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**Towards a Decolonised Research Curriculum in Psychology: A Participatory Action
Research Exploration of Students' Perspectives**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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University of Pretoria

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DECLARATION

I, Malefane Kenneth Maine, declare that the thesis which I hereby submit to the University of Pretoria for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology is my own work and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at another university. Moreover, the material referenced herein is duly proclaimed.

Malefane Kenneth Maine



30 November 2022

Name and Surname

Signature

Date

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The completion of this document speaks less about individual effort or ability and more about Divine providence and support from the family and the University, for which I am deeply grateful. I want to acknowledge the contribution they have made. The order of the acknowledgement is in no way a reflection of the significance of their respective contribution.

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ABSTRACT

The higher education sector has been marked by the pre-eminence of Western epistemology. Western epistemology has also dominated psychology and research curricula. Psychology students at all levels have been exposed to these curricula without adequate opportunities to challenge the foundations of these curricula. Thus, the purpose of the study was to explore how postgraduate psychology students define decolonisation and critique coloniality within the psychology and research curriculum, to explore the factors postgraduate psychology students perceive as impediments to decolonisation and to consider strategies to facilitate the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum. A Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach was used, and data were collected using the participatory video approach (PVA). The data collection took place over several stages, including a Decolonial Encounters Workshop, artistic representations, storyboarding and collection and editing of video material. The findings suggest that these postgraduate psychology students see decolonisation as a challenge and desire the removal of colonial influences in psychology and a transition to a new form of psychology. The findings further indicate that coloniality within psychology is exemplified through the universalisation of psychological theory, the lack of accessibility to psychological services and issues with psychological assessments. These factors contribute to the perceived irrelevance of psychology. The stumbling blocks to decolonisation that emerged included the Health Professions Council of South Africa and its role in perpetuating coloniality and student- and community-related factors. Potential ameliorative strategies include adopting participative and narrative research approaches, making decolonisation a research focus area, promoting inclusive curriculum development processes and novel pedagogical approaches, and uncovering, systematising, and preserving local knowledge. These themes emerged consistently during the different stages of the study and are reflected in the final video production.

Keywords: Decolonisation, Participatory Action Research, Participatory Video Approach, postgraduate students, psychology, curriculum

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APA	American Psychological Association
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PVA	Participatory Video Approach
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the study and provides an overview of the processes that occurred during the study. In the course of the introduction, the purpose and objectives of the study will be outlined. The introduction will also briefly introduce the theoretical point of departure – postcolonial theory. In addition, the methodological approach used in the study and the chapter outline of the document will be presented.

1.2 Background

The higher education sector has long been dominated by Western epistemology. The prominence of Western epistemology has permeated various disciplines within universities, including the humanities and psychology, and finds expression in their respective curricula. One of the driving forces behind this pre-eminence is the colonial history of most non-European nations, which has had a lasting impact on all aspects of life in these nations. The growth of decolonial movements has exposed and critiqued the pre-eminence of Western epistemology and has subsequently explored ways to open curricula to non-Western influences.

The psychology and research curriculum has been similarly subjected to Western domination (Bhambra, Gebrail, & Nişancioğlu, 2018; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018; Morreira et al., 2020; Pete, 2018; Salami & Okeke, 2017). The pervasive Western bias within the psychology curriculum has raised several questions about the relevance of the psychology curriculum to the issues that most South Africans face. Questions about whether universities and the curriculum being delivered at these universities are preparing students to work with marginalised and economically depressed communities have been raised.

Additional questions have been asked about whether the current psychology curriculum endows students with the capacity for creative agency and the critical and analytical skills required to uncover coloniality within psychology and the possible role of the colonial

history of South Africa in the proliferation of contemporary challenges (Barnes, 2018; Kessi, 2017; Lockett, 2016). The indication is that this may not be happening as much as it should, although there are some encouraging steps. Some of the steps taken are explored in the literature review chapter (Hendricks, 2018). The implication is that students lacking creative agency, and critical and analytical skills, may be less able to uncover the influence of colonialism and colonality in the construction of contemporary society and the proliferation of psychosocial dysfunctions. Furthermore, these students are less able to contribute relevant solutions to address the challenges faced by these communities adequately (Long, 2017; Long et al., 2019; Watkins, et al., 2018).

Dudgeon and Walker (2015) explore the implications of overlooking the impact of the colonial history of a place on mental health. They suggest that colonialism within the Australian context has created circumstances where the Indigenous people have become severed from their land, spirituality, knowledge systems and communities. Severance from these sacred connections contributes to a sense of profound grief and pain among the Indigenous people of Australia, and that grief and pain are still prevalent. The colonial history of South Africa not only suggests a similarity in terms of the experiences of the Indigenous people of Australia but also the psychosocial and spiritual impact of those experiences (Cocks et al., 2018; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Long, 2017).

Continuing to try to understand the psychological and the social from a purely Western perspective creates conditions where other factors outside the interest of Western psychology are not considered as having influence and are thus dismissed. The implication is that the challenges emanating from specific communities are not fully realised, and the possible contributions these communities could make are not given credence (Cocks et al., 2018). This situation implies that students who have been through such Western-oriented training are ineffectual in contributing to change within their communities. The outcome of this situation is that Black psychologists, of which the principal researcher is one, tend to experience a sense

of being alien to their communities and unable to contribute meaningfully to change (Kumalo, 2018; Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016; Villanueva, 2013).

South Africa is a complex society from the perspectives of history, culture and language. For instance, South Africa has a population of approximately 60 million and 11 official spoken languages, each of which is linked with specific cultural groupings and geographical locations within the country (StatsSA, 2019). Even within the various cultural and linguistic groupings, innumerable cultural sub-groupings, and linguistic dialects, also geographically distributed, exist.

Over and above the recognised cultural and linguistic groups, other cultural and linguistic groups do not enjoy official status but are fundamental to the history of the country. Such groups, including various Khoisan groups – the original occupants of Southern Africa – and various Hindu and Muslim communities, have faced and continue to face marginalisation even within the current democratic dispensation (Cocks et al., 2018).

According to the 2011 census results (StatsSA, 2011), the majority (77%) of South Africans speak an Indigenous language. The most commonly spoken language in South Africa is isiZulu (22.7), followed by isiXhosa (16%). Afrikaans is the country's third most commonly used language (13.5%). English is only the fourth most spoken language (9.6%). These patterns have remained consistent across the 2001 and 2011 censuses and will probably remain the same in the next census, which is currently underway.

The differences in the cultural and linguistic traditions of these communities denote, to some degree, unique epistemologies, ontologies, and belief systems. Many of these groups have been marginalised and experienced violence due to colonialism and apartheid. In many cases, these groups continue to experience violence through economic deprivation. These issues contribute to the development of psychological issues (Ally & Lissoni, 2012; Cocks et al., 2018; Nyambi & Makombe, 2019).

Psychology and other Western disciplines seek to provide services within these complex systems. Currently, the theoretical architecture within psychology to enable a deeper understanding of the role of the socio-political realities, both past and present, in the genesis of mental health issues is still fledgling (Barnes, 2018; Long, 2016). However, despite these communities grappling with various challenges, they also have various coping mechanisms that contribute to ameliorating these challenges (Cocks et al., 2018; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015). Some of the mechanisms include the connections between the individual and the land, the natural world, the non-living and the broader community.

Within the context of research training and selection, the discipline currently does not offer graduates enough tools to make sense of the contextual factors, including culture, physical environment, community, and family that is both living and non-living. The apparent inability of the current structure and the curriculum to provide the necessary tools is based on the following aspects. First, the higher education space does not create sufficient opportunities for creative research approaches. The proliferation of these methods within the training and application of research can support decolonisation. Such novel approaches are crucial when creating space for collaborations or when studying topics that may appear esoteric and may be out of reach for traditional research methods. However, for these methods to gain traction, they require institutional gatekeepers involved in curriculum development and institutional research review processes to create space for these novel approaches to teaching and researching. The danger of not creating space for these approaches means that their potential contribution to the decolonisation of the curriculum and research is curtailed (Barnes, 2018; Long, 2017; Long et al., 2019; Terre Blanche et al., 2021; Watkins et al., 2018).

Secondly, traditional psychology training focuses largely on the application of psychological theory and practice on individual diagnoses and interventions, and sometimes group interventions. Furthermore, it focuses on deficits that exist within the individuals and less on the historical and socio-political issues that contributed to the genesis and proliferation of psychological well-being and ill health. Having the critical and analytical tools to explore

these questions will create a deeper understanding of the current challenges and raise possibilities for novel ways forward. Part of the reason that psychology does not concern itself with these issues is that they are perhaps, to some extent, located within the fields of sociology, history, political science or even anthropology. Therefore, fully grasping some of these issues requires cross-disciplinary collaboration for which students are not necessarily prepared (Kessi et al., 2021). The key benefit of these collaborations is the potential for the discipline to bring their respective approaches to understand the current realities from a complete perspective. The idea is that a complete understanding of the realities will help us ask different questions and perhaps find more novel solutions (Kessi, 2018; Kessi et al., 2021; Lockett, 2016).

Thirdly, for the longest time, the approach to teaching and learning has tended to favour banking education, where students are perceived to be empty vessels that require filling with information. These approaches reproduce researchers and psychologists of certain types, and these individuals occupy key positions within institutional structures and statutory bodies and therefore contribute to the proliferation of a certain status quo (Kessi et al., 2021). Currently, the higher education curriculum, including psychology, does not necessarily equip students with the skills for critical and creative thought. These skills are essential to uncover coloniality embedded within the psychology curriculum (Long, 2017; Long et al., 2019; Watkins et al., 2018). The implication is that students may not always be able to debate, challenge, and question the status quo within psychology. Furthermore, it implies that the psychology curriculum would not necessarily place the student in a position to sufficiently understand the role that colonialism and coloniality play in shaping the lives of the people they serve. Without an adequate understanding of these matters, helping becomes difficult (Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016).

