values, and in training and socialising members of new social elites (Taylor, 2004). The role of the institutions of higher education is therefore essential in addressing the issue of diversity (Brown, 2004).

Brennan, King and Lebeau (2004) state that changes in universities are examined in terms of curriculum, quality and standards; variation, access policies, student profiles and experiences; and academic responses to change. Nearly all universities had been under pressure to transform curriculum and to introduce new forms of academic recognition and quality assurance (Brennan et al., 2004). International donors often play an important part in making this happen. There could also be opposition to transform within institutions and an absence of suitably qualified staff in certain curriculum areas, which presents further obstacles to change in some places (Brennan et al., 2004).

2.2.4 African Indigenous Education

Loram (2013) states that indigenous African education is more operative than the education given in the mission or government school. In as much as the instruction comes directly from the everyday needs of tribal life and the method is one of doing and not listening (Loram, 2013). Education in the ancestral life of the Bantu was a very operative system which had in view the training of the child to carry on the traditions of the community (Duminy, 1973 as cited in Sibisi, 1999). An African child lives within the cultural environment and is educated to become a compliant member of this stable and organised village society (Fafunwa, 1967 as cited in Sibisi, 1999). The child, in turn, is likely to preserve the culture by passing on the same tradition to their own offspring of which is like most cultures globally (Sibisi, 1999). Here, referencing socialisation and cultural reproduction.

Duminy (1973) as cited in Sibisi (1999) states that indigenous Bantu education, especially in black communities in Africa, cannot be understood without the environment in which it takes place. A marked characteristic of this environment lies in its general conformity and homogeneity of the outlook of its members (Sibisi, 1999). Traditional African education is usually generated within the communities (Omolewa, 2007). It is based on practical common sense, on teachings and experiences (Omolewa, 2007). It is holistic, cannot be labelled and separated from the people who are involved because it is a way of life (Omolewa, 2007).

Omolewa (2007) explains that traditional African education is always used as the information base for the community. It enables communication and decision-making (Sibisi, 1999). It is also an integral part of the history and culture of a local communal, which is stored in numerous forms and conveyed through various methods (Sibisi, 1999). Such modes include language, music, dance, oral tradition, proverbs, myths, stories, culture and religion (Omolewa, 2007). This mode of education has by and large been used as a way of acquiring lifelong learning (Omolewa, 2007).

Omolewa (2007) states that the coming of European/western education from the late 15th century onwards disrupted the traditional system. This educational system brought the formal school system at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, the learning of European languages, literature, history, philosophy, as well as the science subjects, including mathematics, biology, physics, and chemistry (Omolewa, 2007). Africans continue to appreciate the elementary values of indigenous education, which emphasise the inclusion of all, and the pursuit of excellence (Sibisi, 1999). Africans, therefore, reject all the attempts to adapt to the educational system and provide what is understood as an inferior type of education (Omolewa, 2007).

Hamilton-Ekeke and Dorgu (2015) state that gradually, there has been a global shift toward understanding and recognising indigenous ways of education as a practical and genuine form of education. The increasing acknowledgment and practice of indigenous education approaches can be a response to the destruction and loss of indigenous knowledge through the developments of colonialism, globalisation, and modernity (Grenier, 1998). Indigenous communities can “reclaim and revalue their languages and traditions, in so doing, improve the educational success of indigenous students,” therefore safeguarding their survival as a culture (Hamilton-Ekeke and Dorgu, 2005, p.10).

2.3 Colonisation in Africa and South Africa

Oba and Eboh (2011) argue that colonialism in Africa led to the net transfer of wealth from the colonised to the colonisers and inhibited successful economic development. It caused political, psychological and moral damage to the colonised (native Africans). The negative impact of colonialism was so powerful and so persistent that it turned the lives of all the colonised upside and inside out (Smith, 2012). Africans could no longer practice their own culture and tradition after colonialism, they lost full control of the youth in the society, and those were undoubtedly major steps backwards in Africa (Oba and Eboh, 2011). Africans were turned away from their culture to conform to the new ways of practices introduced by the European settlers.

Iweriebor (2002) states that the European settler's drive into Africa was inspired by three main factors, social, political and economic. It developed in the nineteenth century after the downfall of the profitability of the slave trade, its abolition, and suppression, as well as the growth of the European capitalist industrial revolution (Iweriebor, 2002). The expansion of colonialism and the dividing of Africa by the European colonial powers blocked the regular development of the African economic system (Settles, 1996). The requirements of capitalist industrialisation including the demand of raw materials, the search for guaranteed markets and profitable investment channels encouraged the European struggle and the partition and eventual invasion of Africa and other colonised countries (Settles, 1996).

Oba and Eboh (2011) mention that the period of colonialism in Africa and its negative consequences, spring mainly from the fact that it lost power to European colonies. Power is the ultimate determinant in human society between different groups (Iweriebor, 2002). When one society finds itself forced to give up power to another society; this becomes an underdevelopment (Oba and Eboh, 2011). Educational restructurings were also introduced, and, in many areas, modern state systems were implemented in most African countries (Settles, 1996).

Thiong'o (1986) states that the African continent has been a victim of forces of colonial exploitation, oppression, and human degradation. This has overshadowed Africa's indigenous way of learning due to the domination of western culture (Thiong'o, 1986). It has led to the coloniser's values being prioritised and valued, leading to African natives conforming to the colonisers and denying their original image (Thiong'o, 1986). Overcoming conformity with

the coloniser depends on the government policy towards culture, education, and language in Africa (Thiong'o, 1986).

Oba and Eboh (2011) argue that colonisers did not introduce education in Africa, they introduced a new education system which replaced African indigenous education. In Africa, the introduction of western formal education has often served as obstacles to the process of cultural transmission and communication (Moswenyane, 2013). This system also inspired values and practices which amounted to informal education, and it never grew out of the African environment (Moswenyane, 2013). The current educational system in South Africa has its roots in western European notions, this has led the students to call for a decolonised education. It is about re-asserting Afrocentric stances and experiences.

Oba and Eboh (2011) state that westernised education is not an educational system designed to give young people confidence and pride as members of African society. This educational system viewed Africans as having little or no knowledge of their own, which meant they had to learn advanced, organised, systematic or sophisticated skills (Moswenyane, 2013). This educational system was based on learning to read, write and calculate in the English language. In addition, the curriculum was a British Empire history and European geography. African history at the beginning of colonialism was considered either non-existent or unimportant, the great men who were studied in schools were kings of England and not of Africa (Oba and Eboh, 2011).

Thiong'o (1986) states that children and students from Africa who have encountered literature in colonial schools and universities experience the world from a European historical perspective. In addition, economic and political issues of indigenous individuals can never be complete without cultural practice (Thiong'o, 1986). The basic problem is that educational structures were formulated by colonialists who had a cultural background different from that of native Africans (Mazonde, 2004). Culture determines and defines the life of individuals, in the process of colonisation, African culture was distorted and eliminated as part of Africans lives.

Thiong'o (1986) argues that culture is an important part of people in giving the meaning of how they perceive the world. An inclusive educational policy is the one that will allow students to study the culture and environment of their societies (Thiong'o, 1986). Africans are much more conscious of their communities compared to the individualistic European (Loram, 2013). Education should, therefore, be the means of knowledge about self and

surroundings (Loram, 2013). In African universities, Africa should be the at the center of things, which should be seen from the African perspective (Loram, 2013). Students in South African universities are calling for less domination of western theories in the curriculum, this is because of the bias these theories have for the African continent and its people.

McKerron (1934) explains that the educational institutions and formats in Africa including South Africa are versions and constructions of the colonisers. The main purpose was to fulfill coloniser's personal interest (McKeron, 1934). This is because the educational system is familiar with the style of the original home of the European settler as possible (McKerron, 1934). In South Africa, the race has played an important and dehumanising role in the education system during colonialism and apartheid especially during the introduction of Christian missionary schools (Soudien, 2016as cited in Roux and Becker, 2016).

Viera (2007) states that after spreading Christian religion, Christian missionaries opened schools and circulated their education system. Most importantly they aimed at eliminating African languages and instilling European languages (Viera, 2007). Christian missionary enterprise was no doubt important in the westernisation of Africa including South Africa (Becker, 2016). Africans were, however, not passive recipients of the new educational system (Becker, 2016). The adoption of Christianity and the process of cultural exchange were shaped by African choices, needs and efforts to Africanise Africa's Christian experience by securing the roots of Christianity in the African context (Viera, 2007).

Janney (2011) mentions that missionaries have more influence than simply spreading religion, they have also brought a complete change of lifestyle. The effects of missionaries in Africa includes a loss of cultural identity, a change in the unity of Africa, an increase of nationalism, and a spread of Christianity (Janney, 2011). This had greater developments after the training of black African missionaries (Janney, 2011). Africans also lost part of their cultural identity in the field of education, since tribal history and beliefs were no longer taught (Janney, 2011). This education was to support the western system and pursue its goal, which led to South Africans being oppressed in the country of their origin.

Van der Walt (1992) mentions that Christian missionaries are portrayed as contributors in missionary education towards supporting the apartheid system of education in South Africa. Missionary education was a form of separate education, divorcing the indigenous people from their traditional culture and values (Van der Walt, 1992). It prepared them as the labour

force of the capitalist economic system of the whites by forcing upon them all kinds of manual work and technical training (Nwandula, 1988 as cited in Van der Walt, 1992).

Van der Walt (1992) states that the joint impact of Europeans who are Dutch and missionaries was culturally and religiously devastating for the Bantu tribes in South Africa and individuals who fell victim to these influences. The Dutch were practically all Christians, and together with the efforts of the missionaries, the Bantu people were Christianised by them (Van der Walt, 1992). The joint impact of the missionaries' activities and the Dutches' influence on the black race was probably not visible at the time (Ross, 1986 as cited in Van der Walt, 1992). Black people were not only divorced from their traditional religion, culture, and lifestyle, but they were also forced into the European culture, religion and lifestyle because of the close relations with the missionaries and the dominant Dutch influence (Van der Walt, 1992).

The education introduced to black South Africans alienated them from their culture and made them active agents into accommodating the western system. The system introduced to them was exploiting and undermining. It was for the capitalist system which was enforced by the European settlers. This led to South Africans feeling alienated from their country's most institutions. Educational institutions were prominent in perpetuating oppression and exploitation which currently exist in post-apartheid South Africa according to university students. This has led to students to call for the decolonisation of higher education institutions.

2.4 Higher Education under Apartheid in South Africa

Higgs (2016) states that under the apartheid system the higher education was profoundly unjust. This has been addressed since 1994. From South Africa's first national democratic elections in 1994, the Government of National Unity has issued numerous curriculum-related transformations planned to democratise education and eradicate inequalities in the post-apartheid education system (Jansen, 2013). Political debates over the role of higher education have generated theories about its potential to empower and transform the lives of students (Higgs, 2016). The literature concerned with empowerment begins from an idea that higher education has excluded certain social groups and recognises that some social groups are disadvantaged within the educational system in South Africa.

Omolewa (2007) mentions that South Africa had an education before the arrival of Dutch colonists in 1652. African traditional education was controlled by community elders through

an oral tradition based on cultural program and closely combined with life experience (Omolewa, 2007). Christian missionary societies in the early 1800s, however, introduced a European form of education to the schools (Jansen, 2013). In 1920s the Native education which was characterised by the quick structural weakening of black schools and the introduction of the first state-mandated segregated curriculum began (Dube, 1985 as cited in Jansen, 2013). This form of education results from the endorsed policy of apartheid which was introduced in the 1953 by the Nationalist government and created racial segregation in schools.

Moore (2015) states that the Bantu Education Act of 1953 would fundamentally put the educational progress of all black South Africans under the stronghold of the National Party (NP) government. This meant that the government had total control of what was being taught at schools, spreading and endorsing the ethos of apartheid (Moore, 2015). This Act was meant to provide mass education of an inferior quality to Africans (Moore, 2015). One of its main purposes was to train black Africans for unskilled labour for the implementation of the apartheid system and its capitalist and labour activities (Nkondo, 1978). Dr. Verwoerd, the designer of Bantu Education said the “curriculum to a certain extent, and educational practice was unable to prepare for service within the Bantu community” (Nkondo, 1978, p.6).

Omolewa (2007) mentions that after the apartheid system was established in 1948, the epistemic violence and racism at universities was taken to another level. During this era, higher education was intended to establish the privilege and power of the ruling white minority the Afrikaner in particular (Heleta, 2016). The concept of race and politics shaped the higher education policy for certain racial groups (Heleta, 2016). The political, social and economic context in which education exist is used by the state to achieve purposes which it considers to be advantageous and beneficial (Rakometsi, 2008). The assertion that segregation was only introduced in South Africa in 1948 is invalid (Rakometsi, 2008). The racial stereotypes that led to segregation have existed before 1948 (Rakometsi, 2008). The National Party (NP) was more structured and systematic in using the education system as a vehicle of achieving its racial policies and thereby institutionalising it (Rakometsi, 2008).

Msila (2013) argues that according to Steve Biko, South African apartheid education regarded Bantu education for blacks as a method of domination over the oppressed. It was believed that education of the native should be based in the life and worldview of the whites most especially those of the Boer nation (Msila, 2013). Apartheid educational system abused

religion while in the meantime perpetuating division among ethnic groups in South Africa (Msila, 2013). It maintained the master-servant relationship between the black Africans and the white settlers (Msila, 2013). The system trained the people to follow it and brainwashed them as well (Msila, 2013). This has been a means of restricting the development of the learners and teachers and circulating state propaganda in almost all South African educational institutions (Msila, 2013). It was more perverse in the African schooling system.

Heleta (2016) states that the western educational system has an impact to ensure that the students become ignorant on African needs. In addition to this Heleta (2016) mentions that this is nothing, but epistemic violence imposed on the students by the South African apartheid state. This kind of violence erases the South African history and convinces black students that they do not have anything to offer the 'modern' world (Heleta, 2016). It makes students to blindly follow the educated colonisers, learn from them, adopt their worldviews and fit into the margin of their world as second-class citizens (Heleta, 2016). Post-apartheid, students in South African universities have called for a review in the curriculum where it is structured in a way that it speaks to their lives as Africans.

Heleta (2016) argues that the curriculum is inseparably similar to the institutional culture if the culture remains white and Eurocentric the environment is not conducive for curriculum reform. What is in most fields of study, especially in the Humanities and Social Sciences is the Eurocentric promotion, which marginalises Africa and is usually supporting the patronising views and stereotypes about the African continent (Heleta, 2016). European and white values are thus still perceived as the standards on which the country's educational system is based and rooted (Heleta, 2016). The current educational system in South Africa, therefore, fails to critically question the results of a history of patriarchy, slavery, imperialism, colonialism, white supremacy and capitalism.

Jansen (1990) explains that the curriculum transformation in schools for black South Africans has been principally determined by events outside the school i.e. changes in sociopolitical context. The end of the oppressive and racist apartheid system in South Africa post-apartheid did not change the epistemologies and knowledge systems in most universities (Heleta, 2016). They are still based in western worldviews, colonial, apartheid, and epistemological traditions. The current curriculum has not been transformed because it is still showing Eurocentric perspectives and continues to reinforce white and privilege (Heleta, 2016). Even though political freedom was achieved in 1994, many structural imbalances like inequalities

and injustices remain stumbling blocks for the emancipation of black South Africans post-apartheid (Becker, 2016). The higher education institution tends to be one of these stumbling blocks.

Louw (2010) states that Africanisation is usually regarded as the first step towards transformation, it requires curriculum to have more African content. In Africa, this implies that the content should be 'African focused content' (Louw, 2010). In this 21st century, Africanisation is at the center of the African discourse and focuses on the realities of the African context (Mashabela, 2017). Africanisation promotes human rights culture and dignity in order to cultivate and enhance education in Africa through an African agenda for liberation. It is a critical reflection to resist the power structure of the western education to ensure that Africans are liberated from the colonial forms of education (Mashabela, 2017). Students in South African universities have identified the power of western education which has taken away a chance of the introduction of African perspectives in the curriculum.

Louw (2010) argues that Africanisation is generally seen as a renewed focus on Africa reclaiming what was taken from Africa and the emergence of a new sense of pride. With regards to the 'African focused content' curriculum, there is a renewed focus on indigenous knowledge and an African community competing in a global society (Louw, 2010). The role of higher education is, essentially, to focus on and sustain tertiary institutions (Louw, 2010). Higher education should focus on the rebirth of an African voice and identity. Africanisation should, therefore, be taken seriously by the government, higher education institutions and universities (Louw, 2010).

2.5 Effects of Colonisation in South African Education

Kenalemang (2013) mentions that the results of colonialism demolished Africa's traditional culture and lifestyles. The European authorities did not have Africa's interest in mind, only worried about their particular interests (Kenalemang, 2013). Europeans had an effective administrative state for purposes of economic exploitation and this largely explains many of the problems faced by African nations after independence (Oba and Eboh, 2011). After African countries gained independence, the colonial powers did not intend to withdraw (Kaya, 2013). They made small changes which include introducing elements of local democracy (Kaya, 2013).

Keller (1995) states that the African countries assumed they would develop rapidly, with the help of more industrialised countries, and full participation in the world economy. Due to the

economic importance of the colonies and strategic considerations, the negative impact of these efforts was still enormous (Beihami and Meifa, 2014). The most substantial consequence of decolonisation of Africa was a total alteration in the political sphere of the continent (Kaya, 2013). The ideas on the socio-economic, education and politics of the African former colonisers were maintained in the form of so-called neocolonialism (Kaya, 2013). Colonial education was a larger component of the colonial project to dehumanise Africans by imposing foreign cultural practices (Shizha, 2005).

Mazrui (1993) states that to a greater extent colonial education led to psycho-cultural alienation and cultural domination. Most universities in South Africa and other regions, still follow American and European definitions of disciplines, research methods, practices of publication and recognition (Mazrui, 1993). Indigenous knowledge, the locally-based knowledge created before the emergence of colonisation, which in most of the countries continue to exist became unknown (Mazrui, 1993). For example, indigenous knowledge of medicine for healing and agricultural activities that is still practiced in rural communities. The colonialist ideology generally dismissed the knowledge, though sometimes acknowledging it as practical understanding (Connell, 2016).

The education that the colonisers imparted prepared the indigenous people of Africa for inferior roles in the colonial states (Zvobgo, 1994). The colonisers' education curriculum left the indigenous people in a state of cultural crisis (Masaka, 2016). Nevertheless, there has been an increase in appreciation of the intelligence and scope of indigenous knowledge. This social knowledge was vital in resilience and survival of different African communities under the violence of colonial invasion (Connell, 2016). The remaining fact is that colonial education was designed in such a way that it promoted the colonisers' socioeconomic and political interests, which greatly affected the educational system in Africa.

Reddy (2004) states that in the 1960s apartheid designers in South Africa applied the idea of education to higher education outlined in the Extension of University Education Act of 1959. This Act made it a crime for a non-white South African student to register and be admitted at a formerly white university e.g. University of Cape Town, without the written permission of the Minister of Internal Affairs (Beale, 1998). This is because Bantu education perpetuated the benefits of white supremacy (Hartshorne, 1992). It treated black people as children in need of parental guidance by whites, which seriously restricted the student's idea of their role in the South African society (Regan, 2017). It is clear that forced education produces many

problems, disturbs the communal life of the Bantu and compromises the communal life of the Africans (Davis, 2016).

Hartshorne (1992) explains that segregated education disadvantaged all black groups, but particularly for black South Africans. This educational system denied them access to the same educational opportunities and resources enjoyed by white South Africans (Hartshorne, 1992). This racist educational system preserved South Africa's social hierarchy in which skin colour was very closely linked to class (Hartshorne, 1992). Apartheid education, never prepared blacks in the areas of science and technology for them to participate more competently in developing their country (Thobejane, 2013). Today, this has led to improvements in literacy being far from satisfactory (Thobejane, 2013).

2.6 Decolonisation of Higher Education in South Africa

Mazibuko (2017) states that the student unrest around fee increases and fee-free higher education in recent years which may continue after the recent government announcement of the Presidential Commission on Higher Education. This brought to the front some of the gaps in South African higher education (Mazibuko, 2017). Throughout 2015 and 2016 students at South African universities began a mass uprising against fee increment and need for decolonising the higher educational institutions (Becker, 2016). This is where students also called for the end of racism and of neoliberal outsourcing practices of support services at universities (Becker, 2016). Nevertheless, students demanding 'transformation' and 'decolonisation' of South African universities cannot fully define their terms or they do so unclearly (Benatar, 2008).

Mazibuko (2017) suggests that the uncertainty may cause the halo effect that surrounds these terms, academics, and students together, seriously need to speak about them. Decolonisation has been articulated, by student protesters, through a series of demands including making higher education more inclusive through the reduction or removal of registration, tuition and accommodation fees (Mazibuko, 2017). Mbembe (2015) characterises the current time in higher education as a 'negative moment', one that is experienced in all large-scale societal changes. "A negative moment is a moment when new antagonisms emerge while old ones remain unresolved... when contradictory forces – inchoate, fractured, and fragmented - are at work but what might come out of their interaction is anything but certain" (Mbembe, 2015 as cited in CHE, 2016, p.2).

Joseph (2017) mentions that fundamental to the current anti-colonial protests of the #FeesMustFall movement for change and decolonising the curriculum has been the discourse of black pain, institutional racism, and Eurocentrism in universities. Transforming curriculum to give focus to African knowledge, histories, and languages; increasing the number of black students and teaching staff; insourcing workers; including female and disabled bodies in campus culture (Mazibuko, 2017). Eradicating colonial representation and finally addressing anti-black racism in the institutional culture of formerly-white universities is part of decolonisation of the higher education (Mazibuko, 2017).

Sayed, Motala, and Hoffman (2017) state that student movements and others have been more concerned about calling for decolonisation, and experimenting with different ways of thinking and organising, than about recommending the shape that decolonised curriculum should take. One consequence of this conceptualisation of decolonisation is that we also need to think through the silences in current discourses, particularly the silence about teacher's education at universities and their role in decolonising schools (Sayed et al., 2017). A few lecturers asked their students what this demand meant for them and used student ignorance to dismiss it (Joseph, 2017).