The apparent lack of acknowledgement of these contextual factors could be why about 70% to 84% of South Africans rely on traditional healthcare practitioners for assistance (Zingela et al., 2018). Other reasons could include the cost of traditional medicine and the

accessibility of traditional health professionals. In its current form, the discipline forces both the African psychologist and the African client to leave their Africanness at the door and use Western epistemological tools to attempt to understand African life. Furthermore, the lack of consideration of these issues means that the valuable insights and strengths embedded within Indigenous communities are missed. As such, the opportunity for Africans and African life to contribute positively to the human family is missed because of the perceived ontological and epistemological inferiority of non-Western epistemologies.

One of the ways to address these issues is through the critical evaluation of the psychology curriculum in terms of its capacity to prepare students to render relevant services within such a context that is vastly different from what psychology was initially intended (Barnes, 2018; Chilisa, 2012; Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Kessi, 2017; Lockett, 2016). The fact that the students are routinely trained and required to render services within the current context means that they are critical stakeholders in the profession. As such, their critical considerations of the current state and future of the profession are invaluable (Joosub, 2021; Silva & Students for Diversity Now, 2018).

As a practising research psychologist for a little over a decade, the principal researcher has had to interact with people from various social contexts within South Africa. Many of these individuals were African and were from disadvantaged backgrounds. Interactions with these individuals have occurred within research, training, and personnel selections in a work context. In all these varied types of encounters, the contextual factors of these individuals were rarely acknowledged and incorporated into the research, training, and personnel selection processes. Little within the training and selection framework acknowledges these aspects of individuals' lives.

More flexibility is to be found in the research framework due to the inquisitive nature of research and the novel and innovative approaches that usually find expression there. As an African male, the principal researcher has significant contextual similarities to the individuals

that are involved in research, training, and selection activities. The principal researcher's identity, spirituality and sense of self have been hugely influenced by contextual factors. These contextual factors include culture, physical environment, community and living and non-living family.

However, when practising psychological research with African people where there are commonalities relating to some of these factors, the profession does not make enough space to consider the role of these contextual factors in understanding the life of these individuals. Therefore, if, as an African male, the principal researcher can appreciate the influence of these contextual issues on daily life, it appears inauthentic to interact with other African people within the framework of research, training, and personnel selection without acknowledging the role of these contextual factors.

The factors that have been outlined have contributed to increasing calls for decolonisation. Over time, the drive towards decolonisation has gathered pace and conversations about decolonisation have taken centre stage (Morreira et al., 2020). The popularisation of decolonisation has been driven by the broadening recognition of the need to challenge Western epistemological pre-eminence and contribute to making disciplines and the ensuing curricula responsive to the context wherein they find application (Becker, 2017; Heleta, 2016; Maistry & Lortan, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

This need for change has also been recognised within psychology and research in the psychology curriculum. Psychology students in South African universities have been exposed to Western-biased psychology curricula without adequate opportunity to question these narratives. The proliferation of Western epistemological bias has contributed to making knowledge generated in the field of psychology and other disciplines irrelevant, inaccessible, and unusable for local communities.

One of the most glaring examples of Western bias within the curriculum is the language policy of many South African universities. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the majority of

South Africans do not speak English as a first language. However, many universities still maintain English as the medium of instruction, and some use Afrikaans. Many scholars have criticised universities for relentlessly maintaining English as the medium of instruction when so much of the population is not English-speaking (Baloyi, 2021; Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016, Sonn et al., 2017; Zwane, 2019). Thus, one of the cardinal objectives of the decolonial movement is to address the question of language.

Despite the recognition of the need for change within psychology, nothing concrete has emerged, and the status quo largely remains (Heleta, 2016; Long, 2017; Morreira et al., 2020; Morris-Paxton, et al., 2017). Higher education – and by extension, psychology – remains resolutely colonial, with entrenched neoliberal ideologies and knowledge generated for the benefit of Western imperial projects (Bhambra et al., 2018; Joosub, 2021). Hendricks (2018) suggests that some of the measures taken to decolonise were largely ad hoc, performative, devoid of substance and unsustainable.

Long (2016) identifies two factors that have impeded the psychological process in South Africa. In the first place, he suggests that resistance among some, primarily White, psychologists to the suggestion that the history and experiences of Black South Africans are fundamentally different and could require unique and more contextual psychology might exist. This resistance could be attributed to the possibility that decolonisation may represent an uncomfortable reminder of apartheid-era discourses on racial differences (Long, 2016). Long (2016) suggests that this apparent discomfiture among some White colleagues also means that significant institutional and intellectual resources that could have contributed to the advancement of the decolonial agenda for decolonisation have been lost.

In the second place, Long (2016) expresses concern that what it means to be African could also be counterproductive. He notes that what constitutes Africanity is still considered and represented in racial and cultural terms. Consequently, people who are not Black may find it challenging to find a place for themselves within the decolonial conversation. Watkins

et al. (2018) suggest that, on a deeper level, the obstacles may be founded on the idea of White fragility that involves a degree of epistemic xenophobia that contests the centring of non-Western epistemologies. In addition, Becker (2017) posits that the apparent lack of meaningful implementation could be attributable to decolonisation still being mired in the uncertainty of how it would unfold and who would be responsible for it. Thus, the key stakeholders have been content to kick the proverbial can down the road for the time being.

The #feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall protests that engulfed South Africa in 2015 propelled the decolonisation conversation into the mainstream and popularised the concept of decolonisation. Furthermore, these protestations made it clear that kicking the can down the road may not be a viable long-term strategy (Becker, 2017; Morreira et al., 2020). Since then, a great deal of conversation about decolonisation and growing interest from academia and funding institutions both locally and globally has occurred. These developments have created space for various stakeholders to contribute to the rich and complex debates about disrupting Western bias within higher education and psychology and facilitating the decolonisation of higher education and psychology (Ahmed, 2019; Amosun et al., 2018; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018; Oelofsen, 2015).

However, with the decolonisation movement gaining popularity, it is essential that the voice of students continues to be heard and that they occupy a prominent role in the decolonial project because, historically, students tend to be neglected in affairs of curriculum development (Amosun et al., 2018; Tamburro, 2013). The lack of space for students to question Western bias within the curriculum is based on the fact that students have relatively low institutional power and decision-makers within universities have a narrow view of the role that students can play within the curriculum development space (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; Joosub, 2021). Therefore, the current project focuses on creating space for students to contribute to the decolonisation of the curriculum within psychology.

1.2 Aim and objectives of the study

Every year, universities produce master's level psychology graduates in professional coursework degrees who then register as psychologists at the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) in the six different registration categories – clinical, counselling, industrial, educational, neuro and research psychology on completion of a mini-dissertation, internship, board examination and, in the case of clinical psychology, one year of community service.

The initial focus of this study was on research psychology. This focus was inspired by the fact that research, in general, is the heartbeat of any discipline. Second and more personally, the principal researcher is registered in the research psychology category and has been involved in internship supervision. Therefore, the principal researcher has an interest in research psychology and, more specifically, the training and development of future research psychologists. The focus of the study was broadened to include postgraduate psychology students in general because no research psychology students volunteered for the study.

The current study creates space for postgraduate students to contribute their voices to the rich and complex conversations about decolonisation. The purpose was to explore how postgraduate psychology students construct decolonisation and their critique of coloniality within the psychology and research curriculum. Furthermore, it was to explore the factors that postgraduate psychology students consider impediments to decolonisation and their practical contribution to a decolonised psychology and research curriculum. The guiding research question for this study is as follows:

- How can psychology students at a South African university collaborate to make contributions to developing a decolonised research curriculum in psychology?

The objectives of this study include the following:

- Exploring postgraduate psychology students' perspectives on the colonial history of psychology in South Africa and how it affects the psychology and research curriculum.
- Exploring postgraduate psychology students' perspectives on barriers to decolonisation and the transformation of the psychology and research curriculum.
- Together with postgraduate psychology students' perspectives, developing strategies for decolonising the research curriculum in psychology.

1.3 Theoretical point of departure

The theoretical point of departure for this study was postcolonial theory which connects to this study in various ways. Postcolonial theory connects with decolonisation in that it seeks to critique the deterministic, universalistic, and ethnocentric inclination of Western epistemology, which has marginalised Indigenous people and their epistemologies and cultures. Furthermore, it seeks to provide alternatives to Western epistemologies by creating space for marginalised people and their epistemologies to take centre stage (Gandhi, 2019; Lunga, 2008).

From a research perspective, postcolonial theory critiques the unequal power relations between the Global North and Global South, the resourced and under-resourced and between researchers and participants. The critique highlights the impact of unequal power relationships on establishing the research agenda, making decisions about research issues, and disseminating research results (Chilisa, 2012, 2017).

Methodologically, postcolonial theory and decolonisation appear to have an affinity with collaborative and participatory methods. The affinity with participatory methods is based on the idea that these methods seek to disrupt traditional relationships between researchers and participants and create a more equal distribution of decision-making power.

1.4 Methodological approach of the study

Methodologically, postcolonial theory and a decolonial approach lend themselves to collaborative and participatory methods. Thus, participatory action research (PAR) was chosen as the preferred methodology for the study because it is committed to changing society through collaborative efforts with participants and aims to disrupt prevailing power arrangements by creating space for people to have a say in matters that affect them.

This study created space for postgraduate psychology students to act as co-researchers and reflect critically and creatively on the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum. Thus, the study employed a participatory video approach (PVA) to collect data. PVA is a process in which research participants are provided access to video recording equipment and trained to capture aspects of their experiences and observations for reflection and further action.

This approach is based on the principles of collaboration, community mobilisation and the decentralisation of the concept of experts (Jewitt, 2012; Sitter, 2012; Walsh, 2016; Yang, 2012). Cardinal (2019) adds that this approach contributes to democratising the knowledge production process by creating opportunities for marginalised people to contribute to knowledge production. The idea of democratising knowledge and knowledge production is one of the cardinal pillars of the decolonial movement.