Subbaye (2017) states that students debated in almost all universities that they do not simply call for free education but a free education that is decolonised. It appears that students at different universities attached different meanings to the notion of a 'decolonised' education (Langa et al., 2017). The students at the University of Limpopo claimed that decolonised education means getting the same quality of education as students at historically white universities like Wits (Langa et al., 2017). Students at historically white universities (University of Witwatersrand, University of Cape Town, Rhodes University and University of KwaZulu-Natal) articulate that decolonised education means that the curriculum needs to be transformed to reflect the lived experiences of black African people, including recognition of their scholarly work which is often on the periphery or taught as additional modules (Langa et al., 2017). It is argued that decolonised education means re-centering the work of these scholars in the curriculum (Langa et al., 2017).

Joseph (2017) mentions that lecturers indicated that students do not know what decolonising the curriculum means; students do not know what they want. It looks like it's mostly the student leaders such as the Student Representative Council (SRC) members who knew what decolonisation means (Joseph, 2017). The discussion on the Africanisation of Universities in

Africa has been continuing for several decades, but little has been done to implement theories that have emerged (Nkoane, 2006). Certain parts of the curriculum in some South African universities, however, are already Africanised, for example, African languages and literature, African customary law, and African religion are taught (Benatar, 2008).

Nkoane (2006) states that Afrocentric education pursues to nurture its learners an African behavioural orientation and consciousness which will enhance the appearance of Africa's central humanity. In addition, the ability to contribute significantly to the complete growth and development of African community whereby an African student is a participant (Nkoane, 2006). That is entirely appropriate, but not all disciplines in universities lend themselves to Africanisation of their curriculum. Some disciplines find it difficult to Africanise their curriculum since they receive most of their funding from western sponsors, therefore they should conform to the standards (Nkoane, 2006).

Higgs and Van Wyk (2006) states that the framework for transformation rests on three envisaged pillars for a transformed higher education system: First, to satisfy the needs of equity, redress, and development. A policy of increased participation is also required, whereby different stakeholders contribute in policy making. Secondly, a policy of greater responsiveness is needed to ensure that higher education is familiar with the challenges of its social context. Increased cooperation and partnerships will lead to a model of cooperative governance, whose elements include the state in a supervisory role as opposed to a role of control or interference, hence there should be an intermediary between state and higher education institutions (HEIs). The institutions are characterised by internal constituency partnerships, and a set of linkages between HEIs and civil society (Higgs and Van Wyk, 2006).

Advocates of 'transformation' also claim that the curriculum needs to be 'decolonised' or 'Africanised' (Benatar, 2008). Decolonising institutions, decolonising knowledge, decolonising the mind; have been the tags of the new generation of activists who have dominated South Africa's Fanonian moment. The term coined by the political philosopher of post-colonialism, Achille Mbembe, who is a professor at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (Becker, 2016). Mbembe observed that the preoccupations of critical black studies were now being added to a renewed critique of political economy (Becker, 2016). It aimed at bringing together, dialectically, questions of race and property, of class and inequality, and of identity and lived experience (Becker, 2016).

Benatar (2008) states that sometimes the suggestion is that African ways of thinking should be acknowledged and that 'European' ways of thinking should not be privileged. One problem with this suggestion is that it oversimplifies 'African' and 'European' ways of thinking (Benatar, 2008). For example, the ways of thinking that characterised European universities several hundred years ago have changed. Also, what characterises African ways of thinking has not been acknowledged in universities but there is a perpetuating of western ideologies.

If European universities had insisted, as conservatives might have wanted, on preserving traditional European thinking, there would not have been the advances in knowledge that have taken place (Benatar, 2008). Students in post-apartheid South African universities read Steve Biko, who regarded his call to autonomous black action as relevant for contemporary South Africa (Becker, 2016). Most notably, the new generation has also celebrated the writings of Fanon, taking up especially his philosophical critique of racism and insisting on the need for blacks to seize recognition (Becker, 2016). By this Fanon wanted black people to have a place in the society and have their voices heard especially about the struggles they faced (Becker, 2016).

Mamdani (2016) states that the important point is that the institutional form and the curriculum content of the modern South African universities is derived from precolonial institutions; their inspiration was the colonial model. Over the next century, these institutional forms spread in Europe and from there to the rest of the world (Mamdani, 2016). The European experience provided the raw material from which was forged the category 'human' (Mamdani, 2016). The experience from which the category human was forged was double-sided and contradictory. Imperial Europe understood the human as a European, but colonised individuals as so many species of the sub-human (Mamdani, 2016).

Mazibuko (2017) states that the curriculum is based on inherently political questions such as: 'What is the curriculum for, or what purposes does it serve?'; 'How is it determined?'; 'How does curriculum change?'; 'What makes curriculum relevant?' and, perhaps most of all, 'Whose curriculum is it?' The reasons of decolonisation of the curriculum, therefore, become diverse, not always based on similar concepts and ideologies when used by different individuals or groups (Mazibuko, 2017). In other words, this means the addition of disciplines to the existing ones. It may also mean an extensive reorientation of what is taught

at a university to select and focus disciplines on the development concerns of a region in which it is located (Mazibuko, 2017).

Nkoane (2006) states that the demand for Africanisation was formulated in the older colonial era universities soon after independence in South African universities, in a debate that touches two principal ideas, justice, and rights, against one another. “The re-invigorating of Africa’s intellectuals, and the production of knowledge which is relevant, effective and empowering for the people of the African continent, and more particularly, the immediate African societies the universities serve” (Nkoane, 2006, p.49). These were the things which were debated post-apartheid in universities by scholars (Nkoane, 2006).

Mamdani (2016, p.5) states that “decolonisation would have to engage with this vision of the human rejected from the European historical experience which breathed curricular content into the institutional form we know as the modern university”. The concerns underlying this version are the isolation of South African students from the content of what is taught (Mazibuko, 2017). Where it does not narrate the lived, everyday experiences, and the usefulness of the knowledge produced in a university study to the solution of the main challenges of South African communities (Mazibuko, 2017). Challenges which include the alleviation of poverty, the combating of inequality and the development of the economy (Mazibuko, 2017).

The constitution of the Republic of South African (1996) in Chapter 2, section 29 (2) states that “everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of his or her choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state should consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account:

- (a) equity;
- (b) practicability; and
- (c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices” (The constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Cloete, Fehnel, Maassen, Moja, Perold, and Gibbon (2002) state that in terms of South African law, historically white universities remained part of South Africa throughout all the years of apartheid. At the beginning of 1994, South Africa’s higher education system was not

in a good state and not coordinated (Cloete et al., 2002). This was principally the result of the white apartheid government's idea of race and the politics of race (Cloete et al., 2002). This designed the higher education policy framework that was established during the 1980s (Cloete et al., 2002). This continues to happen even after the drafting of the 1996 Republic of South African constitution (Cloete et al., 2002).

2.6.1 Opportunities for Decolonising Curriculum

Heleta (2016) argues that universities have not done much since 1994 to open to different bodies and traditions of knowledge and knowledge production in new and experimental ways. Universities have introduced new policies and frameworks that speak about equality, equity, transformation, change institutional cultures and epistemological traditions but nothing has changed (Heleta, 2016). In addition, the call for the decolonisation of institutions and curriculum also present challenges to the academic project (Oba and Eboh, 2011).

Oba and Eboh (2011) mention that the degree to which curriculum can be changed to include knowledge and epistemological traditions from the global South depends on the discipline. It may be more possible in the Social Sciences and the Humanities than it is in the Natural Sciences (Oba and Eboh, 2011). Decolonising the curriculum is far more different than substituting authors and theorists (Mgqwashu, 2015). If 'curriculum' includes a broader educational experience, universities first need to define how they approach the transformation of the curriculum (Mgqwashu, 2015). Students argued that they need to have a voice or a say in curriculum matters that affect them (Shay, 2016). This raises issues of meaningful representation of students on departmental and program governance structures. Some academics will be concerned or even oppose this (Shay, 2016).

Vorster and Quinn (2015) state that as scholars working from a social realist view of knowledge, they do not advocate that established knowledge be discarded simply because it is the knowledge of the powerful. Some scholars propose that it is important to interrogate what knowledge is powerful for and where appropriate to introduce knowledge from the global South (Oba and Eboh, 2011). Scholars' curriculum transformation judgments are possibly shaped in part by their own academic profiles (Sayed et al., 2017). Much of their ideas is a result of their own higher education qualifications, which plays a strong role in shaping their intellectual viewpoints and the forms of knowledge (Sayed et al., 2017).

Kaya (2013) mentions that in the context of higher educational transformation inherited from colonialism and apartheid in South Africa. Certain questions need to be critically

interrogated, i.e. what does African indigenous knowledge as a concept mean? This could have provided an indigenous theoretical framework for developing methodologies of integrating African ways of knowing and knowledge production into the post-colonial higher education system (Silvester, 2007 as cited in Kaya, 2013). Higher education curriculum in South Africa constructed based on indigenous African epistemologies will be concerned with empowering teachers and learners to gain self-confidence in their own abilities and to obtain a sense of pride in their own ways (Higgs, 2016).

Kaya (2013) states that the implications for African higher education are that research can no longer be conducted with local communities as if their views and personal experiences are of no significance. The honest integration is about free participation by all associates within the society, serving the full expression of the self in a society that allows transformation as a will of the individuals (Msila, 2013). The aim of transforming the higher education curriculum in South Africa should be to give indigenous African epistemologies their rightful place as equally effective ways of knowing among the range of knowledge systems globally to solve global and local problems more efficiently (Higgs, 2016).

Indigenous societies have always generated the knowledge they need for their survival (Hays, 2008). Although indigenous knowledge is not fully explored and valued in the curriculum, it is useful (Hays, 2008). The attitudes and values as well as what indigenous people considered as knowledge has been detached from the youth as they become adults (Masemula, 2013). Disregarding the cultural education of students, will not empower them to shape societies that carry their values and attitudes (Masemula, 2013). Knowledge production in South Africa is therefore flawed, unrepresentative of South Africans, distorted and not liberating due to colonialism (Masemula, 2013).

Insofar the colonial education contributed to marginalisation and exclusion of indigenous African epistemologies and ways of knowing in higher education especially in Africa (Higgs, 2016). Curriculum planners in South African higher education should focus on promoting the decolonisation of the South African higher education (Higgs, 2016). There is a need to develop both capacity among academics for community engagement and to generate knowledge on how this could be done in a way that meets both research and community development needs (Wood, Damons, Waddington, Mathikithela and Setlhare, 2017).

Kaya (2013) argues that in African indigenous knowledge there has been a limited effort among the African scholars who promote these knowledge systems to provide their own clear

definition and understanding. Higher education in South Africa is defined by the needs, practices, and thoughts of locally-based communities in that education should be firmly fixed in the cultural and rational environment of the community in which it is located (Higgs, 2016). It is important to focus on these kinds of developments of concept rooted in Africa. Decolonisation is not just focusing on political independence (Oelofsen, 2015). There are quite a lot of structures, institutions, and economy that needs attention (Oelofsen, 2015).

Specia and Osman (2015) make a point that what is needed are mass-based political movements calling on citizens to uphold democracy and the right of everyone to be educated. This notion will also work on behalf of ending domination in all its forms. Conceptions of 'indigenous' and 'western' knowledge in South African universities have developed in ways that privilege one and silences the other (Ravjee, 2017). The integration of African indigenous knowledge system into higher education enables African students and educators to re-evaluate the inherent hierarchy of knowledge systems because historically knowledge has been tainted (Kaya, 2013). To weaken the legacy of colonialism, it is also very important to decolonise the minds of those who were formerly colonised (Oelofsen, 2015).

Oelofsen (2015) argues critically on the decolonisation of the minds for all Africans by focusing on the concepts which are deeply rooted in African thoughts and practices. The knowledge should be indigenous, hence allowing Africans to study the issues facing Africa (Oelofsen, 2015). These arguments are like those of Mbembe (2015) who debate about decolonising the curriculum by including indigenous knowledge. Additionally, Ogude, Nel, and Oosthuizen (2005) argue that the curriculum should be decolonised and Africanised to address the needs of Africans. Mbembe (2015) views decolonisation in another dimension, he also talks of decolonising the buildings and the public space.

The decolonisation of buildings and of public spaces is not different from the *democratization of access* (Mbembe, 2015). By access it refers to a wide opening of the doors in higher learning to all South Africans, therefore South Africa should invest in its universities (Mbembe, 2015). The claim made by #RhodesMustFall protest at the University of Cape Town is that the experience of a black student is operating within institutionalised forms of oppression (Nyamnjoh, 2017). Statues like that of Rhodes are a constant reminder of a historical legacy that saw and treated black people as objects (Nyamnjoh, 2017). University of Cape Town students stated that the systems and the processes have worked to exclude black students from feeling as though they are part of the university (Nyamnjoh, 2017). The

Cecil Rhodes statue produces those feelings of alienation within the university (Nyamnjoh, 2017). They did not want it to be destroyed; they wanted it removed from the campus (Herman, 2015).

Specia and Osman (2015) argue that changing the educational system so that schooling is not the site where students are instructed to support what they refer to as ‘imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy’, but rather where they learn to open their minds, to engage in rigorous study and to think critically. It is very difficult to understand what exactly this is meant to imply. One problem with this suggestion is that it oversimplifies the African and European ways of thinking. For example, the ways of thinking that characterised European universities several hundred years ago have changed (Ogude, et al, 2005). Africans need to invent ways of rewriting or changing those dominant narratives and deconstruct ‘white’ superiority and the misrepresentation of indigenous people and their cultures (Shizha, 2005).

2.6.2 Challenges of Implementing Decolonised Curriculum

Adebisi (2016) mentions that academic research ignores the African subject in favour of African needs. Research collection makes it evident that it is by non-African academics, therefore, it is filled with biased representations of Africa (Adebisi, 2016). It focuses on aims similar to the research agenda but dissimilar with the needs of the African society (Number, 2013). There is a lack of implementation in universities due to research collection (Adebisi, 2016). South African higher education system stays a colonial settlement up to this date, replicating dominant identities instead of removing hegemony (Heleta, 2016). The notion is that the decolonisation of the scholarly landscape (academic research) will result in the decolonisation of the mind (Oelofsen, 2015).

Jawitz (2016) state that the real and imagined racial differences and similarities between groups of students and staff have consequences in everyday experiences in South Africa. Misuse and abuse of power by academics on students or students on academics is simply wrong (Jawitz, 2016). Some students mentioned that academics do not give them a space to be creative, they are forced to do what academics tell them to do (Jawitz, 2016). The inadequacy of existing policies and procedures for exposing and addressing the abuse of power has been brought under a very harsh spotlight at South African universities (Shay, 2016). One aspect of engaging with the challenges facing higher education transformation post-Apartheid is through understanding how the racialised context interacts with the experience of teaching (Jawitz, 2016).

Benatar (2008) states that it is not clear, for example, what it would mean to ‘decolonise’ physics or mathematics. There is only mathematics not European or African mathematics. There is a proposal that it is important to interrogate what particular knowledge is? Powerful for and where appropriate to introduce knowledge from the global South and to explore the origins of western knowledge in other knowledge traditions where this is the case (Oba and Eboh, 2011). The two knowledge systems should be used in a manner that does not compromise either (Masemula, 2013). Knowledge in both systems should be used in the curriculum as the knowledge that prepares learners from different racial groups for their responsibilities in their communities, their country and the world (Masemula, 2013).

During apartheid in South Africa, each person’s racial classification was legally prescribed based on whom they were recognised to be (Posel, 2001 as cited in Jawitz, 2016). The majority of South Africans continue to identify themselves using apartheid-era racial classifications (Seekings, 2008, as cited in Jawitz, 2016). Students and staff continue to be required to classify themselves using racial categories, White, Coloured, Indian or African (Jawitz, 2016). South African higher education is struggling to remove the legacy of “the racist, patriarchal and authoritarian apartheid social order” (Jawitz, 2016, p.3).

White South African scholars are as influential in driving genuine curriculum decolonisation as black scholars (Mgqwashu, 2015). While black student enrolments have increased dramatically, white academic staff continue to dominate academic positions across the system (CHE, 2015 as cited in Jawitz, 2016). It also affects the experience of black undergraduate students and the way that discussions of race, social justice and reconciliation are confined to institutional and public domains (Jawitz, 2016). For most black students, the undesirable experiences they experienced increase their consciousness of marginality and exclusion (Vandeyar, 2017). Findings from studies conducted in the South African show that the lack of interaction between blacks and whites observed in the wider society is also visible among university students and academics (Vandeyar, 2017).

2.7 Higher Education Policy Landscape

Teferra and Altbach (2004) argue that African higher education, at the beginning of the new millennium, faces unparalleled challenges. Africa's academic institutions face obstacles in providing the education, research, and service needed for the continent to advance. After all, it is the black African academics and researchers who should be at the center of curriculum renewal (Tyatya, 2017). This resonates with students, who have joined and subsequently led

the call for the transformation of academic staff over the last few years in South Africa (Herman, 2015).

Morrow (1990) states that curriculum progress in South African education during the apartheid era was controlled strongly from the center, each department had its own curriculum development and procedures. Curriculum formation in South Africa was dominated by committees devoted to the White House Assembly (Morrow, 1990). Analyses of apartheid education in South Africa have been shaped centrally by the practices of racism and horrible suppression (Carrim, 2007). Students in the #FeesMustFall protest made the emphasis that racial exclusion is still prevalent in universities. This means the results of the apartheid system are still existing in South African higher education institutions.

2.7.1 Department Of Education Language Policy

The Ministry of Education (2002) states that it was the attempt by the apartheid state to impose Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in black schools that gave rise to the mass struggles of the late 1970s and 1980s. The role of language and access to language skills is critical to ensure the right of individuals to realise their full potential to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, economic and political life in the South African society (Ministry of Education, 2002). It is important to note that the South African student population in higher education is linguistically diverse and it is not uncommon to find a variety of home languages represented in the student body of a single institution (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Marjorie (1982) states that South Africa is a multi-lingual country that has exceptional linguistic complications because of its policy of apartheid. In 1955, a policy of teaching in both English and Afrikaans on an equal basis in the basic education was adopted (Marjorie, 1982). The scarcity of black educators skilled in Afrikaans (all teacher training schools for blacks are in English) allowed this policy to be approved in only 26% of the schools (Marjorie, 1982). In 1976 the black students' hatred of apartheid, and of Afrikaans as the 'language of the oppressor', came to a head in Soweto, a black township outside of Johannesburg (Marjorie, 1982).

The policy of separate development resulted in the benefitting of English and Afrikaans as the official languages of the apartheid state and the exclusion and under-development of Africans and other languages (Ministry of Education, 2002). The use of language policy as an instrument of control, oppression, and exploitation was one of the factors that activated the

two great political struggles that defined South Africa in the twentieth century (Ministry of Education, 2002). The struggle of the Afrikaners against British imperialism and the struggle of the black community against the white rule (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Joseph (2017) mentions that in 1997 the Department of Education (DOE) made a publication of the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education, for a single coordinated system. The DOE Minister established a National Task Team on Transformation (NTTT), which adopted the National Framework Agreement on Transformation (NFAT), and advocated for an institutional culture free from racism, sexism, intolerance, and violence (White Paper 3, 1997). Seemingly a good foundation for the transformation of South African universities was being laid (Joseph, 2017).

Lockett (2016) states that the DOE Minister appointed a Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions to investigate transformation in higher education in March 2008. The discourse of this DOE vision gives an assurance to transformation through words such as: equity; access; fair chances; eradication of all forms of unfair discrimination; redress; democratic ethos; culture of human rights; critical discourse; a humane, non-racist, non-sexist social order; advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship (Joseph, 2017).

2.8 University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) Policies and Strategies

Corporations Relation Division (2017) state that the University of KwaZulu-Natal's primary aim is to shape a future that works for all by putting people first and empowering them to cope with the evolving world. Rich in tradition, the University of KwaZulu-Natal has a proud heritage of academic excellence and a history of making a transformative impact regionally, nationally, and globally (Corporations Relation Division, 2017). The University of KwaZulu-Natal identifies with the goals of South Africa's multilingual language policy and seeks to be a key player in its successful implementation (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006).

University of KwaZulu-Natal (2006) mentions that the development and promoting proficiency in the official languages, particularly English and isiZulu is a great need. The policy holding this seeks to make explicit the benefits of being fully bilingual in South Africa (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006). For students and staff, University of KwaZulu-Natal should be a place of new and original thoughts and ideas that will shape a brave new future (Corporations Relation Division, 2017).

Jansen (2013) states that the University of KwaZulu-Natal is transforming its curriculum, in line with its policy of advancing African languages in higher education. Professor Nobuhle Hlongwa as cited by Jansen (2013) said that the Humanities, in specific, had ordered African languages, to become the languages of scholarship (Jansen, 2013). She continued to say a number of students are learning in languages they do not understand; which questions the kind of education that is provided. The emphasis is on that we are a democratic country and that people should be free when they use their mother tongue; the language that they could produce knowledge with (Jansen, 2013). In the development of visiting universities around the country, the committee found that while they had policies on the development and use of African languages, the implementation was lacking (Jansen, 2013).

School of Education (2017) mentions that the Dean of the School of Education, Professor Thabo Msibi mentioned that there is a plan to engage strongly in pressing education issues. One of the issues is to answer the questions on transformation and in turn transform teaching methods and research (School of Education, 2017). “Higher education teachers need to teach transgressive in order to effectively respond to the ‘question of the moment’, i.e. that of decolonisation in higher education” (School of Education, 2017, p.3). He continued to say that, “the current political moment requires for the troubling of traditional conceptions of teaching, and a move towards the discovery of ourselves as teachers and discovering our students” (School of Education, 2017, p.3).

Msibi (2017) said South Africa has the top four universities in Africa, all built on the British model. The School of Education has already seen what has happened to the University of KwaZulu-Natal which was led to the road of ‘decolonisation’ (Msibi, 2017). The result was the plight of students and faculty, administrative disorder and the running out of sponsorships from donors (Msibi, 2017). At the end of that process, the University of KwaZulu-Natal has been well crumbling and is bankrupt (Msibi, 2017).

University of KwaZulu-Natal (2006) state that the dream of the University of KwaZulu-Natal lies on being the leading university of African scholarship. The success of this dream is relying on the transformation of the university (Jansen, 2015). Transformation is greatly progressive by refining the quality of human relations, and meaningful behavioural change that can bring the character and culture of the university into the alliance with its dream (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017).