1.5 Anticipated contribution of the study

In South Africa, psychology has been taught in some of the older universities for over a century. Over the years, much has changed within the country. However, the perchance of psychology to align itself with the powers of the day through the years has remained. Thus, psychology has not done much to challenge prevailing social orders and social injustices (Cooper & Nicholas, 2012; Pillay, 2016). The current format of psychology training in South Africa, which involves a master's degree by coursework, mini-dissertation and a 12-month

internship, has remained since the 1970s. Since 2003, community service for clinical psychology students has been added (Padmanabhanunni et al., 2022; Pillay & Harvey, 2006).

During the 1970s, apartheid policies permeated society, including higher education and psychology training. That meant that access to training was strictly regulated and reserved for White students and that there were very few opportunities for Black students to move into the field of psychology. Only a handful of universities, which mainly were Historically Black Universities and some English liberal universities, offered training for Black students wanting to pursue a career in psychology and some also had opportunities to pursue their studies abroad (Manganyi, 2013; Padmanabhanunni et al., 2022; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021).

The current study is located within a Historically White University. The university was initially bilingual at its formation in 1930. With the growth of the White Afrikaans-speaking student body, English fell away, and the university became an exclusively Afrikaans medium university by 1932. It remained an Afrikaans medium institution until 1982. From then onwards, until 2008, the university became bilingual again and slowly began opening up to students from different racial groupings. In 2019, the university dropped Afrikaans and became an English medium university. The curriculum from the early 1900s to the mid-1980s in historically White Afrikaans medium universities aimed to train students to meet the needs of the White conservative Afrikaner community. Therefore, the needs of the other communities did not enter into the conversation. Fundamentally, the basis of this curriculum was Western, with some modifications to ensure that it was fit for purpose at that time. Of course, the purpose was to advance the aspiration of the White conservative Afrikaner community. The most obvious indication of this posture was the employment of an Afrikaans medium of instruction at the university. One of the implications of this situation is that the theory and practice of psychology within local indigenous communities remained unknown (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020; Manganyi, 2013; Padmanabhanunni et al., 2022)

With time and the advent of democratic rule, several changes occurred within the higher education landscape. These changes are explored in Chapter 4 of the thesis. Some of these included the opening up of historically White institutions to other racial groupings. That meant more Black students entered the university and consequently enrolled in the psychology program. However, despite the changes, the number of qualified Black psychologists remains under 20% compared to the total number of psychologists. Furthermore, the fundamental issues of coloniality and neo-liberal bias within the curriculum remained broadly the same (Hendricks, 2018; Padmanabhanunni et al., 2022; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021).

Since 1994, universities have trained Black psychologists in Western epistemological traditions and continued conducting research that contributed to the rationalisation of oppression and further produced a psychological theory that did not adequately account for the apparent sociocentrism of African societies (Barnes, 2018; Long, 2016). In addition, the actions taken were ad hoc, performative, and unsustainable (Hendricks, 2018). Hendricks (2018) suggests that these actions involved tagging Black scholars to pre-existing course outlines, developing reporting templates that attempt to measure decolonisation within departments and producing statements and charters professing the intent to decolonise. These actions mean that what emerged as a revolt by students towards higher education and its ideological underpinnings became depoliticised into a superficial adjustment of the curriculum, which was, in many instances, fronted by institutions and academic staff while students got side-lined (Hendricks, 2018).

The renewed vigour concerning the decolonisation of the higher education curriculum is partly because of the student protests, known as the #feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall protests, that emerged in 2015 and 2016 in South Africa. One of the demands that the students made had to do with the decolonisation of the higher education curriculum. Within psychology, this contributed to a renewed intensity in the criticism of Western bias within the psychology curriculum (Becker, 2017; Hendricks, 2018; Lacerda, 2015). Thus, it is crucial that students,

as the instigators of the current debate about decolonisation, remain engaged in the conversation as higher education contemplates engaging in the business of decolonising the curriculum.

Ensuring that students continue to be engaged as the conversation progresses and active steps are taken to decolonise the curriculum is essential because students have tended to be excluded from curriculum development discussions. Including postgraduate psychology students as co-researchers will ensure that critical stakeholders contribute to the critique of the current curriculum and the development of innovative approaches to train researchers in psychology (Maistry & Lortan, 2017). Thus, the study contributes to uncovering coloniality within the psychology and research curriculum and offers concrete ideas on its decolonisation. Therefore, the anticipated contribution of the current study is to generate and provide insights into students' perspectives regarding the challenges of coloniality within the psychology and research curriculum within psychology. Another anticipated contribution relates to the strategies for decolonising the psychology and research curriculum within psychology within the university where this study is located.

Methodologically, this study used PVA, which has been used in various contexts to create space for marginalised voices to take centre stage. In the current study, and somewhat unexpectedly, the COVID-19 pandemic meant that there had to be a deviation from the traditional PVA method that adopts face-to-face interactions. The restrictions meant that using a face-to-face approach was impossible and PVA had to be employed through virtual technology. To the best of the principal researcher's knowledge, this is the first study to employ virtual technology within PVA.

1.6 Chapter outline

In this section, the structure of the chapters in this document was outlined. Chapter 1, the current chapter, introduces the study and its background. Chapter 2 is the literature review and presents the current state of knowledge on decolonisation, the curriculum, and the role of

students. Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical point of departure of the study to create a theoretical context for the study. Section 4 presents the PAR methodology used in the study, and the PVA employed to collect data. Chapter 5 presents the findings from the PAR process detailed in the previous chapter. The last chapter, Chapter 6, communicates the discussion, limitations, and recommendations of the study.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study, its rationale and the guiding research question and objectives. The theoretical and methodological approaches, including the data collection method, were also briefly explained, and the chapter outline for the document was presented. The next chapter presents the literature review to provide deeper insights into current debates about decolonisation and the current knowledge context of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the parameters of the literature about decolonisation. The scope of the literature provides insights into the current debates about decolonisation within higher education, psychological theory, research, and practice and, consequently, the curriculum. The chapter begins with an exposition of the key concepts involved in decolonisation and is followed by an exploration of the links between colonialism, apartheid, and psychology and how this relationship influences the current psychology and research curriculum. Based on this relationship, decolonising the current psychology and research curriculum, and collaborating with various stakeholders to make it relevant is imperative.

Globally, various decolonial scholars have encountered challenges when introducing decolonial methods within their respective psychology classrooms, and their experiences are examined. Furthermore, other more germane challenges, which can be anticipated as part of the decolonial project within the research curriculum in psychology, are explored.

The literature points out that decolonisation is a collective endeavour that allows various stakeholders to collaborate. Students are stakeholders who have been marginalised in issues about the development of the curriculum. Thus, the chapter explores students' role in decolonising the current psychology and research curriculum. Finally, this chapter will explore how academic staff have implemented decolonial approaches in some psychology modules in universities both locally and globally.

2.2 Definition of concepts

This section explores the critical concepts most relevant to the study, providing definitions and detailed explorations. The concepts that will receive attention in this section are colonisation, coloniality, decolonisation, decoloniality, Whiteness, curriculum, curriculum responsiveness, critical reflexivity, neoliberalism, curriculum responsiveness, epistemic disobedience, and culture.

2.2.1 Colonialism

Tamburro (2013) defines colonialism as the sustained socio-political exploitation that emerged because of the relentless expansion of European empires for centuries. According to Said (as cited in Tamburro, 2013), specific theoretical and practical drivers underlie this exploitation. Thus, the exploitation was a considered, effortful, and deliberate enterprise to subjugate and exploit Indigenous people throughout Asia, Australia, North and South America and Africa (Chilisa, 2012; Karari, 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Tamburro, 2013).

Keikelame and Swartz (2019) point to four different types of colonisation that have taken place during the history of South Africa. The four different types can be grouped into official and unofficial categories. The first form of colonisation was unofficial. It was carried out by Black people from the north of the continent who travelled to Southern Africa, where they encountered the Khoi and San peoples. The second type of colonisation, also unofficial, was carried out by the Dutch. The third was official colonisation which was carried out by the British. The fourth, also official, was internal by White Afrikaners and concluded in 1994.

The official colonisations appear to be the most violent, oppressive, and exclusive and had the most devastating impact (Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). Colonial powers achieved this sustained socio-political exploitation by subjugating the military, political, economic, spiritual, and cultural lives of the colonised nations (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019). The impact of colonialism on continents goes beyond politics and the economy; it extends to every aspect of the lives of the colonised masses, and its legacy remains entrenched even after independence (Heleta, 2016).

Through these means, colonial powers would divide and rule the Indigenous people by treating loyalists well and arresting, torturing, and killing dissidents (Karari, 2018). Additionally, Christian missionaries were also used to facilitate the spread of colonialism. Christianity condemned the religious and spiritual beliefs of Indigenous people and forcefully encouraged them to embrace a colonial way of life. Colonial powers discredited Indigenous

knowledge through spiritual and scientific racism and established a hegemony of theories and ideas in academia and society. Thus, colonisation resulted in epistemicide – the denigration and decimation of Indigenous knowledge systems (le Grange, 2016; Mungwini, 2018).

Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) suggest that in Australia, colonisation took away the rights of Indigenous Australians to name their realities and thereby determine their identity. Mogorosi (2018) adds that beyond the politics and the land question, colonialism endeavoured to re-engineer the cultures of colonised people to reflect colonial ideals through the manipulation of the education system.

Colonialism and apartheid have created circumstances where Black people have become psychologically displaced, and their ways of life have taken them far from their African roots (Ngunyulu et al., 2020). The displacement of Black people has contributed to creating Black people who have become particularly good at mimicking Whiteness. However, regardless of the efficiency of this mimicry, Black people are never truly part of this new world. The mimicry of Whiteness takes Black people further away from their roots to the point where they become unrecognisable to their people (Kumalo, 2018).