Corporations Relation Division (2017) mentions that the University of KwaZulu-Natal will be student-centered and provide a considerate environment for all students. A holistic approach to education, characterised by excellence in learning and teaching (Corporations Relation Division, 2017). It will produce capable, confident and socially responsible graduates, aware of their role in contributing to national progress and social change (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017). University planning is a continuous process that should be responsive and should adapt to the constantly evolving landscape of the higher education sector and the changing needs of the wider society (Corporations Relation Division, 2017).

Corporations Relation Division (2017) reveal that the demand for free, quality and decolonised higher education may escalate and create an unstable environment for the running of universities in South Africa. There will be increasing pressures to find new and innovative ways to engage students who feel alienated by institutional cultures that are reinforced by university governance and democratic processes, echoing increasing discontent with spreading inequality in South African society (Corporations Relation Division, 2017).

Corporate Relation Division (2017) state that the challenges faced in transforming societies cannot be based on perspectives drawn from separate disciplines. This will require interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches that bring together teams from various areas such as food production, natural resources use, water and food security, land-use planning and management, and link these with skill in service delivery in key human welfare outcomes such as social services, poverty alleviation, health, and education (Corporate Relations Division, 2017). At the same time, solutions will need to be translated into policy and practice, requiring involvement from Development Studies, Political Sciences, Economics, and Law (Corporations Relation Division, 2017).

Narismulu and Adam (2015) state that curriculum transformation, a key imperative for higher education globally, requires researchers and educators to deliberate more earnestly on epistemology and pedagogy. In addition, when the complexity of historically and culturally-situated lived experiences is acknowledged (Narismulu and Adam, 2015). It is further argued that for curriculum transformation to materialise, instructors and educators had to possess the commitment to reforming the curriculum on a consistent basis (Narismulu and Adam, 2015). This is to advocate cross-disciplinary collaboration and to be intentional about what is taught

and how it is taught in history and culturally-situated lived experiences (Narismulu and Adam, 2015).

2.9 Conclusion

The body of the literature review consists of a thorough discussion of the key concepts framing the study, these include decolonisation, colonisation, curriculum, higher education and African indigenous education. The notion of colonisation in Africa and South Africa is also discussed, together with higher education under apartheid in South Africa. The concept of decolonising higher education with a look at the protests that took place in universities, curriculum and knowledge production was looked at with decolonising curriculum strategies. Lastly, the higher education policy landscape and the University of KwaZulu-Natal policies for transformation were discussed.

The literature review concerning ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’ is mostly comprised of international work and some locally, which can be related to the experiences, insights and understanding of UKZN, Pietermaritzburg students. However, the researcher does not know how far the findings expressed in the literature review can be generalised to students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. This study therefore sought to determine whether the above mentioned issues of decolonisation of the curriculum, the renaming of buildings and strictures of the university, can be applied to students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

Moreover, important factors to consider when dealing with decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education are the students’ motivations, influences, experiences, desire to get education, insights, understanding and perceptions towards university transformation. These may ultimately determine whether the students’ are calling for decolonising the curriculum genuinely or whether there are other hidden motives. The continuation of the protests must be able to carry a significant meaning so that these issues can be address. Students’ voices are therefore important to be covered as they are pushing this campaign.

Gaps have been identified in the literature review focusing on the notion and insight of ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’. A number of studies based on decolonising curriculum in higher education did not thoroughly look at the role students’ play in the process of transformation. Most studies do not focus on students, but the insight comes mostly from the academics and covered by the media platforms. Hence, this limit the students to express their views as it touches their most important part of life – education. This study will focus on

students who have called for decolonisation, which will assist in understanding their experiences, challenges that they face at the university. The following chapter will critically discuss the social model and how it relates to this research study.

The next chapter will detail the theoretical framework for this research. It will focus on critical consciousness by Paulo Freire and black consciousness by Steve Biko as an element to explain 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education. The two chapters intersect on different levels as the theoretical framework chapter goes into greater detail on the issues presented in chapter two. The theoretical framework gives an insight into the unique view of how students understand 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education. It will not only give an insight into the history of education system in South Africa but also examine how the call of decolonising education came about and the role it is playing in the transformation of higher education in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe and discuss the theoretical assumptions and concepts essential to the issue of decolonising the curriculum in higher education. Paulo Freire's critical consciousness model and Steve Biko's concept of black consciousness (BC) will be used as broad frameworks to students' insights and meaning-making of the notion decolonisation in relation to the curriculum in higher education. It will also look at how the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education' is written/theorised in the academic literature and media. This chapter discusses how students perceive curriculum in their social context, history and experiences in higher education institutions; which result in differences when it comes to their perceptions and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum'.

3.2 Critical Consciousness

Squier (2016) states that the model of critical consciousness was first developed by Paulo Freire in his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1968. Paulo Freire used the critical consciousness model to explain how individuals needed to fight against oppression and create a world that is safe and good for everyone. By this, Freire explains that students need to understand what creates oppression and propose strategies for addressing it (Boyce, 1996). Freire's concept of critical consciousness will be one of the concepts that will be used for argument, analysis, and discussion in this study.

Darder (2014) mentions that Freire's concept of critical consciousness addresses the struggle for change. It is the moment human beings become critically aware and intolerant of the oppressive conditions in which they find themselves and push towards new ways of knowing and being in the world (Darder, 2014). Critical consciousness emphasises the aim of civic engagement and social justice movement participation (Darder, 2014). This means it evokes awareness of inequalities in educational, social and economic systems (Simon, 2010). Academics are therefore the major contributors in empowering students, they should understand these dimensions as the basis for their work in the classroom (Darder, 2014).

Duarte (2006) states that Freire's concept of critical consciousness includes reflection on the dialectical relationship between self and situation in their surroundings. Freire believes that learning and developing critical consciousness happens through a dialectical process of

breaking things down into related parts and then ‘re-totalizing’ them yet again to arrive at more complex, systematic understandings (Freire, 1993). In addition, critical consciousness can be described as a tool, a viewpoint, or a framework and state of mind to fight against oppression (Gatimu, 2009).

Freire (1973) writes of the ability to read the world and understanding what is happening around. This involves shaping and changing the world, the now and then in small ways, through creative imagining, critical thinking and informed action (Freire, 1973). This becomes a preference compared to following a technical and mechanical definition of literacy, which provides less critical thinking (Freire, 1973). It is the reason why Freire taught “adults how to read in relation to the awakening of their consciousness” (Freire, 1998, p.81). Freire's idea of transformation develops out of the call to question unequal power relations in educational institutions and also within the society. The learning environments created within the ideals of critical pedagogy encourage student-led exploration that embraces these principles (Freire, 1998).

3.2.1 Students and Critical Consciousness

Darder (2014) mentions that Freire also placed importance on students experiencing conditions in the classroom that nurture how they familiarise with the practice of democracy. Freire believed that it is through a realistic and integral learning of democracy, in body, mind, heart, and spirit, that students come to realise that democracy is never a given and emancipation will never be a gift (Davis, 1981). Freire calls for students to take an active role in determining what is of importance to them, which will shape their own lives (Freire, 1971). Students through education should shape their surroundings to what will benefit their lives in the future and of their communities. This can be done by fighting the challenges that hinder their democracy, and this calls for students to critically engage with these challenges.

Au (2007) states that through active participation the students need to have not only a conscious access to the knowable object. They should have the opportunity to critically manipulate those objects through dialogue, to re-know them in the name of education for freedom (Au, 2007). Passive participation whereby the teacher deposits information into the student without offering a student-centered curriculum can lead to student alienation (Au, 2007). This alienation leaves students disengaged, bored, passive, and often feeling helpless in controlling the factors that shape their lives, often creating disengaged adults (Shor, 1992).

Alienation is a fundamental challenge to Freirean pedagogy; a powerful educational separation that hinders all teaching and learning (Martin, 2008 as cited in Foster, 2016). Freire did identify the tension between critical consciousness and alienation (Forster, 2016). Freire finds it important to develop a culturally relevant curriculum that requires the teacher to acknowledge that students are not a shortfall and that they bring with them powerful and rich experiences, cultures and languages to the classroom (Foster, 2016). Implementing culturally relevant pedagogy in the classroom may enhance students' literacy experiences, empower their cultural identity, and shape perspectives of themselves and their communities (Foster, 2016).

The banking method, where the teacher imparts facts to pupils, is constructed on the vertical relationships of teacher over students (Freire, 1993). The students accept the status quo and domination continues (Freire, 1993). Whereas a problem-posing education pedagogy involving dialogue helps consciousness to develop and drives learners to critically participate in shaping their reality (Freire, 1993). The purpose of critical pedagogy is to enrich students' overall life (Mahmoudi, Khoshnood, and Babaei, 2014). In this approach, students are given a chance to explore the relationship between their society and the content of their educational environment (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Students need to be able to practice their ideas in the educational environment from their own communities.

3.2.2 Education and Critical Consciousness

Freire believes that education is a political activity and has a mission to analyse the social relations because this is where most problems emerge (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Such analysis results in the political selection, in other words, actual education develops people's political consciousness (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Freire points out that if poor people cannot be emancipated from silence culture, there will be no path to emancipate them from social and political slavery (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Freire also points out that critical discussion is a sensible sample of active participation of oppressed people in education (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Freire's goal was to prove that an educated person will eventually live a better life because they will be free from oppression and domination (Kershaw, 2012).

Freire (1973) states that education for freedom implies the exercise of consciousness in individuals which will help in discovering themselves in relation with the world. Education should also try to explain the reasons which can make clear the situations people live under (Freire, 1973). Freire's critical liberation pedagogy, therefore, revolves around practice and

aims for students and teachers to be subjects who can critically reflect upon reality and take transformative action to change reality (Au, 2007). To do this, Freire suggests a pedagogical process of problem posing, coding/decoding, and dialogue as ways to develop critical consciousness for transformation both in the classroom and the world (Au, 2007). This method will make it easier for students to understand their surroundings looking through their lenses in the world that is defined by their own perspectives.

Freire (1973) states that students and teachers should be targets in becoming subjects in education when developing critical consciousness. This is because, individuals who, become consciously aware of their context and their condition as a human being become an instrument of choice (Freire, 1973). In this way, teachers and students are positioned as cognitive subjects and as critical mediators in the action of knowing (Shor, 1987). This notion implies that all educational practices require the existence of ‘subjects,’ both teachers and learners who while teaching, learn, and who in learning also teach (Shor, 1987). The reciprocal learning between teachers and students is what gives the educational practice a successful character (Freire, 1998). One-sided learning is not effective enough in promoting intellectual capability in individuals because it supports passive learning (Freire, 1998).

3.2.3 Curriculum and Critical Consciousness

In Freire’s curriculum planning perspective, teaching is an instrument for increasing individual’s critical consciousness that their mental progress is not prevented because of political and social conditions of the society (Shim, 2008 as cited in Mahmoudi et al., 2014). One of the most critical aspects of the curriculum is to accommodate the ever-changing society, economic and political context in the country (Adam, 2009). In this regard, presentation of critical consciousness is considered as a starting point of the curriculum planning process in Freire’s perspective (Mahmoudi et al., 2014).

Grollious (2009) states that Freire’s perspective comes into direct conflict with traditional views on curriculum planning, the content of which represents what is perceived as the highest expression of western civilisation. Freire also disagrees with the dominant perspective of social efficiency (a direct teaching of knowledge) on curriculum planning (Grollious, 2009). Its main aim is to supply, behavioural objectives, the knowledge and skills believed to be necessary for the effective function of the economy and society (Grollious, 2009). This treats learners as passive receivers of knowledge and assigns to curriculum a technical character separate from social, political or ideological conflicts (Grollious, 2009). South

Africa is trying to meet demanding national needs in a global context, curriculum responsiveness has become crucial to policy, in higher education (Ogude et al., 2005). This raises the question of how higher education curriculum should respond to the new global knowledge economy (Ogude et al., 2005).

Mahmoudi et al. (2014) state that from Freire's perspective, curriculum planning is a fully people-oriented process in which the starting point is people and their expectations and wants. Freire believes that curriculum planning is an ongoing process which can happen through mutual participation between teachers and students (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). This means students are considered as important as the teachers in curriculum planning. Freire has attempted to focus educational planning on this fact that any curriculum planning should be based on existing realities of all classes in the society (Mahmoudi, et al., 2014). In addition, when designers of the curriculum consider western values in their plans, the educational plans will not be equivalent for all social classes, because others will not relate to it (Raghfar, 1980 as cited in Mahmoudi, et al., 2014).

Moore (2015) states that in South Africa the Bantu Act of 1953 put the educational development of black children backward. This is because the government had all the control on the curriculum taught in schools which endorsed apartheid principles (Moore, 2015). According to Freire, curriculum planning, in which control has an upward-down process, is an instrument for imposing dominated culture to the new generation (Mahmoudi et al., 2014). Since Freire curriculum plan derived from learners' experiences and their life realities; educational plans should be developed based on the help of professors, experts, parents, teachers, local groups, needs and realities of social life (Dinarvand and Imani, 2008 as cited in Mahmoudi, et al., 2014).

3.2.4 Banking Model

Freire (1970) states that education is a process of depositing, whereby students are depositories and the educator the depositor. There is no communication between teacher and students, the students receive, fill-in and store everything the teacher delivers (Freire, 1970). The banking concept of education allows the 'oppressors' to control the actions, thoughts, and realities of people (Freire, 1993). Freire used the concept of banking education to explain the framework for a curriculum that existed in schools (Hudalla, 2005). Knowledge is only produced through invention and re-invention, and relations of human beings in the world with each other (Freire, 1970). Knowledge becomes a gift given by teachers because they consider

themselves knowing everything upon those whom they consider as having no knowledge (Freire, 1970). This is similar to colonial authorities who had an interest in educating 'uneducated' Africans for economic interests defined by colonial exploitation (Dunkerley, 2009)

Rugut and Osman (2013) mention that knowledge and understanding are constructed socially, whereby teachers and learners are co-producers of knowledge, and active in the process of learning. The more storing students do from what the teacher tells them, the less they develop critical consciousness (Freire, 1993). The important role that teacher plays in the system places great emphasis on education and development of teachers (Pollard, 2002). Freire makes the emphasis that educators have to take their teaching practice seriously, hence they should study and know what they should do (Rugut and Osman, 2013). The experiences of the students should make a significant contribution to the teaching practices. Educators should learn from learners while in a position of being an educator.

Educators and students should both learn to become competent, think independently and logically to solve problems and be responsible citizens (Rugut and Osman, 2013). The classrooms should be flexible spaces where learners are made to believe that their own contribution is of high importance and can make a positive contribution in solving problems of the world. This can be done through sharing of experiences learners and educators encounter in their surroundings, which can lead to critical discussions. The educator should guide these discussions but allow learners to have independent thoughts.

Pollard (2002) states that according to Freire those who are truly committed to liberation should reject the banking concept totally. Instead, they should adopt the concept of individuals as conscious beings who are able to critically think for themselves (Pollard, 2002). In Africa, Freire's ideas appear more important to the education and development of the continent (Botman, 2016). The differentiated and unequal nature of the higher education sector in South Africa is also reflected in the varying experiences of institutions (Botman, 2016). Some institutions show a great deal of inequality where all students are not accommodated in the system of education. Some universities in South Africa still use Afrikaans as a medium language, whereas it was considered as an oppressive language during apartheid. In most of these institutions lecturers and assessments are conducted in Afrikaans while most students do not use Afrikaans as their home language.

Isah and Omori (2007) state that Freire believed that many teachers employ within their instruction an element of education or method of teaching which is responsible for ignorance within students. According to Freire, the purpose of education is that teachers and learners should “learn to read reality so that they can write their own history” (Isah and Omori, 2007, p.13). By acting and reflecting through dialogue, learners and teachers take control of their lives (Freire, 1993). In contrast to the banking concept of education, Freire regards knowing about reality not as an individual or merely intelligent act (Isah and Omori, 2007). But knowing the world is a collective, practical process involving different kinds of knowledge, consciousness, feeling, desire and will (Isah and Omori, 2007).

Isah and Omori (2007) state that it is through communication that human life can hold meaning. The teacher cannot think for students, nor impose thoughts on them. Based on a systematic, fixed, realistic view of consciousness, it transforms students into receiving objects (Freire, 1993). It attempts to control thinking and action, leads individuals to adjust to the world, and constrains their creative power (Isah and Omori, 2007). The teacher intervenes in order to help the learner reflect on aspects of their cultural, social and gender constructs and help the learner to think critically (Freire, 1993). Freire’s view of the teacher and the learner promotes human relations (Isah and Omori, 2007). The failure by the teachers and the learners to communicate has always resulted in protests and demonstrations in the learning institutions (Isah and Omori, 2007).

3.2.5 Banking Model and Curriculum

The hidden curriculum of the banking model is the main ideological control and dehumanises individuals to become passive objects (Hammer and Kellner, 2009 as cited in Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). The concept of a hidden curriculum refers to the silent or implicit values, behaviours, and norms that occur in the educational setting (Alsubaie, 2015). It can also be defined as an implicit curriculum that articulates and represents attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours, which are transferred or passed down without being aware of (Jerald, 2006 as cited in Alsubaie, 2015).

The hidden curriculum is usually thought to serve the comforts of the power elite the educational system is thought to serve (Eisner, 1994 as cited in Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). In South Africa it is very important that the curriculum provides benefits economic productivity, providing specifically skilled labour for capitalist industries (Nkomo, 2000). Eradicating the hidden curriculum, therefore entails that students and teachers actively contribute in the

decision-making process of the curriculum in a true dialogue setting (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014).

In emancipatory pedagogy contexts, the curriculum should be the study of every day (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Through informal and popular culture and how the historical forms of power that lead to such cultures covers the formation of individual subjectivity and identity (McLaren, 1995; Agnello and Lucey, 2008 as cited in Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Freire believed that the starting point for organising the program content of education or political action should be the concrete situations that reflect the aspirations of the people (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Freire mentions that the world can learn a lot from students and move past the painful arrogance and elitist traditionalism that claims that the teacher knows everything, and the student knows nothing (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). The role of the teacher in an emancipatory pedagogy curriculum is to help students to have a contribution in transforming their world and making positive political and social reforms (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014).

Students may not have full participation in transforming their world and participating in political and social reforms (White, 2000). There are few young people interested in the social and political issues in almost all the countries. “It is known that young people have depressingly low levels of political interest and knowledge” (White, 2000, p.1). Freire’s notion of students playing a dominant role can be critiqued because not all students are making efforts to participate in the world problem-solving because they lack interest. In addition, to the multi-cultural, multi-racial countries having a single culture dominating will cause conflict and create more problems, for example, tribalism. It will be difficult to decide which culture or language will dominate in the implementation of the curriculum.

3.2.6 Freire’s Liberating Education

Hudalla (2005) states that Freire put down several components of a liberating education. One of those components is dialogue. Freire states that dialogue is useful because it allows individuals the opportunity to share their experiences in a supportive and constructive atmosphere (Hudalla, 2005). In this platform, students identify what is oppressive and how they might make an effort to end that oppression (Hudalla, 2005). Freire states that dialogue alone cannot be the solution, but it should be accompanied by critical thinking (Darder, 2014).

Critical thinking involves a process of identifying what is oppressive and how someone is oppressed (Darder, 2014). It also involves acting to fight that is perceived to be oppressive

(Hudalla, 2005). Freire believes that critical thinking is not possible in a banking education framework, but only in a problem-posing educational framework (Hudalla, 2005). In South Africa, the policy and curriculum makers do not consult with students because they are not professionals in policy drafting. The students' participation is however important because they are the contributors of their education too.

Warschauer (1997) argues that the content of education is grounded on the generative themes vital in students' lives. The themes are best dealt with through a problem-solving approach which seeks a link between themes and integrates both reflection and action (Freire, 1994 as cited in Warschauer, 1997). As a result of this process, students develop critical thinking which leads to a fuller perception of social, political, and economic contradictions, which enables them to take action against the oppressive elements of reality (Freire, 1994 as cited in Warschauer, 1997). Students only act through protest before critically engaging, in the process, they develop emotions, this cannot be defined as critical thinking. As an essential part of most social action, responsive emotions enter into protest actions at every stage (Jasper, 1998).

Esteva, Stuchul, and Prakash (2005) mention that Freire wanted that change should start with the people themselves, with their consciousness, which will make them aware. Consciousness would give them the capacity to dissolve the oppression (Esteva et al., 2005). Liberating education through critical thinking and honest dialogue increases critical consciousness and is rational for incorporating service learning in universities (Johnson-Hunter and Risku, 2003). The educational system should also be grounded on matters that are important to all students and their communities (Esteva et al., 2005). Addressing relevant and important issues will encourage students to express their views and inspire them so that their self-driven collective actions change their reality (Freire, 1993).

3.3 Critical Consciousness Analysis

In framing this study, Freire's critical consciousness brings into perspective how students fight against the colonial structures and system at the universities. Students have identified the oppression of black African students, especially those who are faced with difficulties in adapting to the university environment due to the existing colonial system. Students have developed a movement to decolonise the university by engaging with the management and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). According to Freire, this is the development of critical consciousness amongst students.

The great sense of inequality in higher education institutions has caused a great sense of isolation in many students especially black African students. This makes them feel excluded from the university. What causes this, is the inadequacy of curriculum planning to suits their social and educational needs. Students feel a sense of exclusion from the university system because they feel the need to fit into a system that has already been created by the colonial system. The protest for decolonising higher education was an initiative the students began so that they can be recognised/heard by the higher education authorities.

Critical consciousness put into perspective the actions of students to go on protest and demand decolonised higher education. They have developed a concept #FeesMustFall which has raised critical issues that are rooted in the operations of the university. Students believe the university system is not in accordance with their day to day needs. Mainly the concepts, theories, and thinkers who are included in the curriculum, do not help them to go back and develop the societies they are come from. Students believe that the curriculum is too westernised. The students want to engage the universities to address these issues which have not changed the conditions of the past that undermine black African people.

Students obtain knowledge at the universities; however, their societies do not benefit from this knowledge production. Students have to take an active role in changing this notion so that they can be able to contribute to their societies positively. They become even more distant and alienated away from their own societies resulting in their communities not benefiting from the education they have obtained. Most society's students come from, face different socio-economic issues like poverty, unemployment, and others. Having no capacity to contribute to resolving these issues is a problem to students.