Therefore, one of the roles of decolonisation is that it contributes to the re-centring of Black people in African ontology and epistemology. The sustained colonial control contributed, through racism, to the loss of ownership and control of Indigenous knowledge, spirituality, belief systems and actions (Chilisa, 2012). Consequently, colonialism and its legacy have profoundly impacted the health and well-being of the people in colonised nations (Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). These outcomes were the same on all the continents, and Indigenous people's lives changed forever wherever the colonisers came ashore.

2.2.2 Coloniality

Coloniality can be understood as pervasive patterns of power emanating from colonial domination which continue to define the spiritual, language, sexuality, culture, labour, and knowledge production in former colonies long after the end of colonial administration (Lacerda,

2015; Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Therefore, coloniality is the socio-political and cultural outcome of colonialism that outlasts colonialism itself. The influence wielded by these superpowers and colonisers is pervasive and can be challenging to isolate and name (le Grange, 2016). Coloniality is kept alive in various ways, including but not limited to institutional traditions, criteria for academic excellence, literature and the cultural aspirations that emerged during colonialism.

Epistemologically, coloniality struggles to recognise epistemic diversity and insists that it is mono-epistemic despite evidence to the contrary. Therefore, it insists on naming and describing the whole universe, and everything contained therein from a colonial Eurocentric perspective (Naude, 2019). From this perspective, higher education produces new colonially trained elites who come to replace the colonialists and implement neoliberal ideologies within public and private institutions (le Grange, 2016).

Maldonado-Torres (2017) distinguishes between the coloniality of being, power and knowledge. These colonialities have emerged and developed globally within the context of worldwide European colonial expansion since at least the 16th century. He states that these forms of coloniality are grounded in the belief that humanity was unevenly distributed among the world's populations, with some being human and others being part of a lesser kind of human. The lesser humans are found in colonised territories and are objects of anxiety, fear, desire, and rage (Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

Maldonado-Torres (2016) states that, much like colonialism, coloniality involves the expropriation of land and resources primarily through the logic of the market and modern nation-states. This expropriation leads to a situation where Indigenous people in colonised territories continue to experience vast forms of dispossession even after independence. This process involves not only land and resources being taken away, but also the possibilities for the Indigenous people in colonised territories to emerge as giving, receiving, thinking, creating, and acting agentic subjects. From this perspective, the Indigenous people in colonised

territories are meant to be landless, without resources and lacking the capacity for autonomy and self-determination with a constant desire to be something other than themselves (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

Adams et al. (2017) suggest that coloniality also finds expression within psychological theory, research, and practice. They aver that psychology colonises through the valorisation of the individual and individualistic habits of mind, largely devoid of contextual considerations. These habits of mind, which include an inclination towards growth and self-actualisation, are rooted in relationships between oneself and one's community defined through Eurocentric and Western ideologies. Psychology considers these ideas an expression of optimal human functioning and prescribes them universally.

Dutta (2018) states that coloniality within psychology manifests in three forms of bias. The first form of bias is analytic-reductionist bias, wherein complex human experiences are reduced to basic units. The second form of bias is trait comparison bias which emphasises enduring human traits decontextualised and sanitised from their socio-historical and political influences and, thus, privileges some and marginalises others. Stability-equilibrium bias, which relates to the emphasis on bringing about stability and balance and pathologising conflict, is the third form.

The power to determine what is considered psychological ill-being and well-being in various contexts means that Western hegemonic psychology continues to perpetuate coloniality across most of the world (Dutta, 2018). Thus, Methula (2017) concludes that coloniality is neo-colonialism and neo-apartheid that create institutional violence, inequality, injustice, and exploitation under the false pretext of its civilising mission, development, and democracy in colonised contexts.

2.2.3 Decolonisation

The literature suggests that decolonisation is dynamic, complex, rich and, in many respects, controversial. One of the vital areas of contention is the possible position of Western

canon vis-à-vis Indigenous epistemologies in the decolonised curriculum (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019; Reiter, 2019). Furthermore, decolonisation is perceived by some scholars as a critical flashpoint in the liberation struggle, while others have been less enthusiastic and perceive decolonisation as a fad that has limited value (Barnes, 2018; Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019; Maldonado-Torres, 2016; McNamara & Naepi, 2018).

The indication is that uncertainty about how decolonisation is to be defined exists (Costandius et al., 2018; Long, 2017). However, despite the contestations and challenges, definite themes that mark the theory, praxis, and intended outcomes of decolonisation can be identified. These themes give insights into the nature of decolonisation and its potential value and allow for better understanding (Chilisa, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2016). It appears that decolonisation can be understood as an event – a process – that disrupts the legacy of colonialism and reclaims and revalues Indigenous ontology, epistemology, culture, and heritage, placing it at the centre of future theory and praxis within academia and broader society (Chilisa, 2012; Magoqwana, 2018; Mheta et al., 2018; van der Westhuizen, 2013).

Simply stated, decolonisation involves dismantling coloniality and the legacy of colonialism to facilitate the political, psychological, and spiritual emancipation of African people (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019). Decolonisation is also not about taking African scholars and having them write psychology books espousing Western thought and epistemology (Nibafu et al., 2021). Although this could contribute to the perception of change and diversity, the epistemological basis of the material remains firmly in the West. The act of African authors writing these serves to legitimise Western epistemology through these optics.

Decolonisation needs to be considered in the context of the lack of recognition of the ontology of Black people within higher education. Due to the colonial history of South Africa, most universities still struggle to create identities in post-apartheid South Africa. Thus, what decolonisation seeks to accomplish goes further than mathematical inclusion and strives to achieve the inclusion of the ontologies and epistemologies of Black people within higher

education (Magoqwana, 2018). Decolonisation is, therefore, a necessary response to colonialism, colonality and apartheid (Mheta et al., 2018). Decolonisation represents a collective effort to work against the epistemic injustice of colonisation.

Decolonial literature suggests that decolonisation may be understood as occurring at various stages (Ally & August, 2018; Chilisa, 2012; le Grange, 2016). It appears that the initial phase of decolonisation involves the profound realisation and recognition of subjugation and assimilation into the culture of the coloniser. Second, this realisation and recognition lead to a radical shift of consciousness that fuels the drive to reclaim and recall a pre-colonial history. The final phase of decolonisation involves taking these reclaimed histories and realigning and recalibrating them to the present to offer more relevant, revolutionary, and helpful literature to inform psychological practice (Ally & August, 2018).

Chilisa (2012) suggests that decolonisation can occur over five phases: rediscovery and recovery, mourning, dreaming, commitment, and action. Briefly, the rediscovery and recovery processes involve searching for the history, culture, and identity of the colonised peoples. Mourning involves lamenting the trauma and assault on the identities and social realities that colonised people have experienced and continue to experience within the postcolonial world. The lamentation process is crucial to the overall healing process and must give way to a new dreaming process.

Dreaming involves mobilising colonised people through their rediscovered and recovered knowledge systems, cultures, histories and identities and theorising and developing new and alternative possibilities (Chilisa, 2012). In this PhD study, these new possibilities relate to the contribution that students, as stakeholders, can make to developing a decolonised curriculum in psychology and research in psychology. The commitment phase involves transforming students and academic staff into activists committed to including the voices of colonised people in the university curriculum. Action entails the translation of dreams and

commitments into actionable strategies aimed at transforming the curriculum as a harbinger of the transformation of broader society (Chilisa, 2012; le Grange, 2016).

In simpler terms, decolonisation is a process that involves dealing with the effects of colonisation. At this point, the issue is not whether higher education should decolonise but rather what strategies and tactics should guide decolonisation (Mheta et al., 2018). Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) observe that higher education in South Africa has not successfully developed and implemented strategies and tactics to guide decolonisation. They acknowledge that such efforts are made doubly difficult because they must unfold within the context of the hegemonic power structures within universities. It is imperative that developing and implementing strategies and tactics that guide decolonisation should be free of unproductive ideological contestations that seek to derail decolonisation (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; van der Westhuizen et al., 2017).

Chilisa (2012) advances that the strategies and tactics for decolonisation should be grounded in an unbending desire to reclaim and revalue the culture and heritage of the Indigenous people of Africa and ensure that Indigenous voices occupy the centre of future theory and praxis. Strategically, this means that there should be critical engagement between higher education and Indigenous people to develop a decolonised curriculum and the material to support that curriculum to affect future praxis within psychology.

2.2.4 Decoloniality

Dutta (2018) defines decoloniality as an ontological, epistemological, political, and pedagogical project that disrupts the pervasive power patterns that emanate from colonialism and continue long after the demise of colonial administrations due to their pervasive dehumanising effects. Maldonado-Torres (2016) views decoloniality first as a philosophy that seeks to restore love and understanding. This philosophy is twofold in that it critiques coloniality and affirms the knowledge and practices that support the restoration of love and understanding.

Epistemologically, the gospel of decoloniality requires scholars to understand and destabilise the processes and practices that privilege modes of knowledge production that sustain and normalise epistemic violence against most people of the world. Maldonado-Torres (2016) suggests that decoloniality involves making these pervasive power patterns visible and analysing the mechanisms through which they render most people of the world invisible or distort their visibility.

Making coloniality visible and studying its means of operation must include a critical reflection of the invisible people themselves. From this perspective, decoloniality is a rehumanising project that makes invisible people visible through the production of the counter-discourses, counter-knowledge and counter-practices that seek to both dismantle coloniality and open the possibility of being in the world (Dutta, 2018).

2.2.5 Whiteness

Knoetze (2018) states that Whiteness is an ideological formation based on the myth of Western cultural superiority which perpetuates in invisible ways, operates in the background, and becomes normalised and universalised. The normalisation and universalisation of Whiteness were facilitated through European colonial expansion and are the basis of modern civilisation. Thus, coloniality is founded on and perpetuates itself through the idea of Whiteness (Dutta, 2018).

Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) suggest that Whiteness can also be seen as an epistemic idea representing the embodied capital, privileges and social protections that are still not equally available, even after the advent of democracy in South Africa. Thus, the call for decolonisation also means a call for the unmasking and disrupting of Whiteness that has been imposed on African life from colonial times and is still used to determine who qualifies to be a human, to be a knower and to be a thinker (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020)

Knoetze (2018) points out that Whiteness represents a relatively unexplored and unreconstructed aspect of the South African democratic dispensation. The study of Whiteness

makes it visible in everyday life and academia so that the privileges that come with Whiteness can be catalogued and disrupted. As Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) suggest, Whiteness occupies the position of an epistemological a priori in the knowledge development space. It occupies this space through universalising epistemologies, ontologies and even what it means to be human. Furthermore, as an epistemological a priori, Whiteness enables a way of knowing and being founded on superiority which then becomes normalised and becomes part of taken-for-granted knowledge.

According to Kim-Cragg (2019), the disruption of Whiteness requires critical reflections within the White spaces of the historical realities that have contributed to cultural, epistemological, and economic domination and exploitation. Furthermore, Duhé (2018) suggests that to decentre Whiteness, the intellectual and historical contributions of Black and Indigenous people must receive focus within academic spaces.

2.2.6 Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is founded on the commitment to individual liberty and the reduced size and influence of the government, limited intervention by the government and a belief that market forces should be self-regulating. Neoliberal approaches mean that the role of the state changes from providing services to monitoring and regulating. Within this neoliberal context, universities become more corporatised, meaning that universities are guided by market-related principles.

The corporatisation of higher education should be understood within the broader context in which political priorities are strongly influenced by the firm adherence to free-market values, the profit motives, and the interest of multinational corporations (le Grange, 2016; Ross et al., 2020). Practically, this means that the focus of universities has been on revenue-generating academic programmes, higher education costs, increased workloads for academic staff and more significant linkages with multinational corporations.

2.2.7 Curriculum

Mulenga (2018) suggests that the definition of the term 'curriculum' is widely contested. The contestation is based on the varied philosophical underpinnings of curricula. Philosophical underpinnings guide curriculum intent, content, subject matter, learning experiences and evaluation practices. Contestation of the curriculum among these components has contributed to varied definitions. Mulenga (2018) identifies four broad philosophical traditions that underlie the different approaches to the curriculum. He named these approaches social reconstructionism, progressivism, essentialism and perennialism (Mulenga, 2018).

Social reconstructionism views curriculum as a mechanism to assist students in acquiring the skills, values, knowledge, and attitudes that will enable them to find solutions to social, political, and economic challenges. Thus, the curriculum should bring positive changes to society. Progressivism places emphasis on the needs and interests of students in developing the curriculum and less on the content of the subject. Essentialism focuses on transferring subject knowledge, mental skills, and cultural aspects to create mastery over centrally controlled and pre-determined subject matter. From this perspective, the needs of students are secondary; the aim is to tailor the students to the curriculum. Perennially, the curriculum is subject-centred and focuses on logically organised bodies of knowledge that remain constant over time. In essentialism and perennialism, academic staff are the primary authority, and their knowledge is unquestionable.

Mulenga (2018) observes that these various philosophies are not applied singularly, and curricula generally include multiple aspects of different philosophical traditions. For this reason, Mulenga (2018) appears to favour a definition that seeks to accommodate divergences within curriculum components. He further suggests that biased and partisan curricula should be viewed with a grain of salt as they produce a skewed perception of how education should be conducted. From this perspective, the curriculum is understood as the planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes developed through the

systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience within the context of a training institution to facilitate personal growth and competence among students (Mulenga, 2018).

Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) also appear to embrace a broader and more inclusive definition that suggests that curriculum can be understood as describing what, why, how and how well students should learn systematically and intentionally. Similarly, Carolissen et al. (2015) focus on three factors to understand the curriculum; these factors are content, process and context. Based on these factors, the curriculum is understood as referring to what is taught – the content, how the teaching takes place – the process – and the ethical and moral principles that underlie the relationship between academic staff and students – the context. They argue that the content, approach, and context in which educational experiences occur shape reality and influence how academic staff and students experience studying specific disciplines.

Ramparsad (2001) also appears to advocate a definition of curriculum that seeks to make space for various worldviews and creates an eclectic exposition of the meaning of curriculum. This position generates compromises between different philosophical traditions concerning their intent and the operationalisation of that intent. From this perspective, the curriculum is understood as the result of the systematic interactions of objectively developed plans created by academic staff for the benefit of students and the further development of those plans. Therefore, the plans do not only relate to the content and subject matter and the learning experiences of students but also include strategies for further developing the curriculum (Ramparsad, 2001). This approach suggests that for the learning experience to be adequate and relevant, it should focus on addressing the needs of students and the needs of society (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017).

Le Grange (2016) suggests three types of curricula that typically operate in educational settings. These types of curricula appear to cut across different philosophical perspectives and describe how the curriculum is structured and packaged. The curriculum types are explicit,

hidden, and null curricula. According to le Grange (2016), the explicit curriculum describes what the students are provided as the framework of the module, including prescribed readings and assessment guidelines. The hidden curriculum refers to the underlying dominant institutional cultures and the values the institution valorises and reproduces and to which students are exposed. The null curriculum is what the institution leaves out and to which students receive no exposure (le Grange, 2016; Mheta et al., 2018).

The philosophical traditions and the different types of curricula suggest that curricula are neither apolitical nor ahistorical. Embedded within the curriculum are ideological formations, values, cultures, and power relations that shape the intent, content, and subject matter, learning experiences and evaluation practices of the curriculum (Castell et al., 2018; Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Watkins et al., 2018). The ideological formations within the curriculum have served to privilege Western epistemology at the expense of everybody else (Heleta, 2016). Heleta (2016) adds that in South Africa, the colonial and apartheid curriculum has undermined Indigenous African thought and actively advanced White supremacy and dominance.

Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) suggest that curricula can preserve and reproduce existing power relations or be used as a reparative, healing, and transformative tool in contexts where epistemic injustice has marginalised Indigenous voices. Masaka (2019) suggests that this is the reason that the higher education curriculum has become the focus in the quest for epistemic justice and has become a foundational precondition for the liberation of marginalised and dominated people.

Decolonisation seeks to critically reflect on the role of the higher education curriculum in dismantling the harmful structures of colonial injustice in society (Masaka, 2019). Lockett (2016) suggests that curricula within the humanities should provide students with the theory, methodology, vocabulary, and analytical tools to understand and describe colonialism, colonality and concomitant epistemic violence. Through this understanding, students may

challenge and decentre colonial canon, engage with the old text in new ways and open collaborative spaces.

2.2.8 Critical reflexivity

Castell et al. (2018) state that critical reflexivity can be understood as a process involving the intentional and purposive locating of assumptions within a cultural and historical context, questioning the meaning of the assumptions, and developing alternative ways of being and acting. Similarly, Ripamonti et al. (2018) view critical reflexivity as a process of becoming critically aware of how assumptions about the world constrain how the individual, others, actions, and decisions are seen. It involves ethical and moral consideration and questioning the consequences 'for others' and the responsibilities involved in one's action and self-positioning in a context (Ripamonti et al., 2018).

Farrell et al. (2018) suggest that thinking more critically about these underlying assumptions and actions makes it possible to develop a more collaborative, responsive, and ethical way of conducting psychology. Thus, critical examination exposes contradictions, doubts, dilemmas, and possibilities. As Wendel et al. (2018) suggest, the ultimate objective of the process is to create change within the individual, organisation, and community. Ripamonti et al. (2018) suggest that critical reflexivity comes from a dialogic learning process where students engage in multiple conversations with themselves and others.

Critical reflexivity has been recognised as essential in higher education and as a valuable skill for students. Ripamonti et al. (2018) suggest that the current state of the world is complex and turbulent; thus, the training of students needs to go further than technical skills and help students develop relevant learning for future professional practice. Thus, the more reflexively students can think about their assumptions and actions, the more they can create more collaborative, responsive, and ethical ways of working (Ripamonti et al., 2018). Through these conversations, students question their ways of doing, values, and assumptions. Ripamonti et al. (2018) suggest that one of the purposes of university curricula and ensuing

internships is to create space for dialogic engagements to facilitate critical reflexivity. Farrell et al. (2018) suggest that this approach can enable students and academic staff to integrate theory and practice, thus creating conditions for engaged scholarship which should be the cornerstone of the curriculum.

The concept of critical reflexivity owes its roots to the ideas of reflexivity and reflection, both of which are well-established within research and scientific practice. Reflexivity relates to the questions that researchers ask themselves as agents within a given research situation and reflections relate to questions about specific phenomena. Reflexivity seeks to provide insights into the research process itself. Critical reflexivity also involves turning an eye on one's authority as an interpreter and an author. Practically this involves critically examining the assumptions that underlie actions, the impact of those actions and what constitutes good practice within a particular field (Farrell et al., 2018).

The literature suggests that these concepts are sometimes applied interchangeably, while some scholars draw distinctions between the concepts (Idahosa & Bradbury, 2020; Ripamonti et al., 2018). In advocating for critical reflexivity, Idahosa and Bradbury (2020) distinguish between reflexivity and critical reflexivity. They use the term 'soft reflexivity' to distinguish the two concepts further. Soft reflexivity is a surface-level recognition that things are unjust while distancing oneself from that injustice. Soft reflexivity means resisting opening oneself up to the discomfort that the impact of one's political subjectivity has in perpetuating and reproducing relations of domination. On a deeper level, soft reflexivity recognises unjust conditions but employs a strategy of distraction and deflection when issues of oppression and inequality are tabled.