The aim of transforming/decolonising higher education according to students is the reviewing of the curriculum and policies. According to students, the curriculum was planned in order to accommodate the westernised ideologies and reject the African perspectives. That is the reason why students question the curriculum structure, on how it will benefit them, especially as black South African students. This goes beyond the curriculum, it also touches the environment, the building structures and the admission in South African universities.

Looking at the method of teaching and learning, student raises a point that it is not Afrocentric, and it does not allow them to be critical thinkers. Students take it into consideration that in order for the education system to function properly, it should be able to challenge their minds so that they can be active and not passive individuals. With the

dominating number of white academics, students are concerned with the lack of black African academics in the institutions, who will favour the majority of the student population. Students feel that there will be a more sense of understanding between lecturers and students if they are both from the same race, culture, and background.

The curriculum is never run-by students or reviewed by them together with the government and the university policy decision-makers. That is the reason why students think that more could be done in terms of what is being taught into the curriculum. Students feel like there is room to change the curriculum to what will speak to their own lives and situations. The important stakeholders should come on board and make a review of the curriculum which will accommodate students from all background.

Critical consciousness will assist in analysing the research data collected. It will explain students' ideas concerning the notion of 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education. It will explain how students and academics could come into terms by agreeing on a curriculum that is fit for all students. Having these dialogues could create consensus and give resolutions between the different stakeholders, including universities policy-makers and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

3.4 Critical Consciousness Criticism

Harmon (1975) states that critical consciousness implies a questioning of the relationships between students and the structured world which in this case are the educational institutions. This is because creating slogans such as #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall and not applying critical consciousness is the only way for students to express their struggles. Not all societies achieve the level of critical consciousness or do all members of a society achieve it concurrently (Harmon, 1975). Students in South Africa have not come up with any proposal on how to decolonise the curriculum, in addition, they have different views on what decolonisation of curriculum means. Students' arguments can be perceived as imaginary, easily broken, and emotional rather than dialogue, they also show little interest in scientific investigation (Harmon, 1975). Students will use terms without full understanding and deeper research on the arguments they are coming up with during the protests.

Ohliger (1995) mentions that Freire produces only generalisations when he writes about human beings. The concept of oppression is an important concept in Freire's social philosophy, it is unfortunate that he does not give a more adequate treatment of how to deal with oppression (Ohliger, 1995). Freire's most consciousness-raising programs have not

achieved expected social changes (Ohliger, 1995). In addition, Freire's work does not include the aspect of gender, race, and class, this is, therefore, open for criticism. South Africa has a diverse population. The process of applying Freire's concept of critical consciousness would be difficult. South Africa also need contemporary concepts/theories to explain the issues that exist in higher educational institutions. The issues of rape, suicide need to be addressed, and Freire does not touch on these issues.

3.5 Black Consciousness

Tafira (2013) states that black consciousness is a historical idea rooted in the colonial encounter between Africans and colonisers. Black consciousness in South Africa was mostly inspired by the Ethiopian religious movements, African religious-political thought and prophecy, the writings of Negritude proponents like Leopold Senghor and Aime Cesaire, and anti-colonial literature by Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon among them (Tafira, 2013). During apartheid in South Africa, it developed in the mid-1960s to fill the political space after the banning of the PAC (Pan Africanist Congress of Azania) and ANC (African National Congress) whereby their leaders had been imprisoned, sentenced to long jail terms while others went underground and into exile (Tafira, 2013).

Gqola (2001) states that the black consciousness movement was established by black university students, who identified themselves as being black African people first and secondly as students. They viewed themselves as being members of the black oppressed community before they were students (Gqola, 2001). Black consciousness began to grow with black students who were the most educated of the oppressed class (Gqola, 2001). The students were part of NUSAS (National Union of South African Students) which contained white critics of white supremacy in the country during apartheid (Tafira, 2013). They were the first to realise the need to fill the political space in the black society which had risen in 1960 (Tafira, 2013). Steve Biko was one of those students (Gqola, 2001). A movement was formed by the black students at Natal University (now University of KwaZulu-Natal) and black consciousness movement was born (Gqola, 2001).

Since its inception in South Africa during the 1960s, black consciousness was a programme for cultural and psychological emancipation from white hegemony (Tafira, 2013). It was adopting a black philosophy of pride, representing ideas of Negritude and Christian liberation theology (Fetton, 1986). Black consciousness was a reply to a white consciousness that

wanted to fit and control the consciousness and the freedom of black individuals in all spheres of life, like culture, religion, and education (Fatton, 1986).

Nengwekhulu (1976, p.2) states that black consciousness is "an attitude of mind, a way of life whose basic tenet is that the blacks should reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of birth and reduce his basic human dignity". The perception of black consciousness, therefore, implies a responsiveness and self-importance in the blackness by black individuals and indicates that black individuals should and appreciate their value as human beings (Nengwekhulu, 1976).

Biko (2002) argues that the values of black consciousness support group pride and willpower by black individuals in South Africa to rise together from oppression and exploitation. It forces black individuals to realise themselves as complete human beings, complete and total in themselves, and not as extensions of anyone (Biko, 2002). Biko emphasises that black consciousness seeks to produce the end of oppression, and for black people do not regard themselves as additions to white society (Biko, 2002). In this case, black students should not feel excluded by the system, they should consider themselves as important contributors to the educational system and not additions. Contributors are not forced to participate in a programme that does not speak to their lives, they should feel as being part of the system. The curriculum should, therefore, be inclusive to all students and not be too westernised excluding black students.

Moodley (1991) as cited in Dolamo (2017) concurs that black consciousness helped the black masses to realise internalised colonial mentality and it set the ground for the self-confident challenge to the apartheid state. This emerged because blacks were portrayed as naturally inferior, accustomed to de-humanise living, sexually promiscuous, intellectually limited, and likely to be violent (Dolamo, 2017). Blackness in any society symbolises evil, demise, chaos, corruption, and uncleanness, in contrast to whiteness which equalled order, wealth, purity, goodness, cleanliness and epitome of beauty (Dolamo, 2017). Black students in universities may be perceived as individuals who seek to go after 'whiteness' and reject their 'blackness' because it symbolises nothing good, and that creates the worst image of black people because they lack identity (Dolamo, 2017).

Pityana (2008, p.8) states that the 'pathological fear' that absorbed the black community had to be dealt with on the psychological level even before an attempt could be made at physically, removing the bonds of oppression, for "the most potent weapon of the oppressor

is the mind of the oppressed”. The fear had undermined the dignity of black people and contradicted their humanity (Pityana, 2008). In post-apartheid, people of South Africa want to continue increasing criticism and pressure to these issues. So that when the period of negotiations comes, they are there to be talked to (Pityana, 2008).

Gqola (2001) mentions that by adopting the philosophy of black consciousness, black people of South Africa have come to see themselves as being a proud and powerful people. Their duty is to liberate, not only themselves but the entire neo-colonial continent of Africa (Gqola, 2001). The black consciousness movement is deep-rooted in an idea of action (Gqola, 2001). This has developed into the central principles of a broad movement implementing echoes of dynamic black organisations such as ANC, PAC, and AZAPO (Azanian People's Organisation), which were resolute to change and fight the system of apartheid (Gqola, 2001).

Black consciousness as a philosophy that was invented by young people who stood in an understanding of the value of education (Dolamo, 2017). Looking at education without going into the complications and details of what is meant by ‘de-colonial education’. One would like to identify components of such a curriculum as articulated by black consciousness over the last four decades (Dolamo, 2017). Black consciousness makes an emphasis that the most important notion, is that decolonised curriculum should be crafted so that it could be offered from primary school to tertiary level (Dolamo, 2017). Higher education institutions should not be the only focus, but the roots of education which is basic education should be given attention. Learners in basic education should get used to the idea of decolonised curriculum which will benefit their development and attaining skills.

Workshops concerning black consciousness held during school holidays in the early 1970s, in Bantu schools were aimed at empowering young people to know their history and their purpose in life (Dolamo, 2017). It was also shaping young people’s own destiny, without referring to the curriculum they were taught in schools (Dolamo, 2017). In order for such a curriculum to be crafted, black Africans should write the study material themselves and discard those written about them by others (Dolamo, 2017). Initially, the curriculum was supposed to be a curriculum that would address the needs and aspirations of black African people (Dolamo, 2017). Black African people have been excluded as active participants in the educational system. What they experience in their lives is not well narrated in the

curriculum in educational institutions. They have been narrated by those who do not fully undergo what as black South Africans undergo.

In the post-apartheid South Africa, there is an inadequacy of applying what the black consciousness movement has been practicing and proposing to do. The educational structures have changes that took place in post-apartheid. Multi-racial schools exist and may require a different approach from what black consciousness has proposed. The segregation during apartheid in the education system is no longer accepted by the South African democratic government. Some elements may be missing when the propositions of black consciousness are applied, for example accommodating racial differences in multiracial schools.

Another critique is that applying decolonised curriculum from primary school to tertiary level is not feasible. This is because South Africa have private and public educational institutions comprising a multi-cultural and multi-racial population. The only schools with black population are Bantu schools based in rural areas and townships. The question would be, do we apply decolonised curriculum in Bantu schools only? Will the multi-racial schools like model-C and private school agree to decolonise curriculum since most of them are funded by private sponsors. This would require a robust policy making-decision to accommodate the rainbow nation in democratic South Africa.

3.5.1 Black Consciousness and Education

Snail (2008) states that the South African concept of black consciousness contributed new methods in the sense that the founders of that idea in South Africa tried to fuse theory and action simultaneously. This came up from the material conditions of black people in South Africa (Snail, 2008). Black Power was influencing the situation in South Africa during apartheid (Snail, 2008). Black Power was an American movement which advocated black group consciousness and black empowerment through total independence from white societies and white dominated institutions in the 1960s and 1970s (Robinson, 2012). Underground literature regarding Black Power in America was circulated, particularly amongst black students, black consciousness movement and black intellectuals in South Africa in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Snail, 2008). The concept of black consciousness in South Africa and its growth amongst the students and the intellectuals was a valid pointer, in that it showed an important break-down in the socialisation progression (Snail, 2008).

Snail (2008) states that the black student organisation, SASO (South African Students' Organisation), which is related to black consciousness recognised that what is needed is not

the integration of blacks into an already customary set of norms drawn up and motivated by white society but, the creation of a new type of society representing new values (Snail, 2008). Black consciousness strongly opposed white liberals' suggestion of integration which they saw as assimilation; Biko rejected integration and called for separation, as this was practically the only means to achieve freedom (Tafiri, 2013). “We blacks should respond in our own way, on our own terms, in a way which fits our characters and identity” (Biko, 2002, p.4).

Assimilation or integrating will only lead black people to lose their identity and not find the way out of being oppressed (Biko, 2002). Black people would still be in an uncomfortable space if they were to be integrated with a culture that exists and forced on them (Biko, 2002). This would mean black people do not have their own history that they can rely on or identify with (Biko, 2002). Assimilation would mean destroying history of South African black people (Biko, 2002). In according to black consciousness that is the element of oppression by the white people. In every part of the black-white relationship, in the past and at present there is a continuous trend by whites to portray an inferior status to what black is (Biko, 2002).

Toure and Hamilton (2002) argue that this is also a call to reject racist institutions and values of this society. The important idea of Black Power is, “before a group can enter open society, it should first close its ranks” (Toure and Hamilton, 2002, p.245). It calls for black people to create a tie; to build a sense of community; to define their own goals; lead and run their own organisations, which enables them to form the revolutionary idea and do things for themselves, and “help create in the community an aroused and continuous black consciousness that will provide the basis for political strength” (Toure and Hamilton 2002, p.239).

Tafiri (2013) mentions that black people should lead and run their own organisations. Only black people can practice the revolutionary idea and black people are able to do things for themselves (Tafiri, 2013). Black people are fighting to be defeated by the white people. Black people should not just give in to the hardship of life, but they should have hope and develop unity in order to look at their problems and build humanity (Biko, 2002). This call for black people not to conform to the standard of their oppressors but to build on to their standards through their own life experiences and their identities.

Biko (2002) states that black children were taught in schools, under the colonial system to despise their way of upbringing at home and to question values and customs dominant in their society. Biko (2002) argues that the purpose of white control is to make blacks obedient,

especially through the education system. This comes out from his own childhood experiences (Biko, 2002). “When you get at school, for instance, your school is not the same as the white school, and the conclusion you reach is that the education you get there, cannot be the same as what the white kids get at school” (Biko, 2002, p.7). Education in white schools is therefore regarded as better compared to the one in Bantu schools.

Badat (1999) states that the black consciousness movement disallowed racist education and the idea that universities are unbiased bodies in the process of obtaining knowledge. SASO in the 1970s wanted to recover black pride in African culture and knowledge systems to stimulate pride in black identity and black origins (Badat, 1999). As black consciousness became more radical during apartheid, it developed the presence of an alternative society in the making (Badat, 1999). The fact that black students did not relate to the educational system that was taught, they felt unimportant and excluded from the system (Badat, 1999). In South African universities, post-apartheid students argued that knowledge taught and produced is at the heart of their experience of alienation (Fataar, 2018).

3.5.2 Language

Tshotsho (2013) mentions that post-apartheid Afrikaans and English were used as official languages all over South Africa. Only students whose mother tongue was English or Afrikaans were at a benefit of making it in the education system. The majority of South Africans speak, read and write in an African language as a home language (Tshotsho, 2013). Practically speaking, English and Afrikaans still have a higher status than other languages in South Africa (Tshotsho, 2013). The value attached to these languages even by blacks themselves undermines the survival of African languages when it comes to communication (Tshotsho, 2013).

Penfold (2013) argues that the question of a linguistic contradiction specific to black consciousness has not received much detailed criticism. Biko challenged apartheid by invoking a theory of language like that which constituted a founding principle of the apartheid state (Penfold, 2013). In 1976, the government decided that black students would receive half their education through the language of Afrikaans (Weber, 2008). Students at black schools were not happy to be taught through the medium of a language they considered as the “language of the oppressor” (Weber, 2008, p.78). They saw this as another way of trying to control them. Students had been influenced by individuals like Biko, who told them

they should love themselves love their own language and culture as black people (Weber, 2008).

Maserumile (2015) states that reality is one in which language policy is openly used to limit the number of black students at historically white universities. Black students should contend with situations whereby white students enjoy privileged status under the pretext of dual language instruction to perpetuate the falsehood of separate but equal (Maserumile, 2015). Black students encounter English and Afrikaans in educational systems, especially higher education. Majority of the black students who enter universities come from rural or township schools where English or Afrikaans is not used as a medium language, in addition, this is not their mother tongue.

The calls of black students depict disaster to sufficiently place the imaginary and strategic policy orientations of the post-apartheid change in Biko's black consciousness thinking especially through language (Maserumile, 2015). If black pride is not achieved in post-apartheid South Africa, Biko's viewpoint remains relevant (Maserumile, 2015). Its superiority continues to connect generations (Maserumile, 2015). More work needs to be done in addressing the failure of transforming the language issues in the South African educational system.

Rass (2016) states that post-apartheid the issue of multiculturalism has not been addressed by the educational system. Multi-culturalism is an approach to teaching and learning centred on democratic values and beliefs and that supports cultural diversity within culturally diverse societies (Rass, 2016). In South Africa there are eleven official languages, the biggest challenge would be to integrate all these languages when it comes to decolonisation of the curriculum. This might lead to other official languages being dominant to the other which will again lead to other challenges. Multiculturalism in the decolonisation of the curriculum/education might not be feasible. The concept of diversity in South African universities can also be a basis of contradiction, inequality and exclusion, and challenge the idea of a cohesive academic community (Kamsteeg, 2016).

3.6 Black Consciousness Analysis

Analysing and framing this study using Steve Biko's concept of black consciousness, shows that black students are aware of the oppression and exploitation in universities towards them. The exclusion of black students and the domination of western ideologies in universities does not consider black students as active participants. Students feel undermined and powerless to

voice out the struggles they encounter due to the surroundings which do not accommodate their needs.

The recent violent protests by students to decolonise the curriculum in higher education have been a sign of rising in solidarity from the oppression that has been faced by black students. The students have become emancipated by acknowledging themselves as important in contributing to the curriculum planning and higher education system. With the knowledge produced and taught in higher education, they feel inferior academically, which leads to the high rates of failure amongst black students. The failure rates may be due to the failure of applying the education skills being taught in their real-life situations. One should diagnose a problem to get a solution, therefore the cause of failure should be identified and treated.

Black South African students feel that in their country they ought to identify with the education that is imposed on them. This is because they take pride and confidence in blackness and feel it should be acknowledged in higher education through the curriculum. Black students want to make it clear that being black is not a sign of being incomplete and intellectual incapable. The students have acted against white domination in higher education by rejecting the system used to eliminate them from the core of higher education which is the curriculum. Black students have risen from all parts of South Africa in solidarity to fight this form of oppression.

Hugo (1998) states that the transformation of the post-apartheid South Africa left institutions of higher learning free from critical scrutiny. The previous South African black university students were not as vocal as the students who entered the universities from the year 2015. According to the black consciousness concept, the current university students have come to a realisation of themselves as capable agents in the society who can contribute positively towards the emancipation of a black person (Biko, 2002). This means students do not consider themselves as added extras to the number of enrolments but as active agents in changing the system.

Critical consciousness and black consciousness concepts make an emphasis on individuals being assertive on making the change that will contribute into making them realise their full potential. These concepts make it clear that the oppressed should fight against the oppression by recognising the factors that oppress them and address them. Paulo Freire and Steve Biko made an emphasis that to be liberated from oppression individuals should be aware of the situations that happen around them. The commonality between these two concepts is that

those who are living under oppression should address these issues through dialogue and action. The concepts also take into consideration that it is the unity amongst the oppressed that will lead to liberation.

3.7 Black Consciousness Criticism

Majavu (2013) states that it is not enough to keep underlining the legacy of racism without proposing substitute socio-economic institutions that aim to fight racism in all its expression. Instead of political slogans, political and economic programmes that speak to the post-apartheid cultural and material conditions, it should be developed (Majavu, 2013). While black consciousness has largely remained an intellectual philosophy, many black South Africans place material consumption at the centre of their idea of postcolonial citizenship in the democratic country (Majavu, 2013). This is because mass consumer culture provides some black South Africans with a tangible strategy to counter the legacies of the apartheid system (Majavu, 2013). Instead of engaging with post-apartheid political realities, political commissars, who view their primary task as one of upholding black consciousness ideals, they should act on implementing these doctrines (Majavu, 2013).

In addition to struggling against negative social realities, 21st-century black consciousness should work towards emerging a set of proposals for post-apartheid societal institutions (Majavu, 2013). Criticising widespread material consumption in post-apartheid South Africa without conceptualising and applying liberatory political programmes that make a positive difference in people's lives is not a worthy political strategy (Majavu, 2013). Democratic South Africa should create a space where individuals from different backgrounds are conscious of their position in society. This is to build a nation accommodative to the diversity of cultural practice and racial differences.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the concept of critical consciousness which was developed by Paulo Freire in his work, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Under Freire, the concept of student and critical consciousness, education and critical consciousness and curriculum and critical consciousness have been discussed. In addition to Freire's concept, the banking model has been discussed looking more into the curriculum and liberatory education. The concept of black consciousness by Steve Biko has also been used to analyse the research study and the actions taken by the university students, looking more specifically into black consciousness perception of education and language. The alignment of the two concepts by Freire and Biko

to the research problem has been discussed. Both these concepts/models have also been criticised by several writers, which is included in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology and the research design that was used in this study. This is followed by a discussion on sampling, a description of the participants, data collection and data analysis. Qualitative data is often collected using interviews, focus groups and field notes or reviewing personal documents or articles related to the issue in question (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Ethical consideration, validity and rigour and limitations of the study are described. The chapter concludes with a detailed discussion on possible bias in the study.

4.2 Research Design

Qualitative exploratory design was used in this research study (Townsend and de la Rey, 2011). The qualitative research methodology can be defined as a “research method which helps to uncover how and why individuals behave and think in certain ways, including their experiences and attitudes” (Neuman 2011, p.102). It is mostly applied to examine issues relating to the ways in which individuals organise, relate to and interact with their societies. A qualitative approach is a systematic subjective approach used to look into life experiences and situations and give them meaning (Burns and Grove, 2003).

Nkwi, Nyamongo, and Ryan (2001) mention that qualitative research is using a methodology which does not include ordinal or statistical values; it relies on verbal data; hence it was suitable for this study. In addition, it allows the researcher to understand that participants’ ideas, perceptions, actions, feelings, and experiences are a result of socially constructed meanings and experiences. It is not their independent meanings and experiences which they have created (Nkwi et al., 2001). Qualitative research was, therefore, suitable for this study because it aimed to understand the influence of students’ protests or calls to decolonise curriculum in higher education and the meaning behind their actions.

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) state that qualitative methodology takes seriously that the lives and surroundings of humans are mostly based on culture, language, social interactions, and experiences. The researcher should build a good relationship and trust with the participants to obtain meaningful results using qualitative and interpretive research methods (Terre Blanche et al., 2004). This enables the researcher to be able to closely observe the research participants (Terre Blanche et al., 2004).

Qualitative methods are then suitable because the study is focused on gathering information by asking questions about perceptions, behaviours, and attitudes of students from different political organisations (Mgqwashu, 2016). In this regard, the realities surrounding their perceptions on decolonising the curriculum with a focus in universities/higher education institutions. Using this method researchers should be able to empathise with the research participants (Mgqwashu, 2016). They need to do this to provide accurate second-hand participant accounts and experiences (Mgqwashu, 2016). These methods also allow the studying of influential realities created by subjective perceptions and basic codes of social meaning and expression (Mgqwashu, 2016).

The research methods used, have permitted the in-depth look of the University of KwaZulu-Natal students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum.' This is based on their understandings, perceptions, and experiences and therefore influencing their engagements with the concept. The organisation, collection, and interpretation of the data will help in finding initial motives behind student protests on 'decolonising the curriculum' in higher education. The input of student political organisations will also be of great significance. The data extracted can contribute to the ongoing discussions in universities and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for policy-making decisions, implementation, and university transformation.