Conversely, critical reflexivity is a challenging and messy process, but change requires confronting one's privilege and complicity in reproducing relations of domination. This type of critical reflexivity goes beyond the superficial exploration of positioning within a context and

interrogates the assumptions and presuppositions that frame an individual's approach to engaging and interacting with the world.

Critical reflexivity involves the asking of questions that enables the deepening of the reflexive process. Idahosa and Bradbury (2020) suggest that it would be helpful to ask whose interest the research and teaching serving are, who is silenced, who has a voice and who is being othered. Similarly, Barnes (2018) puts forward specific questions that could serve as a guide for the decolonisation of methodologies; these questions include who the focus of the research is, the types of questions that are asked, the relationship between researchers and participants, what can be inferred from the study and the contributions to equality and justice.

Wendel et al. (2018) point out that as part of critical reflexivity, asking the question 'why' can be particularly useful as it is critical to explore the social, political, and economic contributors of disempowerment. Wendel et al. (2018) remind us that the process of critical reflexivity can be applied at an individual, organisational and community level. Critical reflexivity can be disruptive when applied in a collective context because it introduces competing agendas, complicated histories, the exposition of entrenched ways of thinking and the unmasking of power dynamics. However, it can increase inclusivity and build greater consensus, bringing additional capital to the collective (Wendel et al., 2018).

Wendel et al. (2018) outline a framework to illustrate the influence of critical reflexivity on individuals, organisations, and communities. The idea of community is understood in its broadest terms and includes all aspects and individuals. They suggest that, at an individual level, critical reflexivity engenders an adaptive learning process that can be understood as a behavioural change endeavour whereby people learn through iteration. Thus, people engage in the continued process of critical reflexivity, progressively adjusting their actions to achieve an intended outcome (Wendel et al., 2018).

Within organisations such as higher education institutions, the process brings new complexities because adaptive learning will occur at different paces for the individuals within

the organisations and communities, feedback is received from different perspectives and the objectives of the various stakeholders may differ. Furthermore, this process is complicated by the power relations within that context.

Idahosa and Bradbury (2020) point out that critical reflexivity can produce a sense of paralysis. This sense of paralysis emerges when, through critical reflexivity, one becomes aware of the contextually generated limits to one's agency to contribute to change. The paralysis itself does not lead to change but opens possibilities to create change. However, the threat of structural and institutional limitations always looms.

Nimer (2020) finds a relationship between socialisation, disposition, and the capacity for critical reflexivity. Using gender socialisation as a point of departure, Nimer (2020) suggests that students from different social backgrounds will have different higher education experiences; these experiences will affect how they engage in critical reflexivity. Therefore, Ripamonti et al. (2018) suggest that academic staff should play an active role in providing a theoretical framework, integrating critical reflexive expectation in the assessment criteria, modelling critical reflection, emphasising the importance of journaling and critical friend relationships, and contributing to enhancing students' capacities to reflect about their experiences critically.

When applied within a decolonial framework, Idahosa and Bradbury (2020) suggest that critical reflexivity can be understood as the capacity to reflect, learn, unlearn, and dismantle overt and subtle legacies of oppression within the knowledge production process. Critical reflexivity enables a critical consciousness of the systems, structures and assumptions that reproduce Eurocentrism at the individual and systemic levels. Therefore, a critically reflective approach to decolonisation would involve questioning the foundations of psychology and research that present themselves as self-evident. This process would illuminate contradictions within the profession and broader society, creating discomfort and conditions for change (Idahosa & Bradbury, 2020).

2.2.9 Curriculum responsiveness

Curriculum responsiveness can be understood as the ability of the curriculum to meet the needs of students and society. The South African National Department of Higher Education views curriculum responsiveness as an umbrella concept for the continuous development and improvement of the curriculum. The continuous growth and progress of curricula should be driven by the needs of students and society (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; Ramparsad, 2001).

Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) suggest that the growing calls for decolonisation result from the apparent inability of the curricula to respond to the needs of society. Ramparsad (2001) suggests that this perspective appears to affirm the eclectic nature of the curriculum and a similarly eclectic approach to curriculum development and improvement. An eclectic approach to curriculum development must necessarily include collaborative efforts between the academic staff of various disciplines, students, and local communities (Castell et al., 2018; Meda, 2019; Ramparsad, 2001; Watkins et al., 2018).

The focus on curriculum development should be more than what takes place in classrooms and should include what students do with what they learn. To this end, curriculum responsiveness would address employability or economic responsiveness, student diversity or cultural responsiveness, the nature of underlying knowledge within the discipline or disciplinary responsiveness and pedagogical or learning responsiveness (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017). Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) suggest that any curriculum that fails to address these points is problematic. They point to the psychology curriculum as a case in point and indicate that it appears unable to respond to local challenges. They suggest that psychology needs give attention to the psychosocial nuances of individual societies. Currently, the ontological and epistemological views that underlie psychology approach the individual as apolitical and ahistorical and place primacy on the dominant Western view of the world.

2.2.10 Epistemic disobedience

All human knowledge is, in the first place, fundamentally local and temporal. Colonisation has essentially taken the local and temporal and made it universal. Dissent and epistemic disobedience are aimed at disrupting the universal and exposing the locatedness of all forms of knowledge (Mignolo, 2009; Nwoye, 2020). Epistemic disobedience is also exemplified through the refusal of some scholars to uncritically follow predetermined approaches based on positivistic, traditional and Western approaches in a manner akin to sheep (Nwoye, 2020).

The dominance of Western epistemology has created, among many uncritical scholars, a naturalised confidence and faith in the supposed fairness of academic achievement through meritocracy, individual effort, and hard work.

This faith in the system belies a paucity of critical awareness about how academia is constructed and its colonial roots. It further belies the paucity of critical awareness about how the system creates these uncritical academics with a vested interest in the system, who see themselves as neutral, and seemingly above the fray with the right to observe others without being observed (Ramirez, 2021).

Epistemic disobedience is a form of resistance from this unmarked and unaffected subjectiveness with the naturalised confidence to observe others without employing critical reflexivity (Ramirez, 2021). It involves gaining critical awareness of the colonial history of academia, and psychology, identifying the embeddedness of coloniality within the profession, exposing the complicity of all stakeholders in the proliferation of coloniality, exposing this history and its contemporary expression and working towards the disruption of this coloniality (Castell et al., 2018; Mignolo, 2011, Ramirez, 2021). The disruption of coloniality within psychology includes contesting the unfounded universalism and decontextualised understandings of the psychological, including psychopathology (Castell et al., 2018).

Dudgeon and Walker (2015) add that this critical awareness understanding could enable stakeholders to know where and how to decolonise.

Epistemological disobedience is a necessary step to decolonisation. It is essential because, in the first place, liberation from the vicissitudes of coloniality requires novel approaches and thought models that are different from those espoused by Western epistemology. Secondly, epistemological disobedience is essential because it takes us to a different beginning, thus opening up new possibilities. Thirdly, it enables researchers and academic staff to centre on non-Western epistemology, whose psychologies emerge from multiple localities (Mignolo, 2011).

Therefore, there is a need to conduct a deep dive into the limits of Western epistemology. The fundamental purpose of this deep dive would be to see Western epistemology for what it is, as just another epistemological perspective in a universe that contains myriad epistemological perspectives. This way, disconnecting from various colonialities and the concomitant power structures becomes possible (Mignolo, 2009). The move towards decolonial thinking necessitates epistemic disobedience, the objective of which would be the replacement of Western epistemologies with epistemologies that have been marginalised (Castell et al., 2018). Castell et al. (2018) suggest that within a higher education landscape steeped in coloniality and neoliberalism, this epistemological disobedience carries a variety of punishments within the academy. For this purpose, engaging in decoloniality within such contexts requires clarity of intention, continuous critical dialogues, the boldness to speak truth to power and solidarity with those engaged in decolonisation (Castell et al., 2018; Long, 2016; Maldonado-Torres, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2019).

2.2.11 Culture

Different scholars use many conceptions and definitions of culture (Idang, 2015). In his description of culture, Idang (2015) identifies various critical ideas of what constitutes culture. Culture can be considered a way of life, a way of being, a way of thinking, and a way of doing

that is adopted by a group of people who occupy the same space simultaneously, distinguishing one group from another.

Culture is not unitary; it is complex, contested and evolves. For instance, within the African context, many diverse cultures, and languages form part of the daily lives of African people. Contestations within similar cultural groupings regarding the understanding and practice of rites and rituals also occur; however, notwithstanding the divergence within cultural groupings, points of convergence mark African and South African cultures. These points of convergence include social, moral, political, and spiritual aspects (Chukwuere, 2020; Idang, 2015).

Socially, culture relates to the uniqueness of social practices, such as marriage rituals, funeral rituals, and rites of passage, which take place on specific occasions. Furthermore, it relates to the hierarchical arrangements of families, clans, and communities. Morally, culture relates to the moral values that are part of a community and shared through the community. It also speaks to the cultural processes that introduce sanctions to those who transgress. The sanction that forms part of the culture centres on the transgressor losing face and informs the community to discourage others from perpetrating similar transgressions (Mutwa, 2019).

Religiously, culture relates to the idea that every activity is imbued with spirituality, and thus, the spiritual aspect of life is taken very seriously. The belief that life after death exists and that the human soul lives after death and continues to influence events among the living is commonplace. Politically, it relates to the idea that institutions within African cultures are headed by respected members of the community and respect is often ascribed through age (Chukwuere, 2020; Idang, 2015; Nussbaum, 2003).

One of the central pillars of the African culture, more specifically Southern African culture, is the matter of Ubuntu. It bears mentioning that this concept is not unique to South Africa; in other African countries, the idea is understood but by different names. The idea of Ubuntu is a central pillar in the decolonisation conversation (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020;

Naude, 2019; Seehaver, 2018). Ubuntu can be understood as an ontological, epistemological, and ethical concept with practical applications that aim to create a framework for regulating interactions between people within a social context.

Ubuntu is ontological in that reality is understood as an intricate network of interrelationships between the cosmos, nature, humans, and interdimensional beings described as ancestors. Humanness is ascribed to an individual based on how they behave within the context of these interrelationships. Epistemologically, knowledge about the self, the community, the universe and whatever lies beyond is developed and shared through this intricate network of interrelationships.

Ramose (2001) also mentions that those yet to be born are part of the complex community. The spiritual forces are crucial in facilitating communion between these intricate networks of interrelationships and play a role in the conception and practice of justice. Within the context of Ubuntu, justice relates to the restoration of equilibrium between the different entities that occupy this intricate network of interrelationships, and the living are central in administering this justice (Ramose, 2001). It can be said that colonialism and coloniality contribute to epistemic injustice towards indigenous people. The decolonial project is part of the restoration of epistemic justice in the Global South.

Practically, it means that individuals must be in harmony and have good relations between themselves and all conceivable parts of this intricate network. Good relations are facilitated by expressing compassion, reciprocity, dignity, mutual caring and contributing to creating justice within the community (Nussbaum, 2003). Sodi et al. (2021) add that there are qualities that facilitate the forming of good relations and harmony, and these include humaneness, compassion, gentleness, hospitality, generosity, empathy, kindness, and friendliness. Furthermore, it is not necessarily just about harmony between human beings but rather harmony between the self and all things – both seen and unseen – that occupy this intricate network of interrelationships at a particular time and space (Nussbaum, 2003). Sodi

et al. (2021) use the term *botho*, which has the same meaning as *ubuntu*, to advance the study and understanding of this concept. They point out that *botho* is exemplified through various qualities transferred through fables, proverbs, myths, and storytelling within specific social contexts.

Mboti (2015) cautions that the idea of collectivism and sociocentrism that is part of African culture and *ubuntu* is not absolute. Space needs to be created to understand the people of Africa as unique and having identities inside and outside their communities. Within this perspective, morality does not simply amount to doing the right and avoiding the wrong to facilitate harmonious relationships. There are always contestations and competing interests that influence the conception of right and wrong at a given time. It is an essential point because it could be argued that prioritising harmony means subjugating personal interests and sometimes remaining silent for the benefit of the community. Mboti (2015) suggests that this position exposes an inadequate appreciation of the complexity and possibilities for expressiveness that characterise African people. He adds that rather than insisting on harmony at all costs, *ubuntu* probably relates to good citizenship based on independent thought and action based on good sense as understood within a given context.

2.3 Colonialism and apartheid heritages of South African psychology

The decolonisation of psychology should be grounded in a firm understanding of the history of colonialism and apartheid and how this history is embodied within psychological theory, research, and practice. Furthermore, it should be grounded in understanding the complicity of traditional psychology in colonial domination and apartheid (Castell et al., 2018; Long, 2017). Numerous scholars have outlined how colonialism has influenced the development of psychology and how psychology has perpetuated coloniality in South Africa and globally (Adams et al., 2017; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Kessi, 2017; Long, 2016; Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

Science was founded on the idea that human beings can employ specific methodologies to develop knowledge and use that knowledge to draw universal principles about the world. Psychology as a field of study operates similarly but is unique in that it focuses its methodologies on human behaviour and uncovers the underlying and universal structures of human functioning across contexts (Adams et al., 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2017). According to Maldonado-Torres (2017), this approach has contributed to significant advances in knowledge within psychology; however, the progress was founded on the ideological formation of positivism and post-positivism that have tended to universalise discoveries and apply them indiscriminately.

Dudgeon and Walker (2015) suggest that this approach could be problematic in Indigenous communities. In these contexts, the nature of ties to families, communities, culture, land, spirit, and ancestors is essential to individual well-being. On the contrary, traditional psychology sees the integration of cultural and contextual factors as barriers to its efforts to universalise the structures of human functioning. Adams et al. (2017) argue that this traditional approach can benefit the privileged few but that the benefits do not translate into broader society. This approach has gained normative status in many ways and has contributed to the rejection of other forms of knowledge and the privilege of traditional hegemonic psychology.

Dudgeon and Walker (2015) describe the cumulative effect of emphasising the perspectives of a dominant group and marginalising Indigenous cultures as cultural racism. They suggest that this cultural racism, underpinned by ethnocentrism and hegemony, was the basis for the global growth and success of psychology. Ethnocentrism relates to the assumption that one's standards are correct, and that others' standards are invariably incorrect. In this context, hegemony depends on the power of colonisers to privilege their ethnocentric perspectives and turn them into universal standards.

Within psychology, ethnocentrism and hegemony engender a notion of the superiority of Western beliefs about ill-being and well-being and the universal application of those beliefs

through control of political and economic power (Dudgeon & Walker, 2015). Psychological research also contributes, directly or indirectly, to the reproduction of these individualistic, universalistic and decontextualised notions of human behaviour through the disregard of cultural racism in the name of scientific detachment and neutrality (Barnes, 2018; Chilisa, 2017; Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Zinga & Styres, 2019). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) adds that research methodologies continue to exclude Indigenous people in colonised territories from the knowledge production process. Consequently, non-Western people have become confined to the fringes of mainstream hegemonic psychology and those of broader society.

The ontologies and epistemologies of Indigenous people are shifted to the periphery of psychological theory, research and practice and aspects that do not fit the framework of science as understood through the limiting paradigm of Western thought are branded as pseudo-scientific. Ally and August (2018) argue that, pedagogically, Black South African psychology students and graduates are trained to interact with their communities from the framework of ever-present Western thought. The universalisation of the Western canon also means that the great reservoir of knowledge systems from indigenous peoples is side-lined (Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016).

Villanueva (2013) suggests that this contributes to a certain de-indigenisation among these students. This de-indigenisation can be understood as a state of ill-being that emerges when people are hindered from connecting with specific spiritual teachings that helped their ancestors know themselves better (Villanueva, 2013). This inability to connect with these teachings and the concomitant loss of ancestral memories and communal names is part of the historical trauma of de-indigenisation, which has found a place within psychological theory, research, and practice. Oelofsen (2015) also refers to a colonised mentality to describe this de-indigenisation. This mentality is a state where colonised people valorise and internalise the values and views of the colonisers, including those that judge colonised people as inferior and backward. Thus, this colonised mentality is marked by a sense of inferiority and mimics the colonisers.

Before the advent of democratic rule in South Africa, the best-resourced institutions and internship providers catered to White students almost exclusively, which meant that most of the students who qualified were White. This contributed to psychology in South Africa being racially skewed (Cooper, 2014; Pillay, 2016; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021). Pillay (2017) goes further and suggests that psychology in South Africa cooperated with the apartheid regime and thereby contributed to the oppression of Black people. Psychology contributed to the oppression of Black people by organising people into racialised groups and calling some less intelligent, lazy, irresponsible, and therefore less human (Kessi, 2017). Therefore, it appears that colonial and apartheid-era psychology adopted an economic framework that coincided with the exploitation of Black workers by powerful political and economic forces (Long, 2017; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021).

Even when the racial demographics within South Africa started changing, Black psychologists trained in Western traditional hegemonic psychology continued conducting research that contributed to rationalising oppression (Long, 2016). As a result of this work, psychology has contributed to the legitimisation of colonialism and apartheid and has contributed to the dehumanisation and, consequently, the genocide of millions of people (Kessi, 2017).

The dawn of democracy in South Africa has generated much hope and expectation about the future of psychology and progress has been made (Cooper, 2014; Pillay, 2017; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021). Cooper (2014) believes that the profession has been successful in overcoming its troubled legacy. In contrast, Long (2017) suggests that little has been accomplished and that questions of relevance still weigh on the profession. He suggests that these questions persist because psychology seems incapable of taking to heart the social issues, including HIV and violence, that plague the poor and some middle-income South Africans. He adds that this could be due to the well-documented tendency of organised psychology to align itself with the powerful. Similarly, Pillay (2017) maintains that the ghosts of the colonial past and apartheid psychology still need to be exorcised. He suggests that after

1994, psychology was merely renamed and remains very inaccessible and irrelevant to the majority of South Africans (Pillay, 2017).

Long (2016) argues that the price the new democratic South Africa had to pay for its readmission to the international community was the adoption of neoliberal ideologies. These neoliberal ideologies have profoundly influenced the political, economic, and higher education landscape. Within psychology, these neoliberal ideologies meant putting individualism and market capitalism at the heart of theory, research, and practice (Long, 2016).

Stated differently, the growth and relative success of the profession has meant embracing coloniality disguised as neoliberalism (Chiodo et al., 2014). Therefore, psychology has tended to ignore the ethnophilosophies and realities experienced by Indigenous people in the curriculum (Ally & August 2018; Chilisa, 2012). In this way, the current psychology curriculum has perpetuated a form of coloniality that has marked psychology in South Africa (Ally & August, 2018).

Long (2016) suggests that the success that psychology achieved in the democratic dispensation was primarily due to psychology adopting knowledge inspired by the neoliberal idea of a commercialised higher education landscape. In practice, this success has been gained through strategic partnerships with the government, international funding agencies and industry (Chilisa, 2005, 2012, 2017; Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Long, 2016; Pillay & Nyandeni, 2021). Thus, the curriculum developed from this paradigm does not necessarily equip students with the critical and analytical skills and creative agency to uncover coloniality with psychology, imagined curriculum possibilities and contribute to addressing the challenges faced by many within local communities (Long, 2017; Long et al., 2019; Watkins et al., 2018). Heleta (2016) concludes that this type of curriculum has contributed to ignorance about the continent and contributed to a situation where African people remain faceless.

Clark et al. (2013) suggest that it is also essential for academic staff to show how psychological theory, research and practices are political, historical, and firmly situated in

Western cultural assumptions. This clarity will lay the foundation and position psychology on the path to decoloniality. They caution that to work towards decoloniality within an institutional culture steeped in coloniality requires clarity of intention, ongoing critical dialogue, imagination, and solidarity with those who live and embody the struggle for decolonisation.