4.3 Sampling

This study used purposive sampling, which is non-probability. It relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting participants that are to be studied (Miles and Gilbert, 2009). In purposive sampling, the sample is approached having a prior purpose in mind (Alvi, 2016). The criteria of participants who are going to be included in the study are defined before. So that it does not include everyone who is available, rather those who meet the defined criteria (Alvi, 2016). Purposive sampling is a useful and appropriate method of selecting a sample, and the only method available in certain cases (Showkat and Parveen, 2017).

4.3.1 Purposive and Snowball Sampling

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2005) state that in purposive sampling the participants are chosen based on the judgement of the researcher. In this study, the researcher used her knowledge of where to find different student political organisations that participated in the #FeesMustFall protest calling for decolonisation of education. This was done by

contacting the secretaries and chairpersons of relevant student organisations. Getting their contacts was through the Student Representative Council (SRC). When the contact details were obtained, the student leaders from the organisation and participants of different organisations referred the researcher to members/students who participated in the 2015/2016 #FeesMustFall protest. Since there was also a movement consisting of students called 'movement' some political organisations referred me to those individuals who were part of that movement, who are still registered students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

The participants were carefully chosen because they had characteristics which allowed the thorough analysis and consideration of the central themes of the study. For example, the researcher made sure that the participants selected had characteristics which were fitting to the criteria, such as membership in a student political organisation and students who participated during the #FeesMustFall protest, studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

Snowball sampling contains approaching either a single participant or a group of participants being investigated and inquiring if the participant could refer the researcher to individuals with similar life experiences (De Vos et al., 2005). The small number of members the researcher was able to get through purposive sampling, gave the researcher enough contacts to get other participants who had similar experiences. The snowball sampling was therefore used until an adequate number of participants was attained.

4.4 Participants

This study consisted of 15 participants. There were 7 undergraduate final year students and 8 postgraduate students from different student political organisations at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. Participants were from the College of Humanities, Agriculture, Engineering and Science, and Law and Management College. The reason being, students from the political organisations were not only from one College, but a mixture of students from different Colleges and they were willing and suitable participants to take part in the research study.

There was a certain number of participants in each student political organisation on campus. From the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC) there were 5 participants, from Young Communist League (YCL) there were 2, from the South African Democratic Students Movement (SADESMO) and South African Student Congress (SASCO) it was one

for each, lastly from the Fees Must Fall movement (non-political) there were 6 participants, which will be clearly identified and described as #FMF. There were two chairpersons, one from the EFFSC and one from SASCO as representatives of their organisations (See table 1). Choosing these students as participants' lies on their leading and participation in #FeesMustFall and protest to decolonise higher education in 2015 and 2016. There was no requirement or restriction on the participants' area of origin, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, ethnic group, religion, age, gender, and race. The only restrictions in the selection of the study sample were political affiliations and participation in the #FeesMustFall protest.

Table 1.

No. of participants	Organisation/Party	Level of study	Position
1	#FMF	Undergrad	Member
2	#FMF	Post-grad	Member
3	#FMF	Postgrad	Member
4	#FMF	Post-grad	Member
5	#FMF	Post-grad	Member
6	#FMF	Post-grad	Member
7	Party A	Undergrad	Member
8	Party A	Post-grad	Member
9	Party A	Undergrad	Member
10	Party A	Undergrad	Member
11	Party A	Undergrad	Representative
12	Party B	Undergrad	Member
13	Party C	Post-grad	Member
14	Party C	Post-grad	Member
15	Party E	Undergrad	Representative

4.5 Data Collection

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews are used when the researcher wants to investigate and deeply understand the topic (Miles and Gilbert, 2009). Since the study is based on the students' insight, understanding, and experiences of decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education, this was an appropriate method. Conducting interviews using semi-structured interviews technique specifically, is a powerful and useful way of helping people to explain, unpack and make things clear that are or have been kept hidden (Gray, 2004).

The most effective method of collecting data for this study was using semi-structured interviews. The interviewer's role in this instance involved asking questions and making sure that the interview covered all the features of the phenomena which are being studied. The interviewer also asked the participants for further clarification in their responses. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews have allowed for an open discussion on decolonising curriculum in higher education between the students and the interviewer. Interviews become essential because they allow the researcher to interrelate with the participants on a closer level so to understand how they think and feel (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

Semi-structured interviews do have some identifiable disadvantages. They can take a longer time than expected for both the participant and interviewer. Participants can sometimes wish to make elaboration to their responses, reflect and refer to events they have seen, heard or came across. Good interviewing skills by the interviewer reduce the feeling of a long and daunting task, instead, they create an enjoyable conversation (Legard, Keegan and Ward 2003).

The interviews were conducted in isiZulu and English. Participants who wished to reply in IsiZulu did so. However, during the transcription, the responses were translated to English. The interviews took 20-60 minutes. A tape recorder was used (with the consent from the participants) and notes were taken during the interviews. The interview schedule was written in isiZulu and English. Participants who responded in isiZulu, their responses were translated to English. Transcribing was done on the paper using a pen while listening to the interviews on the tape recorder.

4.5.1 Data Collection Instruments

An interview schedule has been attached as Appendix 2 there were two different interview schedules, one for students and the other for student political organisations (Appendix 3). Both interview schedules contain open-ended questions drafted by the researcher and supervisor, drawing wisely by considering the research topic, the research aims and

objectives, and the literature review available. The questions were drafted to allow the students to give an elaboration in their explanation of their experiences, perceptions, and observations based on the topic. The Informed Consent Letter is attached as Appendix 4.

In addition, semi-structured interviews give the researcher the chance to analyse how the participants express themselves and their body language while giving their responses. Babbie and Mouton (2001) call this process the collection of non-observable data. Research findings are not only based on the responses from participants. The participants' voice tone, facial expressions/reactions, and body language could reveal equally important information. The participants' body language, for instance, could notify the researcher that the research participants' is not sure, uninformed or not keen to respond to certain questions (Mouton, 2001). The researcher would be alerted when to ask the participant further, when to clarify the question and when to withdraw the questioning (Mouton, 2001).

The research interview schedules in this study consist of open-ended questions. The researcher could sometimes stray or add questions that were not originally in the research schedule. This is because there were semi-structured interviews which are flexible. The questions included in the interview schedule were based on the research participants' dialogue with the researcher. The researcher asked the participants follow-up questions to gain clarity at times and to acquire in-depth data. This is because the participants express unexpected themes which may come to the researcher's attention. During the interview process, the researcher was conscious of the student's responses and wanted more elaboration on the information and stimulating points that popped up from the students' responses during the interview processes.

4.5.2 Recording and Transcription

The data collected in this study was recorded and then transcribed. Data transcription is a method where recorded interviews from the research participants are documented in a written form (Hancock, 1998). Each interview was transcribed manually, there was no use of computer software like NVIVO or a professional transcriber to help with transcribing data. For the researcher to transcribe data, was advantageous because the researcher got the opportunity to absorb a lot from the research. To some extent vagueness that came up in the interviews during the transcription of data was simply resolved by pressing the replay button on the recorder.

While transcribing, the main goal was to capture the participants' responses and also depict their feelings towards the questions posed. The main aim of the study was to gain the students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education. Observing students' approaches and opinions towards the topic of decolonising the curriculum during the interviews were important in the transcription process. To capture the students' voice tone, feelings, facial expressions, and meanings. The data was transcribed in a way that highlighted punctuation, the students' pauses, silence during or in the middle of responding, laughs and the sounds they made during the interviews, for example, Uhm, Ahh, Yahh, etc. This type of transcription is referred to as verbatim transcription.

On average the interviews took 20-60 minutes and the transcription process took approximately 2 or 3 hours per individual interview. Manually transcribing was also time-consuming as the researcher had to ensure that the participants were not misrepresented in their responses. Additionally, there were participants who expressed themselves in isiZulu, the researcher translated their responses to English. There are also those who mixed isiZulu and English, data was also translated into English. The main challenge experienced in the data transcription process was that some recordings have interrupting sounds since the interviews were recorded in spaces like the SRC offices, where there were knocks on the doors or loud voices in their corridors. Repeating the recordings during transcription, however, made it possible to get every word in the recording.

4.6 Data Analysis

Thematic content analysis was used in this study. This data analysis method is used for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns/themes within the data collected (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It offers an accessible and theoretically-flexible approach to analysing qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Patterns and meanings from the students' responses which are essential for the study were noted. The analysis has been used to analyse the students' understandings and experiences by exploring the ways broader social and cultural context shape understanding. The themes in thematic analysis can either be created from the theory or lies in participant interviews which allows more flexibility in the research process. The themes occur from the data collected.

4.7 Ethical Consideration

It is vital to contain the integrity of the participants. All the participants were interviewed in a private space and given the chance to articulate every expression themselves in a manner they

felt comfortable. The opinions, attitudes, and experiences shared by the participants were not confronted or debated. Instead, all responses were welcomed as an important contribution to the research findings. Additionally, in this research study confidentiality and anonymity were provided. Confidentiality and anonymity ensure that the participant's identity and the information are not revealed to the public. For example, the participants' names, surnames, student numbers, and physical addresses have not been included in the transcriptions, discussion, and the results of the research study. As a result, participants were expressing themselves freely during interviews.

During data generation, anonymity and confidentiality were being applied to all participants equally. Interviews were carried on voluntarily and participants were allowed to withdraw during the study and were not required to continue. A consent form was given to all participants before the interviews, which had information about the research process, anonymity, and confidentiality. To sustain privacy and anonymity, pseudonyms were created, therefore, details revealing the identity of participants will not be published in the findings. The ethical clearance form was sent to the University of KwaZulu-Natal ethics committee to give permission to conduct the study within the university.

Participants were guaranteed that ethical considerations such as confidentiality would be maintained, in the informed consent. Participants signed the consent letter which properly gave them details of the study. It explained what was anticipated from them as contributors/participants, all the terms and conditions of taking part and the contact details of all relevant parties including the researcher, supervisor and research office. The informed consent letters were read together with the researcher before being signed by the participants so that every detail is clear. It was made clear to the participants that agreeing to take part in the study was completely voluntary and that refusing to participate or withdrawing from an interview in progress would not affect them negatively.

4.8 Trustworthiness and Credibility

Credibility maybe can be carried out when we talk of trustworthiness (Babbie and Mouton, 2011). The researcher was able to make use of three strategies to guarantee trustworthy and credibility was upheld (Babbie and Mouton, 2011). Firstly, the researcher did acknowledge biases which may be personal and have an impact on the interpretation and findings of the research study as she was partaking in the 2015/2016 #FeesMustFall protest (Babbie and Mouton, 2011). Secondly, the researcher made sure that all the data was recorded and stored

for future referral, making sure that interpretations of the data were constant and clear (Noble and Smith, 2015). Finally, the final thesis will be made available to the public so that future researchers are able to study the research findings of this research field (Babbie and Mouton, 2011).

4.9 Limitations

The limitation of the study may lie in time-consuming due to the collection and analysing of data of this research study. Students who were approached to participate in this study would sometimes not be available due to their other commitments which can be academic or personal. It was understandable to have these reports from students because the data was collected towards the end of the semester, which is a critical time to focus on the incoming examinations.

Regarding, the challenges experienced in this research study, the interviews were conducted during the June examination. Another challenge was that several students from different student political organisations had completed their degrees in 2017. These are students who were second/third year/ postgraduates during the 2015/2016 #FeesMustFall protest. The challenges reduced the sample size. Initially, 20 participants were to be interviewed, 5 students in each of the 4 students' political organisation. Except for a reduced sample, there are no negative impacts on the findings. The sample size was not reduced to the point that the data had to be collected again and the sample was still appropriate for the type of methodology used and the data were adequate.

Lastly, it may also be difficult to generalise the findings to students who are in TVET colleges, Universities of Technology and other Universities in South Africa. As a consequence, the research findings in this study are not going to be representative or generalisable to a larger context or population of other higher education institutions. In fact, the findings within this study may be ascending from situations sole to the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus where the data was collected. However, research findings from this study are looking forward to contributing profound insights on the topic of decolonising curriculum and supplement to the already existing literature on this research topic.

4.10 Possible Bias

The study takes into consideration the researcher's insight, understanding, and experiences with the notion of decolonising curriculum in higher education may present a potential bias. The researcher's perception of decolonising of the curriculum in higher education may have had an unintended influence on understanding and interpreting the primary and secondary research data. Yet, as a student who was there during the #FeesMustFall protest during 2015 and 2016, it may also have had a positive impact on gathering meaningful responses. This is because I may have been able to easily understand and relate to the perceptions and responses of participants. Additionally, being able to have an interview with someone who may have had similar experiences, may have nurtured an advantageous setting which encouraged participants to honestly and freely express themselves. On the other hand, participants may have felt uncomfortable or awkward talking about issues as some of them were arrested and went through an emotional pain during the #FeesMustFall protest of 2015/2016.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has explained all the methods and processes that were used for data collection and analysis of data in the research study. The methods and methodologies used in this chapter were chosen based on obtaining in-depth data on decolonising the curriculum in higher education from the students' insight and understanding. The researcher used numerous qualitative methods and data collection instruments to report precise explanations of the students' insights and understandings of decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education. The key findings and discussion are in more details in the next chapter, which is chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE: KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the main findings from the data collected. The findings of this study are limited to the students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. This chapter will deliberate on how students and student political organisations understand the concept of decolonising the curriculum in higher education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. The chapter explores students and student political organisations interpretation of decolonising the curriculum. It also examines their thoughts on finding ways to implement the policies, the challenges of implementing a decolonised curriculum and furthering discussions on this matter. The data in this chapter is linked to key themes and their relations to both the literature review and the theoretical framework chapter. Key themes in this chapter were identified by grouping the common ideas rising from the literature review, theoretical framework, student political organisations and the students' responses.

5.2 Concept/Notion of 'Decolonisation of the Curriculum'

5.2.1 Student Members Response

Party A

When Party A students were asked about their thoughts of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum', 2 out of 4 mentioned that it means changing the content so that South African black students have a sense of belonging. They indicated that the current content is filled with western perspectives, which is the reason they do not see students as part of the process of university transformation, and this results in black South African students failing to further their studies to postgraduate.

X2: *"Umh, from my understanding, is that it means changing the way we are, we are, changing the content of teaching and learning, uhm, into a more accommodating way for indigenous, uhm, uhm, people of that certain country."*

X3: *"Ah okay, from my understanding basically how, ah, academics or any other researcher's view it is that when you are decolonising a curriculum in the context of Africa's continent, you are basically uhm applying what is relevant to Africans"*

X4: *“from my view, decolonisation of the curriculum or education is to be independent of beliefs, values and habits of the country its simple like that so when it comes to education it’s no longer dependent on other countries epistemology but be dependent on own beliefs, values and habits, yes.”*

X5: *“So decolonisation of the curriculum is when, let’s say for instance there at environmental science a it would mean the knowledge there is passed down even if someone is not from there, they can come and listen and curriculum becomes a social good, not something that is objectified”*

Biko (2002) mentions that blacks should respond in their own way, on their own terms, in a way which fits their characters and identity. This is in relation with X4 when stating that education in South Africa should be independent of the western countries but depend on black South African individual’s own beliefs, values and habits.

Party B

X7: *“Uhm, eh that name gives me a notion that the education that we are taught should be changed and be the education that is going to accommodate African people, an education that will address the needs, and then what we are taught is being able to be applied in our communities where we come from.”*

X7 believes that education should be transformed to accommodate black South African students who will use education in disadvantaged communities where most are coming from. This means factors affecting communities like crime, drug abuse, and unemployment, for instance, are not addressed in the curriculum as these are some of the factors affecting most societies/communities in South Africa and Africa as a whole. Indeed, Freire has attempted to focus educational planning on this fact that any curriculum planning should be based on existing realities of the low classes of society (Mahmoudi, et al., 2014).

Party C

X13: *“...decolonisation is the removal of what we have you see but the decolonisation that we need here is the one that is going to make sure that each focus focuses on the interest of the native people in the land, you see, not others, that is where the focus is the native people of South Africa have to be comfortable in their country without being imposed by other things in different places,”*

X13: *“And with that being said here we are adding another layer because decolonisation is a process so during the process when you’re decolonising we are transforming we are not going backwards, we’re transforming, but transforming an Afrocentric agenda to be equivalent or to be equated with the western”*

X12: *“Prioritising the Afrocentric dream, but we are not saying we’re doing away with western completely we’re saying let balance because seemingly now the western norms and cultures are at the top and they’re suppressing our norms and values.”*

Shizha (2005) states that Africans, need to invent ways of rewriting or changing those dominant narratives and deconstruct ‘white’ superiority and the misrepresentation of African indigenous people and their cultures. The notion is like that of participant X12 who believes that decolonisation is to deconstruct or remove the colonialism and imperialist system and prioritising the Afrocentric dream. This is not completely the removal of western notions, but to balance the two, the Afrocentric and western notions. X13 also agrees that decolonisation is the removal of western notions and adds that it should make sure that the focus is on the interest of everyone, and where black South Africans are comfortable in their country. Black people of South Africa have come to see themselves as being proud and powerful people. Their duty is to liberate, not only themselves but the entire continent of Africa (Gqola, 2001). The liberation of black people in South Africa therefore lies in their hands, they should take full control.

Party D

X6 and X4 emphasised that firstly the term ‘decolonisation’ should be defined before understanding ‘decolonising of the curriculum’. X1 believes that decolonised education or curriculum should be able to accommodate the black South African students’ needs in what they are studying, and it should not be something that is enforced because that is a form of oppression.

X1: *“I feel like because you understand that this procedure of studying has been the same procedure forever during apartheid, so it’s the question of why hasn’t it been reviewed that is it applicable to the now so-called freedom communities”*

X6: *“We should also argue why we are being taught American and European things while we are in Africa, an example of getting a calling, in Africa, we perceive it as being normal, but in the west it is perceived as schizophrenia so it is not normal (laughs)”*

X8: *“...material that we are using they are mainly coming from the European perspective, but we are doing South African marketing studies so that if we could decolonise education it could mean we’re using African authors or international but the perspective should be South African.”*

X9: *“The terms that are used in science, it is what we did back home it just that now it has these big terms, these big terms don’t speak to us. We knew back in the day how to plant and all that stuff, what is important now in the content is that we relate to it and not be scared by these big concepts”*

X10: *“so when you talk about decolonisation of the curriculum we are talking about giving the opportunity to say alright we know that the western cannot offer knowledge production itself there, but however, what about the lived experiences also the theories of people from the South that’s when they talk about...”*

X11: *“Uhm to me it means, what we study should be in line with our needs as South Africans, I think after 1994 nothing changed for black students and black South Africans, everything is Eurocentric,”*

Paulo Freire explains that students need to understand what creates oppression and propose strategies for addressing it (Boyce, 1996). Students make an emphasis that decolonisation of curriculum means black South Africans having a say on what they are learning. X9 finds the content of teaching and what is relevant about black South African students in history to be an important part of decolonising the curriculum. Freire finds it important to develop a culturally relevant curriculum that requires the teacher to acknowledge that students are not a shortfall and that they bring with them powerful and rich experiences, cultures and languages to the classroom (Foster, 2016). Student participation, therefore becomes an important element in transforming the curriculum in higher education.

5.2.2 Student Leaders Responses

The student political leaders like student members also think that decolonising the curriculum should focus on changing the content by including more African perspectives which relate to black South African students. Party E representative leader also makes an emphasis that to clearly understand the concept, it is important that firstly the definition of ‘decolonisation’ be understood so that it can be narrowed down to ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’. Students demanding ‘transformation’ and ‘decolonisation’ of South African universities cannot fully

define their terms or they do so unclearly (Benatar, 2008). A deeper understanding of the term ‘decolonisation’ among students is greatly required so that they can clearly address this issue, as student leaders and literature state that students do not have the full understanding. It becomes a problem if students act by protest with no basic information. It is important that they take steps of reading literature to understand what they are fighting against.

Party A: *“...there is no enough research that goes to the black way of life that is why inherently everything becomes capitalistic and nothing socialistic, there is no social aspect of it because everything is European.”*

Party E: *“I think in terms of the decolonisation of curriculum we need to firstly transform the institutions and also the government sectors...”*

Students have different meanings attached to their understanding of what decolonising the curriculum mean, which gives unclear definition. Being politically affiliated to different political organisations create differing views of the notion decolonisation of curriculum, however, the views were not entirely different. This can also be the case with other students from different universities, they can have different insights and understanding compared to the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus students. This makes the definition of this notion very complex, which means it should be narrowed down and critically unpacked to get unanimous definition.

#FeesMustFall protest was calling for change and decolonising the curriculum since students believe it has been the discourse of black pain, institutional racism and Eurocentrism in universities (Joseph, 2017). During the interviews, it was observed that some students made the emphasis that decolonising the curriculum should specifically accommodate black South African students. This made an indication that students who were interviewed have personal experiences within the university that made them feel racially excluded, even though they did not explain more in-depth. University of Cape Town students also stated that the systems and the processes in the university have worked to exclude black students from feeling as though they are part of the university (Herman, 2015).

The student political organisations share the same sentiments with the student members regarding their understanding of the notion ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’ in higher education. Party A states that since they are a Marxist-Lenin organisation which also draws a lot from Fanon, they understand this notion as an act of including African scholars in creating a decolonised curriculum in higher education institutions. Most notably the new generation

has celebrated the writings of Fanon, taking up especially his philosophical critique of racism and insisting on the need for black South Africans to seize recognition (Becker, 2016). The exclusion of black students in university still stands out even in a democratic South Africa which states that every race, culture, and religion is equal. The organisations and students are not specific on the aspects that make black South African students excluded in the institutions, also when they talk of black students, they do not refer to international black students coming from other African countries and the world.

5.3 Importance of Discussing Decolonisation of the Curriculum

Discussions concerning decolonisation in universities have taken place and are continuing. Students find these discussions to be the important platform of raising issues, however, other students believe that there should be an alternative in addressing these issues. The action of implementation is an alternative for other students.

5.3.1 Student Members' Response

Party A

X2: *“Ah like I said South Africa is one of the colonised, uhm colonised countries, it is important for us to talk about this things so that we can come up with proposals to change”*

X3: *“Uhm its very important because, uhm in South Africa particularly we do understand that there have been historical disadvantages ah that have been affecting black South Africans in particular, and results in particularly the institutions of higher learning they are starting to manifest themselves cause uhm you find that much of the majority of the people are influenced by the western thoughts...”*

X5: *“...it is where people are open to think, and they talk of class cluster, that when you are here you are not classified because you are getting all the privileges your peers in the hood are not getting but still I will get hungry due to social circumstances, but let say that is true either way. So you are allowed to think loud and out of the box when you are here so you can create something, so that is why the conversation should go on.”*

X4: *“...it is important the decolonisation of education in South Africa because initially we do not have access to go outside and look for things that we need what we need we get it here so, that means even things we study here or the way the system the curriculum in the university it needs to accommodate us.”*

X2 perceive discussions as the opportunity to come up with proposals that would change the system of how learning takes place so that in the future there are no protests. X3 states that due to South African historical disadvantages that have been affecting black South Africans in particular, there is a need to question why they are studying western scholars' theories. This can open discussions on how to combine western and African thoughts in the curriculum. It is a critical reflection to resist the power structure of western education to ensure that Africans are liberated from the colonial forms of education (Mashabela, 2017). The western perspectives show a great sense of domination in the educational system, which may be caused by the historical events of the implementation of colonial education in South Africa.

X4 states that the exciting thing is that mostly in Social Sciences the research studies conducted in this school currently, touch a lot of what is happening in South Africa. The transformation may be more possible in the Social Sciences and the Humanities than it is in the natural sciences (Oba and Eboh, 2011). This shows that the issue of the decolonisation lies in the social issues and human relations. If more research is conducted in Social Sciences, questions to the issues faced by society can be answered. X5 thinks that it would be important if the decolonisation begins from basic education, because education is the pillar of our system, also adds that these conversations establishes an avenue where people are open to thinking. Black consciousness also makes an emphasis that the most important notion to this is that decolonised curriculum should be crafted so that it could be offered from primary school to tertiary level (Dolamo, 2017).

Party B

X7: "...it is important as South Africa as we call ourselves as a democratic country a to continue with these discussions and talk about them, not just in universities but also outside universities."

X7: "...now it is important that these discussions reach outside universities, so that the government and other organisations pays attention to these issues we are facing maybe we would even get solutions and see how we fix these, thank you."

Some universities in South Africa, academics together with students and other role-players, have been getting together to explore the suggestions of transforming curriculum (Leibowitz, 2017). X7 perceive these conversations as very important because there could be solutions arising to the problems faced by South Africa as a whole. In addition, X7 states that these

conversations can help South African higher education institutions to come to conclusions in transforming the higher education system. Additionally, the issues in universities need to reach outside communities, because it is important that conversations reach there too. The universities are an important part of developing the society. Without the society universities would not function, having discussions will bring the universities and the society closer. The communities need to contribute to the functioning of the universities, not as participants for research studies but also as contributors of it functioning.

Party C

X12: *“So if we were to, it is important because higher education is where, is a sector where people are prepared for what, for employment.”*

X12: *“...we should start talking about this decolonisation because we are ready, and we are expected to go back to our communities transform them, give back you see, in whatever way so the universities is the microcosm of the society it actually reflect”*

A holistic education will produce skilled, self-confident and socially responsible graduates, conscious of their role in contributing to the national development effort and social transformation (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017). This resonates with X12 who states that it is important to have the conversations because in higher education it is where individuals are prepared for employment and serving the South African local communities. Also, the university reflecting exactly what is going on in our communities. It is important, therefore, to have these conversations because there are academics who are able to write and publish. In the discussions, new information can be accumulated and implemented.

Party D

X1 mentions that conversations are important because students need to know whether the curriculum is channeling them to other opportunities in the society, for instance like opening a business. X6 states that since 1976 problems are still existing even today in educational institutions, therefore conversations have to happen to address these challenges and problems. Discussions to students seem to be very important as a tool to address the issue of the decolonisation. Having discussions requires individuals to have basic knowledge of what is discussed, however as mentioned by student leaders that sometimes students cannot define ‘decolonisation’ which becomes a concern.

X6: *“We can speak about the issues of access, ah what else, funding also needs decolonisation one way or the other, because those things are the one that suppress black people, yah funding it also needs to be decolonise and access too.”*

X8: *“Mmm, it is really important because looking at the challenges we are facing, like unemployment, the need of education lot of people are dropping out, so I think decolonisation could be part of those things, people within the universities are not happy but still are not satisfied.”*

X9: *“I think we should have them a long time ago (laughs), one thing that scares people is when you say ‘decolonise’ because you don’t have the definite definition of that name, I think it is important to have them urgently for me yah (laughs)”*

X10: *“Well I think for one it is our history first, our history is distorted for one, from, what is it 1462 or 1652 it is distorted, black people lived pre-colonial during colonial times and post-colonial, so if we were to decolonise the curriculum especially here in South Africa it means we have to uncover things that are not taught in the mainstream about South Africa and how our ancestors fought against domination...”*

X11: *“I think everything starts with a conversation, if you could go to outside countries they say in South Africa, students burn things and then things change, of which is not true, there are complaints before we take it to the streets because these are not addressed.”*

The concept of critical consciousness by Paulo Freire generally addresses the struggle for change. It is the moment human beings become critically aware and intolerant of the oppressive conditions in which they find themselves and push toward new ways of knowing and being in the world (Darder, 2014). The community should also intervene according to students in this issue of the decolonisation, because decolonising the curriculum could also help the community in the long run. X9 believes that these conversations should have been there a long time ago, and they should be taking place urgently. X10 looks at how South African history of black people has been distorted and suggest that knowing history first is important. The Africans also lost part of their cultural identity in the field of education, since tribal history and beliefs were no longer taught (Janney, 2011).

5.3.2 Student Leaders’ Responses

Party A: *“...decolonisation aspect becomes a sub in the quality of the education amongst other factors as well, so it’s an important conversation but we don’t take decolonisation alone but it goes with all other things, yah...”*

Party E: *“...so currently discussion that we are having right now is the issues around decolonisation, which is why we have discussed them to commissions...”*

Party A makes an important note that while decolonisation conversations continue it should be taken into consideration that it goes with other aspects too, like registration fees and accommodation. The decolonisation has been articulated, by student protesters, through a series of demands including making higher education more inclusive through the reduction or removal of registration, tuition and accommodation fees (Mazibuko, 2017). Party E makes a point that they do have these conversations within the organisation, where they also look at other issues such as the value of South African higher education in the job market. Student political organisations believe that the conversations within the university are important since the university is a space to engage different thoughts.

5. 4 African Thinkers’ Students Engage With When Talking of the Decolonisation

Students engage different African thinkers/writers/scholars/politicians when discussing the issue of the decolonisation. One of the prominent writers students find important and relevant is Steve Biko. This is because Biko was a black university student who spoke and wrote against western notions being imposed on black people. This leads students to engage with him when addressing issues such as decolonisation.

5.4.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X2: *“I think uhm people like Steve Biko, played a very crucial role, uhm into opening black people’s mind especially about how they should be proud and of themselves and how the system should actually work to accommodate black people.”*

X3: *“...obviously you have uhm political leaders like the Julius Nyerere, the Thomas Sankaras who themselves are an influence you know in terms of what we are ought to learn in the history of Africa.”*

X4: *“...its Frantz Fanon because Frantz Fanon mentions that we are the only people who can liberate ourselves like for economic emancipation, because if you take a look if we*

decolonise the curriculum, it goes back, it's very deep because its goes back where, where we are fighting for economic emancipation."

X5: *"But now you find the likes of Ngugi waThiong'o, we can use Steve Biko, Sobukwe as a reference to say this is where black people wanted to go,"*

X4 perceives Frantz Fanon as one of the important writers because in his writings he states that only the oppressed can liberate themselves especially black youth population and women. This is because they are the ones who are the most oppressed in institutions and society. Decolonising institutions, decolonising knowledge, decolonising the mind; have been the tags of the new generation of activists who have dominated South Africa's Fanonian moment (Becker, 2016). The emergence of activist has caused a stir in the country concerning the issues that affect the society. The decolonising higher education institutions have also been accompanied by the issue of rape and sexism (Becker, 2016). The country has seen more feminists rising to address and challenge these occurrences.

Party C

X12: *"I have Julius Nyerere I think the guy is still one of the best African thinkers,"*

X13: *"Nkwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Nkwame Nkrumah is the father of Neo-liberalism, you know that? You are aware? Yeah he is the father of neo-liberalism, he actually identified colonialism of special type as a problem that no, now there is another element a new form of colonialism that is taking place even way before Steve Bantu Biko..."*

Party D

X1: *"I think for me the best person who talks about decolonisation there's no other person but Steve Biko"*

X6: *"I don't know about an African write but there is a writer it is Paulo Freire he speaks about education, he compares... there is one which he calls the banking system, the teacher comes to class and just banks everything to the student, then the students don't develop anything, and a student's becomes like a storage, he says a teacher and students should help each other, and learn from each other."*

X8: *"Ah Thabo Mbeki mostly talks about identity, like you should be able to identify with being African, and the way you behave should be in line with African perspective, if you call yourself an African, therefore by means of action you should show."*

X9: “...we can look at people like Ngugi, and, most of them are males (laughs). I haven't learnt about decolonisation actually, even Biko himself talks of black power which you can really associate the decolonisation with”

X11: “Mmm decolonisation obvious the father of black consciousness, Robert Sobukwe, Mugabe I will never leave him, but he is legend to those who are alive (laughs), he always thought about a black person, he was never afraid of a white man.”

X6 states that he does not know of any African writer but know Paulo Freire who speaks about education and has a concept called the banking system where the teacher knows everything and the student nothing. According to Freire those who are truly committed to liberation should reject the banking concept totally, instead, they should adopt the concept of women and men as conscious beings who are able to critically think for themselves (Pollard, 2002). X6 further states that academics like Sabelo Gatsheni Ndlovu from UNISA and Achile Mbembe who have recently produced articles that can be used to engage with. Knowledge becomes a gift given by teachers because they consider themselves knowing everything upon those who they consider as having no knowledge (Freire, 1970).

Students also look at politicians like Robert Sobukwe, Robert Mugabe, Julius Malema, and Chris Hani, and academics like UCT vice-chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng as very important individuals to engage with when talking about decolonisation. Political debates by politicians over the role of higher education have generated theories about its potential to empower and transform the lives of students (Higgs, 2016). Political views have an influence on how individuals perceive issues that occur in mass protests. These views may be relevant if the politicians do not use them for populism and to gain votes in the elections. The views should be that of transforming the structures of oppression individuals feel they exist.

5.4.2 Student Leaders Responses

Party A: “So the major issue of decolonisation that Biko speaks in general not in education is that, you should be able to as black people work in being inferior and claiming back our humanity”

Party E: “Steve Biko's ideology because he was the father of black consciousness, now meaning that we have always identified with Steve Biko and we have always be on the likes of Robert Sobukwe's”

Most of the student members and leaders find Steve Biko to be important when engaging in such issues as decolonisation of the curriculum. X2 believes Biko played a huge role in emancipating black people especially in educational institutions. Students in South African universities read Steve Biko, who regarded his call to autonomous black action as still relevant for contemporary South Africa (Benatar, 2008). X5 also adds that as much as writers like Ngugi waThiong'o, Paulo Freire, Steve Biko and Robert Sobukwe can be used. There is a need, however of contemporary black writers because, there are issues like gender which old-school writers did not address in their writings.

Contemporary writers and thinkers are important in addressing the current issues because of the ever-changing societies. Most of the writers mentioned by students either lived under colonial or apartheid states. The conditions of the societies they lived under is different of those in democratic societies. As much as they can be used as a reference, new thoughts should emerge. The issue of gender in most societies is prominent amongst the issue of the decolonisation. From the thinkers mentioned, women who took part in fighting the colonial and apartheid regime were not mentioned, for example, Charlotte Maxeke, Winnie Mandela and Angela Davis. This is becoming a question of why women are excluded in these issues, hence we need contemporary writers who will address this.

5.5 Failure of Implementing Decolonised Curriculum

Decolonised curriculum has not been implemented according to students. They mention that the university management and the Department of Higher Education are the cause for the failure of implementation.

5.5.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X2: *"I think it is because of the ignorance of the people in the management also including our government and also the fact that we are still under the colonial rule"*

X3: *"Uhm to be honest it is simply because the different institutions of higher learning are uhm they seem not to be taking effort to invest uhm resources"*

X5: *"I think lot of people from us not having an identity and not knowing wo we are so that is why I think that is why the system is not implemented"*

X2 from Party A believes that failure of implementation is due to the ignorance by the university management and the government. The decolonisation depends on the government policy as a whole towards culture, education, and language (Thiong'o, 1986). In addition, X3 believes that the institutions of higher learning do not make an effort to invest resources that will lead to the decolonisation of the curriculum. This means the universities are still carrying the colonial legacy and are investing resources in transformation. The basic problem is that educational structures were formulated by colonialists who had a cultural background different to that obtaining among Africans (Mazonde, 2004). Changing the colonial forces, therefore become a great obstacle in higher education institutions.

Students feel that there is no willingness from the university management to decolonise and there is no eagerness in the predominantly white staffed universities to teach decolonised curriculum. After all it is black African academics and researchers who should be at the center of curriculum renewal (News24, 2017). This thinking resonates strongly with students, who have joined and subsequently led the call for the transformation of academic staff over the last few years (Herman, 2015). Identifying with the academics is an important point raised by students who feel that there are few black academics in universities. Black students may be not relating with those who teach them. Having more white academics may seem like an agenda to continue the legacy of colonialism. "Only a fool would let his enemy educate his children" (Biko, 2002, p.7). Biko was referring to white teachers educating black learners.

Party B

X7: *"Ehm (takes a deep breath) I think uhm (silence) it is not happening because ah, basically there is no idea or maybe I can say a plan, a proper plan which can make us say eh, it will happen, it is not happening because there is no plan, there is no plan at all (shaking head)."*

Party D

X1: *"I think we do not have the power to implement, we are just people that are talking and vouching for decolonisation however, we do not have the resources"*

X8: *"So language is one thing, two, material sometimes is lacking, for instance when we do research, you find out that articles written by Ndlovu, Mkhize, Mthembu, Ndimande are very few you see, so it is one of those things, so this will end where you have to use Smith and you*

don't have a choice you have to include them you see, so it's those things, access to publications also limits"

X10: *"...you see so we will have problems when we are decolonising, you see I don't think the white, supremacist likes being challenged because if we are talking about the decolonisation of curriculum it means we are challenging the capitalists society of the sense that black people are able to produce knowledge"*

X11: *"The management as much as they can be south Africans they are white and they have the interest on the image of the university on how it is maintained, also money which goes to everything."*

X1 believes that people who have the power to change the system or decolonise are not people who are for the decolonisation but against it. In addition, there are no resources for the decolonisation of the curriculum, therefore it will never be implemented. X6 also believes that there is no strategy to achieve decolonised curriculum, another issue raised by X6 and X8 is language, because part of the decolonisation is language students are taught in the content. Jansen (2013) states that the University of KwaZulu-Natal is transforming its curriculum, in line with its policy of advancing African languages in higher education. Professor Nobuhle Hlongwa was cited saying that the Humanities, in specific, had ordered African languages, to become the languages of scholarship (Jansen, 2013).

According to students, the university has to please the western funders. X10 mentions that there will be no funders for the decolonising education, which is why the universities can be perceived as neo-liberal. This is because it is not only about knowledge production but for a specific hegemony. We have already seen what has happened to one university (UKZN) which was forced down the road of 'decolonisation' (Msibi, 2017). The result was the flight of students and faculty, administrative chaos and the drying up of benefactions from donors. At the end of that process, UKZN has been crumbling and is broke (Msibi, 2017). As the students stated the functioning and resources of the universities lies a lot on donors of which might become one of the obstacles of the decolonising the curriculum.

Students show no confidence that the curriculum would be decolonised in the future. In their no confidence, they give no possible ways of implementation. Students look at the obstacles such as resources and management which is not willing and failing to provide alternative ways. The #FeesMustFall protests look like the dead end of ideas about decolonising the curriculum and the higher education system. Strategies and suggestions in the meantime, look

like they have been discontinued by the students, and this questions the eagerness and willingness of students to get a decolonised education.

5.5.2 Student Leaders Responses

Party E: *“I think that as an organisation there hasn’t be much research that has been conducted around the issues of decolonisation and there has been a lack of activism around the issues of decolonisation and so that has influenced in terms of us getting to even understand the content or what the concept of decolonisation actually means...”*

Similar to what the students have mentioned, Party A states that there is no practical effort that has been exerted on decolonising the curriculum at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Party A believes that the policy of studying in isiZulu and English in UKZN is not operating the way it should, it is just on the ground. University of KwaZulu-Natal (2006) mentions that the development and promoting proficiency in the official languages, particularly English and isiZulu is a great need because it seeks to make explicit the benefits of being fully bilingual in South Africa. Party E think that there is no failure because nothing has been done to show that decolonisation is taking place, therefore nothing can fail if there have not been any attempts.

In the development of visiting universities around the country who talk of transformation, and policies on the development and use of African languages, the implementation was lacking (Jansen, 2013). Students stated that decolonised curriculum cannot fail because it has never been implemented as yet, however, when it happens it will be problematic for instance in the job market. If the decolonised curriculum is implemented the university might generate graduates who are unskilled for the current job market. Producing graduates who will fit the job market that is required in South Africa is important to students. While efforts to restructure curriculum show evidence of institutions attempting to become responsive, the outcomes are sometimes incompatible to immediate market needs, they may not produce the ‘self-programmable labour’ that is required for the new knowledge economy (Ogude et al., 2005).

In terms of the job market, South Africa needs to be in line with the global trends in order to sustain and develop its economy. Students did not talk about the role of the industries when it comes to decolonising the curriculum. In finding ways of the decolonising education they mentioned academics, communities and them but not the industries who require skills from

their qualifications. The role of the industries would therefore be important because they are the drivers of the country's economy.

5.6 Curriculum Transformation and Decolonisation in Degree Programmes

Students have stated that language is important to talk about when decolonising the curriculum. Most students believe that being taught in home language is more effective and can increase academic performance, they believe that the introduction of African language in the content is important.

5.6.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X3: *“if we are advocating for decolonisation then it is important to also take into consideration that uhm there are African languages that are predominant in the institutions so why not include them in the curriculum which could perhaps uhm you know increase uhm the performance or the results amongst the students”*

X4: *“...for me I would like students to sit in a circle and a lecturer moving around not the lecturer being in front because it is also intimidating for someone who's coming from the rural areas you see a person whom it is obvious that they are educated and obvious you have all that in mind that whatever they say they know so I can't challenge I need to listen sometimes you can't even cough or what (laughs) so you don't learn...”*

Language is one of the factors students believe should be addressed. In this instance, language is important for better academic performances. Most black students enrolled in higher education are not using English as the home language. The number of black students in the universities show that approximately 16% of 18–24-year-old black youth are enrolled in universities (CHE, 2016). Using English as a medium language, however, is not foreign in the South African education system. From basic education, most of the subjects are assessed in English for example, Mathematics and Physical Sciences tests, exams and projects are assessed in English.

Party B

X7: *“So I do agree that decolonisation can be possible, because even African thinkers are also taught, you see even most concepts we do in class are concerning Africa eh, even the*

way things are done here in Africa, they are done now I see that at least things are not the same”

Party C

X13: “...for political science we need to decolonise we need to produce, the process of decolonising right we are introducing more we want to learn about our own history because we want to understand who we are where are we coming from specifically South Africans and we want to, to learn about the history of, of Africans, African history, we want to learn more about Julius Nyerere, we want to learn more about Patrice Lumumba, we want to learn more about all other African leaders”

The emphasis of learning about African former and current leaders is noticeable amongst students. They understand that these leaders had a great influence in empowering black African people to fight against colonialism. Including eradicating factors like poverty and inequality in the curriculum would be important skills to acquire in their qualifications. For black people to come with their own terms as Biko stated, it also requires technological inventions. In a world where technology and science are taking charge, students should realise the need for technological developments amongst Africans.

Party D

X1: “Even the lecturers they need workshops to teach them what the current youth goes through so when you engage with such a student, don’t come with guns and bombs shutting that students out, that is why you would find people dropping out, not because it was hard studying but it is the environment it was just too hard for them.”

X6: “Also with economics, our lecturer was complaining about the pure theories, but no real life situations in our country, if it doesn’t fit our world, there is no need to include it in our curriculum, let’s do both learn the theory and then compare and see how they fit to real life situations in the discussions we do.”

X8: “Mmm for starters the text books that are used in class they are mainly European, they will tell you that you can use South African textbooks etc. but you should focus on these so if you make your argument basing it on South African authors they don’t credit you as much”

X9: “...we still need to learn a lot about South African animals, some things are fascinating, but are they relating to our contexts, so the post research projects shouldn't be so Eurocentric we need our local context, so yah.”

Students believe that the most important factor is how lecturers engage with students, and also the understanding of students by lecturers. This is what Freire find important to develop, a culturally relevant curriculum that requires the teacher to acknowledge that students are not a shortfall and that they bring with them powerful and rich experiences, cultures and languages to the classroom (Foster, 2016). This adds to participant X6 who mentions that in the major that he did (Political Science), more current affairs should be studied not just theories, because what is more important is the reality taking place in the country where students are able to contribute and relate.

Students state that South African universities should no longer use European based textbooks but use South African textbooks and authors, local authors would lead to the decolonisation of the curriculum. Students state that in undergraduate programs, more scientific terms/names should be translated in isiZulu to make it easier for most students to understand. For postgraduate, research projects should be of local context. X10 similar to X8 believe that European writers cannot be publish South Africans' experiences correctly when they do not even live with local people. Such practice could distort the information about the lives of South African and African people. Freire states that the content of education is grounded on the generative themes vital in students' own lives and should be interpreted by them (Warschauer and Lepeintre, 1997).

Using local authors' materials only may deprive those in the educational system to have an international outlook on the live outside their scope. In this time of the globalisation relating or connecting require the sharing of experiences. The less domination of European material over South Africa can create a space of creativity and development of local needs in the educational setting. As much as the focus may be on the local context, having other perspectives globally would help in developing the educational system as we live in a global village.

5.6.2 Student Leaders Responses

Party A: “...you know you look at the African way before, white people came, and you would be able to analyse society in a different way and understand, there were divisions and there was segregation...”

Party E: “...we need to ensure that we improve research around the issues of decolonisation and also in terms of understanding even the education system...”

X13 states that in the third year in the Psychology discipline there was an introduction of being taught in IsiZulu to make it easier for students to understand the module. Students and student leaders emphasise that it is not just the issue of language only but also the content. Political Science students mention that Political Science second level module, ‘South African politics’ is taught by foreigners (not South Africans) and they do not relate to them. This should also be part of the decolonising to students, because that carries a lot in the content. Political Science students at Wits voiced out the lack of transformation in the structure of the population in the departmental staff, this is because there is an imbalance in terms of gender and race, there are few women and it is dominated by white people (Dlakavu, 2014). Modules that should be targeted when decolonising curriculum according to students are modules registered by the majority of students, for example, Political Science and Psychology.

5.7 Disciplines That Need Transformation and Decolonisation of Curriculum

Student members and student leaders believe that all disciplines in the university should be decolonised. Most of the students state that the College of Agriculture, Science, and Engineering is in most need of decolonisation because of racial issues arising there.

5.7.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X2: “I honestly think that every (silence) every ah discipline need to be decolonised uhm because the effort that is being put, yoh! Its, its uhm its very less you know, I think the whole system of education still need to be, to be decolonised, especially when it comes to language.”

X3: “I find there is a bigger need to basically uhm, go to the ah uhm streams such as commerce, science cause even though the argument is that these streams majority of the theory that is learnt has its own technical terms, then why not find people that will be willing to invest the time.”

X5: *“So you find that in science you learn about the system that doesn’t validate you, so for me is the gender, the women in science. Then there is a black science, but then the question is, how much do we study black science?”*

Students from Party A believe that all disciplines at the Pietermaritzburg campus should be decolonised. They state that the Science, Agriculture, and Engineering College should be decolonised because it is too westernised, from the content of the curriculum to the way it is taught. X5 mentions that the discipline of Science, Agriculture and Engineering does not validate black South African students, because the system is too colonised.

Molewa (2007) states that the coming of European (Western) education from the late 15th century onwards disrupted the traditional system and brought the formal school system at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, the learning of European languages, literature, history, philosophy, as well as the science subjects, including mathematics, biology, physics and chemistry. X5 also looks at Law, where they still practice and study in a European system, also adds that black lawyers are not recognised in the Law discipline. X4 states that all the disciplines do not make one grow as an individual it is just a matter of studying for a degree.

Students identify the disciplines that need to be decolonised and have proposals of what needs to be done. Some of the students have personally encountered some incidences in the disciplines where they felt decolonisation is needed. Through these incidences, they should draw a strategy of dealing with these issues. The SRC (Student Representative Council) should also take part in addressing these issues because students do address them in some cases. Professionalism to approach the Colleges’ management is also vital amongst students when engaging in such matters.

Party C

X12: *“Pre-dominantly in fact Agric is dominated by white racists’ lecturers, professors if you go to Agric and you go around offices and you search how many lecturers, black professors are there maybe there is one or two, not more than three.”*

Party D

X1: *“I have talked to some other students too like in the science where they say lecturers do discriminate racially they undermine the way we think as black students”*

X6: *“All of them (laughs), but I would say science is very difficult one, students are not fit enough or prepared enough in schools for science, in the end they fail dismally and end up changing courses”*

X9: *“Humanities I think they are playing a huge role in decolonisation, agriculture there’s a slow change, looking at medical sciences, we did use some plants to heal ourselves traditionally and still are, without going through the scientific ways, but yes we do have space for it but most importantly the Humanities I think they have done lot, so yah.”*

The discipline of Medicine should also be decolonised according to X1, even though it is not at the Pietermaritzburg campus. X8 believes that Social Sciences, Law and Science as a whole need decolonisation because they do not accommodate African perspectives. X9 similar to X6 feels that Humanities is making progress to decolonise while disciplines like Science, Agriculture and Engineering lack behind. X10 states that Sociology, Philosophy, and Law should be decolonised due to the theories used. What we have in most fields of study, especially in Humanities and Social Science is the Eurocentric propaganda, which marginalises Africa and is usually supporting the patronising views and stereotypes about the African continent and that should change (Heleta, 2016).

Most students in all political organisations/organisations believe the Science discipline as a whole should be decolonised, specifically Agriculture. They find significance because Agricultural sector is white dominated and does not recognise the African traditional methods. Students believe that African traditional methods are very useful and functional to the society today because in rural areas they are used and are functional. Agriculture is thus taking away those traditional methods and replacing them with western methods that students find difficult to apply. Students find it important that African indigenous methods should operate as part of the curriculum. Benatar (2008) states that sometimes the suggestion is that African ways of thinking should be acknowledged and that “European” ways of thinking should not be privileged.

5.8 Student Political Organisations Interpretations of Decolonising Curriculum

Student political organisations admit that they have never drawn/written a proposal stating how the decolonised curriculum should be structured. The student organisations have had discussions but they have not been effective and continuing after the #FeesMustFall protests.

5.8.1 Student members response

Party A

X3: *“Oh okay the decolonisation of the curriculum, uhm since I am part of an organisation that sort of like advocate for black people it means that it’s not only part of the curriculum but it is part of everything that surrounds us, the buildings the various statues and the institution itself, cause we feel that majority of the things that have been named by ah, after western individuals”*

X4: *“but as an organisation in the campus we still believe that black students are oppressed, black students are limited, black students don’t have access to education, black students are in fact comfortable in an uncomfortable space this space is exaggerated with white academia”*

X5: *“But the interpretation was, the system needs to change also our surroundings, because we want to know these people’s contribution, like Cecil Rhodes, he did horrible things but he robbed black people.”*

The university space is of concern among the student members who believe that it does not accommodate and relate to black students. Quoting the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC) Wits leader Vuyani Pambo who said, “We don’t want to treat the symptoms, we want to decolonise the university that is at the heart of the cause” (Le Grange 2016, p.2). Buildings and structures are an important part of the university, they are the image and reflect its identity. The intriguing question is which names or labels are suitable for these structures that will put up an image relating to black students.

Party D

X1: *“We all share the same sentiments when it comes to decolonisation, like the physical feature, students want to identify with them, like the residents, we can’t call them William O’brian, why not Queen Nandi for example Albert Luthuli, people that we recognise in the struggle, so that you can feel the sense of belonging”*

X8: *“Mmm, if I remember correctly, we were mainly focusing on access to universities and tertiary education, that was another form of decolonisation in the way they expressed it, students should have access to the higher learning institutions, so that is one point. Secondly looking at what is being taught in the institutions we should check in form of what is happening in the global South movement it shouldn’t be English, the perspectives should change and things like that”*

X11: *“If we say we want decolonise education, we want to untie the chains and undo, not to transform of fit in, I don’t want to fit in, I don’t want my child to fit in, the education should be designed for us.”*

Student movements and others have been more active about calling for decolonisation (Yusuf et al., 2017). The different student movements/political organisations have their interpretations. However, X8 mentions that within their movement they never sat formally and discussed how the curriculum should be decolonised. They were just using these terms without any full interpretation and critical understanding. Students used terms as slogans and as a way of demonstrating what they never fully understood during protests. There could be uncertainty which may cause ambiguity around decolonising curriculum which academics and students seriously need to speak about (Mazibuko, 2017).

Some students interpret decolonising education/curriculum as having access to higher education and expanding the universities to accommodate a large number of students. This is to accommodate also the lower and middle class who cannot afford the expenses of the higher education. Having access and resources to enter and function within the university is an important part of the decolonising of the curriculum for students (Mazibuko, 2017). At the begin of each year students, especially black South African students from disadvantaged backgrounds struggle to find spaces and funding at the higher education system. Other students end up going back home or finding it difficult to survive within the institutions due to different factors.

Students from Party D talk of language as the biggest factor when it comes to decolonising the curriculum. They mentioned that learning in your own language is much better. They state that those who do not understand Nguni languages will have to learn in the process. This is because, the value attached to English and Afrikaans languages even by black Africans, undermines the survival of African languages when it comes to communication (Tshotsho, 2013). Students do not take it into consideration that South Africa has 11 official languages. It will be a very complicated process to apply most of these languages in a single curriculum and might require great resources, finances and time.

Steve Biko states that black South Africans should respond in their own way, in their own terms, in a way which fits their characters and identity (Biko, 2002). Students highlight that universities want them to fit in a system that is not designed for black South Africans and call this to be changed. Students from Party A also state that in their student political organisation

they attach decolonising the space of learning with decolonising the curriculum. Statues and names of the buildings are one of the important aspects they believe need decolonisation. This is because the individuals whose names are attached in these buildings have done everything wrong to black Africans. The decolonisation of buildings and of public spaces is not different from ‘democratisation of access’ in institutions (Mbembe, 2015).

5.9 Challenges in Implementing Decolonised Curriculum in Higher Education

University management has been identified as an obstacle in implementing the decolonised curriculum. Students state that not all individuals in the management would agree for implementation to take place. This becomes a challenge according to students because the university management is supposed to make these decisions. No matter how systematic the planning or how inventive the thinking, curriculum designs always end up not being everything that everyone would want (Ogude et al., 2005).

5.9.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X2: “Obviously there would be divisions amongst the management the people who said this is uhm, you know we still have white domination in our management in our universities and ah, people have different opinions, but we should let people know that this is for the good benefit of our country...”

X3: “the question of whether the other races or other individuals would they be accepting or would they accept this whole transition it is the biggest problem that we need to encounter”

Students state that one of the challenges would be divisions amongst the university management. They mention that all races will not be accepting this change, and state that individuals either students or academics will find it hard to adapt to new change. X4 believes that the challenges will start from the government because the government has failed to change lot of things in the country, they will also fail when it comes to decolonising the curriculum in higher education. X5 mentions that the biggest challenge would be competitiveness with other universities in the world. In terms of rankings, a university with the decolonised curriculum in the African context will not be able to compete with other universities in the world.

Party C

X12: *“People would not be employable a, because most of a, a, the companies hiring people are private companies, because the government froze the posts and government cannot continue creating more job opportunities”*

Party D

X1: *“Mmm okay, change brings fear, some will be for it some will resist, that will then create a gap, and it will bring debate amongst races.”*

X6: *“The issue that I mentioned is the issue of language how are we going to study the current modules with African languages, because now we are diverse, are you going to translate economics in all those languages...”*

Language will be a challenge since South Africa is a diverse country according to students. Another challenge includes the issue of finding new lecturers who will teach the transformed curriculum. X6 and X5 emphasise competitiveness with other universities across the world. Students also emphasise the issue of language by stating that it could be a challenge for academics and students to adapt to using a different language because there is no language known to be superior to English. X9 believes that there is no enough capacity to run decolonised curriculum, for instance, X9 looks at the predominantly white lecturers at the university who might not be willing to teach this sort of curriculum. X11 believes that administration is the problem and it can resist change, therefore it will not be easy to change the curriculum.

X8: *“So the question to the people is, are they willing to use IsiZulu as a superior language as compared to English, superiority is the one, if you speak English you are superior to someone who speaks IsiZulu”*

X9: *“So in 2013 when the Zulu language policy was introduced, my biology lecturer came in class and said she doesn’t understand this Zulu thing, because it will compromise quality, so that’s a problem because that means they will not be willing to teach it...”*

X10: *Challenges? (Silence) the staff members, one it could be them, how well trained they are when it comes to decolonisation because it will be challenging for someone who received maybe their PhD under western*

X11: *“...so people resist change (laughs), administration is a problem, also resisting change.”*

Freire makes an emphasis that academics are the major contributors in empowering students, they should understand these capacities as the basis for their work in the classroom (Darder, 2014). According to students having lecturers/academics to teach the decolonised curriculum would be one of the biggest challenges. Academics who teach in universities were trained in the westernised higher education institutions. Therefore, it will be a challenge for them to adapt to new ways of thinking, teaching, and learning. Academics who have been educated and work in the western knowledge traditions educational institutions, would not produce the indigenous African perspectives (Vorster, 2016). Research collection used in South African universities makes it evident that it is by non-African academics, therefore, it might be biased representations of Africa. Students thus, look at the willingness by academics to teach the decolonised curriculum, which they believe does not exist and will not. They make a suggestion that new academics be trained before the implementation takes place, of which will be a very long and probably not feasible procedure unless a proper strategy is implemented.

5.9.2 Student Leaders Responses

Party A: *“The biggest challenge would be the attainment of knowledge for the decolonised knowledge, firstly the knowledge is being tainted a lot and being stolen from Africa...”*

Party A realise that the biggest challenge in implementing decolonise curriculum is attaining knowledge that will be used in the new curriculum. For decades African indigenous knowledge has not been fully applied in universities across Africa and the world (Kaya, 2013). As the students mentioned that research which has been done, does not reveal the true experiences of African people. This is because students feel like researchers conducting research especially about the lives of black Africans are bias in their findings and interpretations. Research collection makes it evident that it is by non-African academics, therefore, it is filled with biased representations of Africa and thus focuses on aims similar with the research agenda but dissimilar with the needs of the researcher (Number, 2013).

The organisations believe that there is going to be a huge problem when it comes to verifying the knowledge whether it is true or not. This is because most of the African history has been lost through colonialism and apartheid especially in South Africa. Curriculum plan derived from learners’ experiences and their life realities, educational plans should be developed based on the help of professors, experts, parents, teachers, local groups, and needs and

realities of social life according to Freire (Dinarvand and Imani, 2008 *as cited in* Mahmoudi, et al., 2014).

Party E maintains that challenges would include bureaucracy. They argue that the issue of institutional autonomy is important in universities because it would allow the university to make decisions such as decolonising curriculum without reliance on DHET (Department of Higher Education and Training) (Bentely et.al., 2006). If reliance continues bureaucracy will become a very big challenge. Party E believes that transformation and implementation can happen through university being independent and reject the western content.

Increased cooperation and partnerships will lead to recommendations of a model for cooperative governance, whose elements include the state in a supervisory role as opposed to a role of control or interference, hence there should be an intermediary between state and higher education institutions (HEIs) (Higgs and Van Wyk, 2006). Students have mentioned that proposals have been made orally but till the present day they are still waiting for changes. The university management is still insisting that they are looking at the matter such as renaming of the buildings, however, there has not been any feedback given to students who came with proposals.

5.10 Opportunities for Knowledge Production for Academics and Students

Most students stated that interpretations about Africans would not be misinterpreted in the research studies and in academia. Students believe that the way Africans' experiences are narrated in the knowledge produced, does not reflect the true image about Africans and the African continent.

5.10.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X2: *"...what decolonised education can offer us it is re-connection to our people. It is to relate to the issues, it is to boost our economy, it is to innovate, ah innovate, help us as students to innovate new things not to be just mere ah workers for white industrialists but for us to innovate and build our country"*

X3: *"...academics can be able to tackle or to sort of like be open to, or to understand that the landscape of the country constantly changes."*

X4: *“...we’ve been blind of who we are we’ve been neglecting who we are so opportunities that can be offered is who we are and pass that to the generations to come and embrace our own identity and create a nation of our own identity.”*

The decolonised education can offer students and academics to reconnect with ordinary people who are not in the academic space according to X2. This is because the knowledge produced does not relate with the majority of black South Africans. X3 mentions that academics would be able to understand the country’s situation and the constant changes that take place. X4 states that black people do not know themselves, the opportunity that can be offered is to find exactly the kind of people they are. X5 believes that having resources to produce knowledge is needed, and implementing that knowledge is vital.

The history of black people in South Africa before colonialism and apartheid have remained silent for decades. Due to the untold and distorted history, students find it important to go back and find the true identity of black people. This would lead to interpreting the lives and actions in the present and in future. Lives of black people have always been aligned with slavery, colonialism, and apartheid, while ignoring the definition of what makes them as black people in Africa and across the world. Having more publications about these experiences also requires academic researchers and authors who will be able to narrate these stories. This goes back to how white academics and researchers dominate the university space which students question when it comes to conducting research on black Africans.

Party C

X12: *“...in South Africa we have beautiful history not necessarily saying it was good that people were being killed and assassinating but the beauty that I am talking about is that we have reached history, that yet needs to be discovered so that history is not discovered as yet so once we reach that stage, if we could have a decolonised education we can now begin to write our own history”*

Party D

X1: *“...not that black people don’t have ideas, it’s a matter of how you are allowed/authorised to publish which mostly is white people, so decolonising would inhibit that. It will create the opportunity for black people to write more, because even some of the black history is lost so we might have that opportunity yah.”*

X8: *“Mainly when it comes to books if you look in the shelves here at schools, in KwaZulu-Natal, actually South Africa as a whole, but there is still more we can do, but investing in research if students are encouraged to publish, even in their own languages that will open opportunities for them to write more books and share knowledge and create demand...”*

X10: *” And also our opportunity is to be critical of the university as well in how it is ran, you would find that academics right now they are not critical of the university and the type of students they are producing the structure how it is ran, so under the decolonised university we would have to criticise university”*

Nengwekhulu (1976) mentions that students resonate with black consciousness that black people should and should appreciate their values as human beings. This implies that knowledge production should occur without too much reliance on western scholars and theorists. Decolonising the curriculum will minimise conformity with white scholars and ideas by using the knowledge that is already existing in Africa. This will create opportunities for new knowledge. Assimilation or integrating will only lead black people to lose their identity and not find the way out of oppression (Biko, 2002). SASO which gave birth to the Black consciousness movement wanted to revive pride in African culture and knowledge systems to inspire pride in black identity and black roots (Badat, 1999).

5.11 University Dialogues on Decolonisation

Students do want the university to further discussions because this is where solutions could come from. Students believe inviting experts and individuals with the full understanding of decolonisation could create a great and productive dialogue together with the academics.

5.11.1 Student Members Response

Party A

X2: *“You know the discussions are over too, now it’s time to act, it’s time to do an alternative, you know we’ll do ah the university can further these discussions and offer seminars and offer open platforms for people to have their opinions about decolonising the university but talking now is not an option, we should just act like we did”*

X3: *“Uhm one most effective way is to have public lectures those public lectures I believe they form part of you know how we can be influenced by decolonisation. Inviting prominent political leaders and other speakers who are in the forefront of transformation...”*

X5: "I think the period of 2017 everyone was in the world of brokenness everyone because I can't go to who I was before 2015/2016. What the school need is the conversation, because what it had 2017 is like 'we are tired of talking, they know'"

X2 believes that discussing is overdue and it is time to implement and have the alternative way of furthering the issue of the decolonisation. X3 mentions that the most effective way of discussing, it is to have public lectures which can form part of the decolonisation, by inviting prominent political leaders and other speakers. X3 also propose that it should be compulsory for every module to have a content on African philosophy or African study. X4 states that there should be a different way of addressing these issues and not do what has been done before. She mentioned that university management is the same as the capitalist, therefore nothing can really be expected from them. X5 states that the discussions did take place before and were agitated by the social conditions, but after the arrest of other students during 2016, discussions decreased in 2017. X5 believes that there have been too many discussions like X2, stated and now it is time to act.

Darder (2014) mentions that the concept of critical consciousness by Paulo Freire generally addresses the struggle for change. Students argue that the university does not have any idea of what the students want when it comes to decolonising the curriculum and that becomes the biggest obstacle for student voices to be heard. They feel that the conversations concerning decolonising the curriculum should not stop. The conversations should be a space where students, academics and university management engage without any act of aggression like it usually happen during the protests. Having conversations according to students will point at relevant gaps which will be filled with consensus by different university stakeholders. Some students have mentioned that the conversation should not just be between students and academics, but the rest of the staff members including non-academic staff like cleaners at the university.

Party B

X7: "These discussions are no longer happening, but we can just invite people to be part of the decolonisation, for instance have conversations every semester and ideas written"

X7 believes like other students that there should be prominent people who are invited in the discussions every semester, and what is discussed should be taken into consideration and that will happen through writing proposals down.

Party C

X13: *"...you have to realise how decolonisation affect students because you will provoke emotions, first to people who believe in decolonisation and those who do not because there are those too"*

Party D

X1: *"We should be conscientious even through our degrees like drama students can create plays in line with decolonisation. So the university should allow that. We even need people who are politically affiliated to have talks..."*

X6: *"The University should not discuss alone, they should include us in because we are the one who form the university"*

X8: *"One as students, we should keep this topic alive, engaging, the way we write in social media like I talk about decolonisation,"*

X1 believes that through the degree's students are enrolled for, they can further the discussions, and also have political leaders to give talks is important. The university should also have training for lecturers concerned with understanding the pain of a black child according to X1. X6 also believes that specialists are needed to facilitate the discussions. In addition, X8 believes that even using social media platforms can further the discussions. X9 states that the university does not want to further these discussions, they only have fancy events that should be used for vital platforms to discuss such issues. X10 believes that the discussion has been there, but they need to be taken seriously, the university should not do it for public relations like they did with previous discussions. X11 believes that the university will not further discussions, but everything that need to change lies with the students.

X8: *"I don't know maybe continue organising talks and talk about decolonisation, have also other students from other universities to also engage in these things, have competitions, have research so that we can see the value."*

X9: *"(laughs) does it wants to (laughs) joking, does it want to, not thinking about UKZN, does UCT wants to does Wits wants to. If we really wanted to there wouldn't be so much resistance I feel like all those fancy events where we waste money, should be used for round discussion."*

X10: *“I think engaging with the university from the community, one it is to have talks and take them seriously, it’s just that the university does things for PR, public relations, “yah we are having discussions about decolonisation” and then probably they want to have money from the government and then after getting money, nothing happens...”*

X11: *“The University will not further the discussions, but it will be the students that is the next hashtag, we are a generation of that, #rhodesmustfall, #feesmustfall...”*

Students from Party A and Party D have mentioned in the interviews that the language issue needs to be revisited. They feel like the current language policy at UKZN is not enough for transformation. In teaching and learning, students find implementation weaker than how they expected it to be when it was introduced. They anticipated that the core content in the curriculum should be taught in isiZulu and have more research papers published in isiZulu at the UKZN. Jansen (2013) states that UKZN is transforming its curriculum in line with its policy of advancing African languages in higher education. Drawing from the previous statement published in 2013, in 2018 students still feel the need to include African languages more efficiently.

Student members believe that other students during protests were excited to use terms such as ‘decolonise’ and not knowing what it actually means. The students should, therefore, read first before engaging in protest and understand deeper the call behind protests. Freire believed that it is through a deeply experiential and integral learning of democracy, in body, mind, heart, and spirit, that students come to understand that democracy is never a given and liberation will never be a gift (Davis, 1981).

Some students mentioned that they need specialists, politically affiliated individuals to conduct seminars that will unpack the notion of the decolonising the curriculum, in order for them to fully understand. This is because, the conversation around transformation and decolonising the curriculum is only discussed by academics and excludes students on many occasions. Furthermore, conversations should be written documents with solutions, plan of action and time frame to implement new changes. This is because conversations may happen overnight without putting nothing into practice.

5.11.2 Student Leaders Responses

Party A in the same way as the student members agree that the conversations should go on. This is because according to leaders, a dialogue is one of the ways to generate knowledge.

Through the conversations, the process of decolonising the curriculum will be possible. Party E finds it important to start having conversations about historical injustices which might assist in having productive conversations about colonisation until the issue of the decolonising the curriculum is reached.

Party A: *"...not have dialogue in a place where you are supposed to be producing knowledge you are most likely going to create people who don't who are not open minded, who are quiet bias in their writings..."*

Party E: *"Okay, I think, I firstly think it is very much important that we have such open dialogues or such open discussions around the issue of decolonisation because we should firstly understand that colonisation is a historical injustice"*

Corporation Relations Division (2017) state that the University of KwaZulu-Natal should be a place of new and original thoughts and ideas that will shape a brave future for both students and staff. Students, especially postgraduates at the University of KwaZulu-Natal who took part in this research feel that their supervisors treat them as empty vessels, therefore they do not have a voice as students to contribute to their research studies. This resonates with the notion of the banking system by Paulo Freire, stating that a teacher is all-knowing while the learner is an empty slate that needs to be filled (Freire, 1973).

Students want to contribute to their studies because they feel they are not given a chance to participate in their own education. They consider the participation of students in the curriculum of UKZN as non-existence. They highly regard their input as important as those of the academics. However, the Dean of the School of Education at UKZN, Professor Thabo Msibi mentioned that there is a plan to engage on pressing education issues and respond to the questions of the moment and in turn transform teaching methods and research (School of Education, 2017).

The student political organisations are not opposing discussions to take place at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. They believe that university is a space to generate knowledge, understanding what is happening around and creating thoughts. They maintain that this can happen in a university setting because if it does not happen the university will produce individuals who are not able to think critically. They argue that discussions are vital for dialogues to take place and have a way forward in resolving the issues. Having dialogue according to student political organisations entails that student organisations will be able to come forth with recommendations in university policymaking to

decolonise the curriculum in higher education. Paulo Freire explains that students need to understand what creates oppression and propose strategies for addressing it (Boyce, 1996).

5.12 Engagements with the University Regarding Decolonising Curriculum

5.12.1 Student Leaders Responses

Party A articulated that there are no engagements that are currently or that have occurred before regarding decolonising the curriculum. They believe that as an organisation engagement like this should be continued until they reach the conclusion. They have noticed that these issues end up being ignored due to immediate issues, like funding and registration. Party E also shares the same sentiments with Party A by admitting that there have never been formal engagements with the university. Party E believes that there should be a charter drafted by all students which will be submitted to the university policymakers. There will be increasing pressure to find new and innovative means to engage students who feel alienated by institutional cultures that are underpinned by normal university governance (Corporations Relation Division, 2017).

Party A: *“I think the issue is that the conversation is centred on a lot, around academics rather than involving the students...”*

Party E: *“...but maybe it’s because as an organisation we haven’t really got into sit down do these things, do research engage robustly...”*

Party A: *“You can’t say this is active decolonisation when you just feature black people as if you are doing them a favour”*

Party E: *“So that has always been a challenge of, of the bureaucratise of the universities because you would find that some of the somehow information doesn’t get a pass down”*

Party A. Chairperson states that the engagements in their organisation usually happen through SRC to the university management. Their organisations have realised that the conversations decrease in 2017 after #FeesMustFall protests. The conversations became even more centred on academics and excluded students. Also, the conversations around decolonising end up being replaced by immediate issues like NSFAS (National Student Financial Aid Scheme), registration and residence issues.

Party E. Chairperson also emphasise that there is nothing much that has been done to engage the university regarding the issue of the decolonising the curriculum. It has only been through

protest that the students have called for decolonisation in the universities. The minister of Higher Education and Training made a proposition which may be similar to that of University of Cape Town, where he appointed a central curriculum committee to coordinate the decolonising of the curriculum (Le Grange, 2016). The student political organisations do take it into consideration that they should also sit down as student organisations and draw a proper proposal which they will submit to the university.

5.13 Conclusion

This chapter reveals that the students do have an insight and understanding to a certain point of the notion ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’ in higher education. They are aware of the failure and challenges of implementing a decolonised curriculum. Students understand that it cannot be a simple procedure but insist that it should happen so that it can accommodate especially black South African students. Nevertheless, contradictions between literature and findings do occur. What stands out are the similarities of responses between different student political organisations’, as there would be differing political views expected. Additionally, there is still eagerness for students to embark on this activism, and they showed the willingness to try other approaches.

Some students feel that when this process was initiated, it was too emotional, and it is still emotionally draining. The literature review shows clearly that this notion is interpreted differently by students. Some students stated that the curriculum needs to be transformed to imitate the lived experiences of African people (Langa, 2017). Some students stated that the university should be inclusive through the reduction or removal of registration, tuition and accommodation fees (Mazibuko, 2017). These views are like those obtained from data collected from the UKZN, Pietermaritzburg campus.

Between student members and student political leaders, there are greater similarities in how they define ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’ in higher education. Additionally, the interpretation by both student members and student political leaders do complement each other, which is an indication of student members drawing their understanding of the principles of their organisations. The challenges stated by students and student political organisations varied from what students have encountered personally within the campus and what they have observed.

The literature on challenges for implementing decolonised curriculum is common to what the students stated, even though there are necessary gaps which can be filled to address more of

these challenges, especially on the matter of white academics. Academic staff and lecturers need to address more of these challenges and be more reliant in meeting the students' needs concerning the curriculum. This is because academics have an experience in academia and can exercise it to meet the students' needs.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary and Conclusion

The issue of 'decolonising the curriculum' is a very important aspect when it comes to transforming higher education institutions. The insights and understandings of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' by students ensure their great contribution towards transforming the universities. Students might have not expressed all their thoughts concerning this issue, which might influence the key findings obtained in this research study. The way students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Pietermaritzburg campus understand the notion of 'decolonising the curriculum' may also have risen from their experiences in their campus. Experiences may differ from other students in other higher education institutions/universities. The generalisation about how students understand 'decolonising the curriculum' cannot be, therefore applied to a wider population of the students. The different experiences may include how influential and vocal student leaders were, the intensity of violent protest within the campus, the motivation behind these protest and other factors.

Further studies should be conducted to find more about how students understand 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education institutions. Conducting more studies in other universities who had these protests across South Africa like Wits, UCT etc. would be essential. In this study, however, there are adequate findings and insights made by students in this campus (Pietermaritzburg). Students and political organisations did not show any sign of cluelessness when it comes to this research topic. They did not hesitate to respond and expand their responses. The responses were adequate to be compared with literature and the theoretical framework underlying the research study. The responses may have not been specific and detailed on how the curriculum can accommodate black African student's needs, but they were adequate to give an idea behind students' call and protest acts.

The student members and student political leaders appear to interpret decolonisation of the curriculum through the influences of similar thinkers like Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon. This gives them a common ground when explaining the challenges that could be encountered when implementing decolonised curriculum. As much as they can differ on their political affiliations, what is common is that they are all students. The postgraduate students seemed to have stronger opinions about the topic of decolonising the curriculum in higher education. Postgraduate students have more experience since they have been on campus longer and have obtained several undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

All postgraduates interviewed were present during the inception of these protests. They were part of the students who gathered in the meetings leading to protests. Some students were amongst those who faced criminal charges and others former SRC members. These students showed more outlook on viewing decolonisation of the curriculum in terms of what could be done. This is because they have been part of the university for a long time particularly the Pietermaritzburg campus. The findings also revealed that students were greatly influenced by African thinkers like Steve Biko, Frantz Fanon, Julius Nyerere, Patrick Lumumba and political leaders like Thomas Sankara, Robert Mugabe and Julius Malema on embarking in their call to decolonise higher education institutions.

Academic staff seemed to be silent in engaging students through dialogue. Students have stated that most academics, especially white academics are not willing to accept the transformation of the university. Academics are responsible for implementing the curriculum in class, therefore they can make a great contribution in driving this initiative. Some student political leaders did engage academics, but it was through informal engagements and that did not have much effect. Some academics may have written and published research papers to make effort, but most of those papers have not reached the wider community and some students do not access them. There is a great need, therefore for academics and students to discuss these issues to have a way forward.

In addition, there was an indication that students do not read, they use terms as slogans and are there in protests just to have a good time. This entails that some students have insufficient knowledge of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education. There is also an indication that they cannot define the term 'decolonisation'. The findings strongly point to the unawareness or lack of knowledge to the methods that can be used to decolonise the curriculum. Students did mention that nothing in a form of a proposal was drawn by students on how to tackle this issue. Similar to some portions of the literature, there was no literature stating that students have written and submitted written documents on decolonising the curriculum in higher education. The findings revealed that student members and student political leaders usually engage in protest actions with nothing on paper.

Factors related with student's participation in protest actions and how they understand decolonising the curriculum are factors such as peer influence, behaviour during protests and their political association. Another identified factor was the exclusion felt by black students in the university. This means racial exclusion is still prevalent, and that the black students

may raise serious emotions when calling for decolonisation of higher education. The students, especially black students used this platform to address such factors, whether they achieved that goal or not they feel they have played their part.

In summary, the insights and understanding of the notion ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’ obtained in this research study make it almost impossible to cover every aspect of decolonising higher education. Numerous detailed and contextually studies have to be conducted to make efforts in understanding decolonising the curriculum in higher education. Due to these reasons, this study could only touch on a few contributing ideas on how decolonising curriculum can be defined and ways of implementing. In addition, as stated in the research proposal, this research study will contribute to the existing data on decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education. It aims to encourage more research on the topic and to assist in the development of strategies to the transformation of universities in South Africa.

6.2 Recommendations

The aim of the recommendations section is to recommend the various strategies that universities may use in transforming higher education specifically the curriculum. Higher education institutions can use some of the recommended strategies and match them with other recommendations from other research studies. In addition, it is highly recommended that higher education institutions create a space where the university community, including staff, academics, students and supporting staff are included in these conversations. This is because as stated in some parts of the research study that dialogue between different parties is required in tackling this issue. Decolonising the curriculum, therefore, requires multiple stakeholders to address it.

6.2.1 Students Research on Decolonising Curriculum

Students need to do more research on decolonising the curriculum. Using terms and abstract phases is not convincing enough that they have the full understanding of what they want. The students who were aware that there is a need for decolonisation should assist other students who do not have an idea on which direction to take. This is because other students are able to read but others do not. When it comes to reading amongst the students, there is a huge problem. Students do not read much on materials outside their academic requirements. Most students do not use much of the library services that provide African literature which might contain a significant information. Students are more interested in protest which is defined by

slogans and struggle songs. There is adequate information in the libraries on campus that can build capacity on students to think critically based on the issue of decolonising the curriculum. This is where there are important aspects that need to be addressed.

6.2.2 Dialogue between Academics and Students

More formal dialogues should be conducted where discussions between academics and students take place. Different colleges within the University of KwaZulu-Natal should host these dialogues, where issues, challenges, and opportunities of decolonising the curriculum are discussed. It can also be a space where proposals are made with consensus. Academics are closest to the students, they understand the process of curriculum implementation more and can make a great contribution when collaborating with students. These dialogues can also prevent violent protests that usually take place on the campuses. This is because protests are the only way students can be heard. Protesting is a sign of their voices, therefore if there is someone who would listen, there would be a calm procedure. Students should prepare for these dialogues by reading and understanding critically. This is because some students may use emotions to discuss proposals made by academics, thus dialogues become unproductive.

6.2.3 Student Political Organisations/Organisations on Drafting Proposals

Student political organisations and other organisations are very influential in initiating movement on campuses. They lead the protests and are able to communicate with the university management. Drafting proposals on decolonising the curriculum are very important. The organisations should not mislead students by calling for proposals they do not fully understand during protests. To avoid differences between organisations that might occur during the drafting of the proposals, Student Governance and Leaders Development (SGLD) should act as a mediator in the processes. In these proposals, students should make proper planning and suggestions which are practical to apply. The university management should also make means of giving responses and time frames to these proposals, to show that they do take students seriously on what they think about the university environment.

6.2.4 Additional Stages on Language Policy by University of KwaZulu-Natal

The language policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal has been recently introduced. The university should make advanced developments on language policy. For instance, apply it in the content being taught, conducting compulsory tutorials in isiZulu, test, and examination question papers and other assessments containing questions both in isiZulu and English.

Applying this in the mainstream content will make students realise and appreciate the policy. Other students will be more comfortable on being assessed in a language they mostly relate with and will realise the progress of decolonisation. Implementations can make policies firmer and find a ground to grow within the university environment especially in transforming the curriculum.

6.2.5 Review on the University Physical Structures

The naming of buildings is highly associated with decolonisation of the curriculum according to students. The university should take it into consideration how effective this notion is to the students and the identity of the university. #RhodesMustFall at the University of Cape Town (UCT) was a demonstration of such; it took students to go on a protest and remove the statue of Cecil Rhodes who students believe was the oppressor of black people in Southern Africa. Physical structures named after white people/settlers who perpetuated oppression become a reminder to students of the pain they caused to black people. For the well-being of black students, the university should have changed these names post-apartheid. The buildings and structures may not be named after these individuals, but it should be new names indicating that South Africa is a democratic country. This does not mean the contribution of the white individuals in universities should be considered unnecessary, but it should be kept in the archives for future references.

6.3 The Study Strengths and Limitations

The objectives of the study were achieved possibly through data collected from the students who were participants in this research study. The main objective of this study was to investigate the students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum' in higher education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. The study has also investigated the challenges and opportunities of decolonising the curriculum and also implementing policies to decolonise the curriculum.

The semi-structured interviews used in this research study have maintained the quality of this research study. This is because it was able to explore students' and student political organisations insights regarding their understanding and experiences at Pietermaritzburg campus. With the information acquired, this research study can be used in contributing towards the on-going research conducted in this field of study. This will close the gaps which were not realised by academics, non-academic staff, university executive management and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). This will also be beneficial in

administering the process of possible implementation in decolonising the curriculum. Limitations in this study include the difficulty of reaching students during the exam period. In addition, some students who participated during #FeesMustFall protest have graduated and left campus (Pietermaritzburg). Getting representatives from student political organisations was a challenge because most organisations are currently led and have members who did not participate during #FeesMustFall. This resulted in having limited information based on student political organisation because there were two student leaders interviews, instead of four. Another challenge was that few participants responded on how to implement the policies in the University of KwaZulu-Natal to accommodate a decolonised curriculum. The sample used in this research study was also limiting as it was from one campus across five UKZN campuses available therefore, the results may not be generalised to other campuses/universities.

6.4 Future Research

Getting to know the insights and understandings of the notion ‘decolonisation of the curriculum’ in higher education from students is vital. It is also important to investigate academics perspective on these issues. It would also be ideal if this study is conducted in other universities who were prominent in acting, calling for decolonised education. It is, therefore, recommended that future researchers investigate academics and investigate views from other students and student political organisations across South African universities who participated during #FeesMustFall.

6.5 Conclusion and Remarks

The aim of this research was to collect the in-depth experiences, insight and understanding of students who have participated in a call for free and decolonised curriculum. Due to the nature of the research, the participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality concerning their identities. This was to ensure that the respondents were given the full expression without thinking about the consequences of their responses. Decolonising the curriculum was chosen as my focus given the rise of protest by students in the universities in 2015 and 2016 to decolonise higher education. As seen in the methodology the participants are university students who had experienced and participated these protests.

The findings in chapter five strongly indicated that there is ignorance or lack of knowledge and awareness to the understanding of decolonisation of curriculum in higher education amongst the students. This is because some students gave vague explanation and terms

without giving a deeper responses even after follow up questions. Similar to some parts of the literature review where there is data suggesting that the students do not understand what they are calling for, they are just interested in the protests. The findings revealed that postgraduate students gave definitions similar to the data in the literature review compared to undergraduates. In addition, non-political affiliated students showed more understanding compared to politically affiliated students.

Participants have responded to the research questions that there are challenges in the implementation of the decolonised curriculum in the university that needs to be addressed. Students also find it important that the issue of language be taken more seriously when it comes to curriculum. They find language to be a very important aspect when it comes to decolonising the curriculum. Other students have also mentioned that academics can become a barrier when it comes to implementing decolonised curriculum. Students made an emphasis that Afrocentric curriculum with African perspectives should be implemented to accommodate black African students. Renaming the University infrastructures and facilities, such as buildings, also becomes the main proposal from students who claim that they do not identify with individuals whose names are used to label university buildings/structures.

Some students and student political representatives mentioned that registration, student residences and funding is still a challenge and it was also part of the protest. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds find it difficult to fit in the universities, therefore accommodating their needs must be part of transformation. Students also mentioned that some academics do support this course they are fighting for, however some of them are against it. They also state that since the university has international donors, it will not be easy for decolonisation especially of the curriculum to take place.

Some of the lecturers and academic staff according to some of the students played a large role in communicating and participating in the engagements concerning 'decolonisation of curriculum' in higher education. Some lecturers and academic staff were responsible for the small and informal engagements they had with students regarding this issue. From these engagements students were able to further and add knowledge concerning decolonisation of the curriculum. However, students never drafted any formal proposal after these small engagements. Most of the times students used mass meetings within the campus as platforms to engage and share perceptions with other students to continue to call for free and decolonised education.

It is clear in this research study that participants were able to share their perceptions on decolonising the curriculum as they were part of the #FeesMustFall during 2015 and 2016. It can be argued that if this research study was done by a researcher who was not there during these protests, some of the important and rich information may have not been well explained. In addition, the participants were more comfortable to give information because they familiarise with the researcher and most of them were comfortable in replying in isiZulu.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1

Imibuzo

Unyaka wokufunda:

Ikolishi:

Iqembu labafundi lepolitiki:

- 1) Likunikeza muphi umqondo igama elithi '*decolonisation of curriculum* emfundweni ephakeme'?
- 2) Ucabanga ukuthi kubaluleke ngani ukuthi eNingizimu Afrika nasemfundweni ephakeme kuqalwe ukuba nezingxoxo ezifana nalezi?
- 3) Uma kukhulunywa nge *decolonisation* ibaphi ababhali base Afrika ocabanga ukuthi bengasetshenziswa kulezingxoxo?
- 4) Ucabanga ukuthi kwenziwa yini ukuthi ikharikhulamu e-*decolonised* ingenzeki?
- 5) Uma ucabanga ngaleziqo ozenzayo manje, i-*decolonisation* ingezeka kanjani? Naba kabanzi ngaleso naleso sifundo osenzayo.
- 6) Imiphi eminye imikhakha ekhona enyuvesi ocabanga ukuthi idinga i-*decolonisation* kwi-*curriculum*?
- 7) Eqenjini labafundi lezopolitiki okulo, niyibona kanjani indaba ye-*decolonisation* kwi-*curriculum* emfundweni ephakeme?
- 8) Ucabanga ukuthi iziphi izinqinamba umnyango wezemfundo ongahlangana nazo kulenqubo ukuze kwenzeke lokhu?
- 9) Iziphi izindlela ezintsha ocabanga ukuthi osolwazi kanye nabafundi bengazisebenzisa ukukhiqiza ulwazi?
- 10) Iyiphi indlela ocabanga ukuthi inyuvesi ingaqhuba izingxoxo mayelana ne *decolonisation*.

Appendix 2

Interview schedule

Year of Study:

College:

Student political organisation:

- 1) What do you think the concept/notion ‘decolonisation of curriculum’ means?
- 2) Why do you think it is important for us in South Africa and in higher education to begin such conversation?
- 3) When you talk of decolonisation which African thinkers do you think it is important for us to engage with?
- 4) Why do you think decolonised curriculum in higher education is failing to be ‘implemented’?
- 5) Thinking about the degree you are enrolled for – how do you think decolonisation can be applied? Elaborate on each of the modules or discipline subjects you are doing.
- 6) In which other disciplines do you think this can be implemented and how?
- 7) In your student political organisation what are the interpretations concerning the decolonisation of curriculum in higher education?
- 8) What do you think will be some of the challenges that will be encountered in higher education for this process to be implemented?
- 9) What opportunities for knowledge production do you think decolonisation can offer academics and students in the country?
- 10) In what way do you think the University can further discussions on decolonisation?

Appendix 3

Interview schedule

Student political organisation:

1. How does your student political organisation understand the notion ‘decolonisation of curriculum’ in higher education?
2. In the student political organisation how important are these conversations to be conducted?
3. As an organisation which African thinkers do you associate with when you talk of decolonisation?
4. What are your thoughts about the failure of implementing decolonised curriculum in higher education?
5. Thinking about the degrees offered in Pietermaritzburg campus, how can decolonised curriculum be applied to them?
6. Which disciplines do you think are mainly in need of decolonisation? Why?
7. How are your engagements or previous engagements with the university regarding the issue of decolonising the curriculum?
8. What outcomes have been there in these engagements? Are they satisfying?
9. What challenges of implementing decolonised curriculum does the organisation think will be/are there?
10. Why do you think it is important to have open discussions within the university regarding the decolonisation of curriculum in higher education?

Appendix 4

Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is Sindiswa Ndamane. I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: Students' insight and understanding of the notion 'decolonisation of the curriculum in higher education' at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. The aim of the study is to give insight of the notion 'decolonisation of curriculum, universities and higher, education'. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview will take about 45 minutes.
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisor. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. Email: sindiswandamane@yahoo.com; Cell: 0714303596. My supervisor is Dr. Sharmla Rama who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: ramas@ukzn.ac.za; Phone number: 0332605188

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

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