Critique of the current state of higher education and psychology must be central to the decolonial effort. Such critique will enable staff and students to see through and defect from colonial ideologies and practices that have become normal within psychology and the broader academy (Hook, 2005; Long, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Meda, 2019; Távora & Moodley, 2017; Watkins et al., 2018; Zwane, 2019). Challenging the myth of Western epistemological pre-eminence within psychology must be accompanied by acknowledging alternative epistemologies that mark the lives of the Indigenous people in Africa (Chilisa, 2012, 2017; Meda, 2019).

2.4 Need for decolonising psychological theory, research, and practice

The movement for the decolonisation of higher education curriculum, pedagogy and knowledge production is not unique to South Africa and certainly not to psychology. It is part of a global experience that has spotlighted the epistemic injustices within science, higher education and psychological theory, research, and practice. The global experience of decolonisation has been reflected in various quarters within the Global North and Global South. The work has primarily been driven by academic staff and often without the expressed support of institutional administrative structures and regulatory authorities. Indeed, without the expressed support of the political power structures outside higher education institutions, with notable exceptions. There have been great examples of these initiatives in the Global North and South. In the Global North, much of the work has emerged from Oceania, North America, and some in Europe. First, Villanueva (2013) details her experiences in embarking on the decolonial journey within the classroom and creating spaces for hopeful resistance in the United States of America (USA) by employing what is termed Chicano Indigenous pedagogical

practice. The term Chicano describes people of Mexican descent that reside in the USA. This pedagogical practice draws on the experiences of the academic staff, local Chicano communities, and students to create novel pedagogical approaches that problematise dominant ways of knowing, engender hopeful resistance and contribute to the healing of colonial and contemporary trauma (Villanueva, 2013). Secondly, the #Rhodesmustfall protestation inspired similar protests in higher education institutes in the United Kingdom (UK). The protestation in the UK sought to challenge and affect change within the epistemological architecture of the higher education landscape (Ahmed, 2019).

Thirdly, Zinga and Styres (2019), within the Canadian higher education context, focused on developing decolonising and anti-oppressive pedagogies. These pedagogies encourage academic staff and students to reflect on their positionalities and the influence of these positionalities in the classroom. Practically, that meant opening up spaces for students to question the status quo, their positionality, and their implication in the proliferation of the status quo. The questioning depends on the extent to which students are encouraged and able to conduct critical reflection and dialogue. The academic staff have to be purposeful in creating these spaces. These approaches constitute a form of resistance against the dominant status quo.

Fourth, in Australia, Chiodo et al. (2014) began an attempt to ensure that the perspectives of different cultures within the Australian context receive representation within the psychology curriculum. This change was based on the realisation that the students who graduate would have to function within multicultural contexts when they complete their studies. Should these students lack awareness of the historical and cultural issues that affect mental health, these students would be less than effective, undermining the relevance of psychology. Still, in Australia, Castell et al. (2018) recognised the importance of critical reflexivity within the curriculum as a key mechanism for decolonisation. The value of critical reflexivity lies in its ability to incline students to think critically about their contexts to facilitate learning. Therefore, efforts were made to introduce this approach into the classroom. Their experience suggests

value regarding this approach as a potentially helpful tool for decolonisation (Castell et al., 2018).

Closer to home, colonialism also left an indelible mark on the rest of the continent, which has extended to educational institutions. With the growth of the decolonial movement, the curriculum in various higher education institutions has also become an issue of contestation. The outcome of colonial influence on education has contributed to people looking down on indigenous cultures and epistemologies. The critical consideration of these issues facilitated the decolonial movement and calls for change in the curriculum. The change that has been mooted is based on the idea that social science curricula should speak to the African context and focus on addressing African challenges (Mngomezulu & Hadebe, 2018).

Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018) suggest that these conversations began in the 1960s, after the independence of several African countries. For instance, Okonji (1975) made contributions regarding how decolonial conversations could begin within the social sciences, such as psychology within Sub-Saharan Africa. A good starting point, he opined, would be to learn more about traditional African psychology. The reason for starting the conversation at that point was that before the decolonial process began, it would be productive to understand which parts of psychology were colonial and thus required decolonisation. Okonji (1975) suggests studying behaviour within traditional African societies through naturalistic observation, contrived role-playing situations, personal, family and clan case history, clinical divination and heredity and behaviour to facilitate this learning process. In truth, these conversations began earlier than the 1960s, even before the independence of some African states. However, the indication is that the progress from these conversations towards applying the decolonial ideals within higher education and broader political life in post-independence has been slow (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2012). The possible reasons for the slow process are outlined later in the chapter.

More recently, Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018) reflected on the decolonisation and Africanisation of the political science curriculum and elected to use East Africa as a case in point. They acknowledge that reforming the curriculum is an immense task but hasten to add that the scale of the challenge should not dissuade us. As a guide for the decolonial process within political science, Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018) suggest that the focus should be on research to understand local issues and find solutions for those issues, develop localised explanations and examples for political phenomena and promote local ways of doing things.

The conversation about decolonisation in South Africa cannot occur without referencing the #feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall protestations that engulfed the country. The protestation elicited powerful reactions and created an impetus for the decolonial movement, which resulted in increased scholarship on the decolonisation of the curriculum and practical action from some academic staff to challenge classroom practices and higher education in general (Costandius, 2018). The contribution from these different quarters has led to the development of different curricular and pedagogical approaches underpinned by decolonial ideals. These approaches are explored further later in this chapter. The scales of the contribution are no doubt linked to the availability of resources, institutional support and the relative power imbalances that exist within the different sections of the globe.

Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) stress that this is a critical development because mainstream science, higher education and psychological research have tended to perceive Indigenous people only as data sources for Western scholars and Western-trained Indigenous scholars who would then validate, legitimise, and refine the information. Coloniality contributed to the normalisation of this process and created a perception that Indigenous knowledge was pseudo-scientific and irrelevant to human progress.

Coloniality has meant the side-lining of Indigenous people in the planning and execution of research projects (Barnes, 2018; Chilisa, 2012, 2017; Kessi, 2017). Therefore, coloniality within science, higher education and psychology has proliferated within higher

education psychological theory, research, and practice. This section explores how coloniality has played out to highlight the need for decolonisation. Specific focus will be on the current curriculum structure, marginalisation of Indigenous epistemology, corporatisation of higher education, power dynamics within the classroom, race, and language.

2.4.1 Banking education

From a curriculum standpoint, formal education has tended to implement the banking education model. The banking model is the hallmark of colonial education and has been embraced and applied across various levels of education, including higher education. Psychology has primarily subscribed to this model of education and applied it in the training of students.

The banking model has received considerable criticism from decolonial scholars. Castell et al. (2018) suggest that this education model subscribes to the rigid roles between students and academic staff where the staff are considered all-knowing and all-powerful and students the naïve and passive recipients of knowledge. This education model ensures epistemic obedience and thus runs contrary to the decolonial aspiration of reimagining power relations.

The banking model within a colonial framework is founded on the idea that the colonisers were superior human beings on a mission to drag uncivilised Indigenous people out of the darkness into enlightenment (Castell et al., 2018; Heleta, 2016; Távara & Moodley, 2017). These rigidly defined relations are considered dehumanising for all stakeholders (Freire, 2007). This approach does not prepare students for collaboration, dialogue, consensus building, appreciative enquiry, community visioning and attention to community rituals and ceremonies which seek to humanise and create space for love and understanding (Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Watkins et al., 2018). According to Watkins et al. (2018), these skills are critical as psychology embarks on the decolonial project.

2.4.2 Marginalisation of Indigenous people

Coloniality within science, higher education and psychological theory, research and practice is based on the marginalisation of Indigenous voices. The marginalisation has contributed to shaping South African universities in fundamental ways and a fundamental misrecognition and denial of African ontologies and epistemologies within higher education. The misrecognition and denial have contributed to grave epistemological injustices and have undermined the Indigenous voices within psychology and the higher education landscape.

Much of the focus post-1994 has been on numerical representativity according to race and gender. Even though strides in improving representation within psychology have been made, a persistent Western ontological and epistemological bias within the psychology and research curriculum still remains (Naude, 2019). The increase in Black academic and administrative staff and students has not necessarily equated to greater recognition of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies within the academe. The privileging of Western epistemologies at the expense of Indigenous approaches persists in colonised societies worldwide (Heleta, 2016).

Students in certain parts of the world receive Western indoctrination from curricula that are based on the idea that Western values are superior and, thus, should form the basis of human life (Heleta, 2016; Jackson, 2013). Kessi (2018) points out that when these ideas about science and knowledge become dominant within institutional contexts, they create an elitist group of insiders who can regulate access to higher education and determine who belongs. This situation persists despite codified policies and regulations that speak about equality, equity, transformation, and change, institutional cultures, and epistemological traditions (Heleta, 2016). Lockett (2016) considers these contradictions from the point of view of the experiences of Black students in South African universities and concludes that these students exist in spaces where there are codified policies that ensure their inclusion. However, cultural, and linguistic demands serve as a basis for their exclusion from those same universities

(Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016; Lockett, 2016). The psychology curriculum, both locally and globally, struggles to bring the experiences of Indigenous people from the periphery to the centre (Long, 2017; Watkins et al., 2018). Diab et al. (2020) suggest that psychology, in its attempt to improve human functioning, has contributed to ensuring that people are well-adjusted to unjust and oppressive systems and do not challenge oppressive social orders.

2.4.3 Corporatisation and commercialisation of higher education

Methula (2017) suggests that another issue that drives the need for decolonisation is the apparent rise in the corporatisation and commercialisation of higher education in South Africa and globally. This corporatisation has been marked by a greater focus on revenue generation and less on knowledge production (Methula, 2017; Miller & Miller, 2020). Furthermore, this has driven focus towards university rankings and competition between universities.

According to Magoqwana (2018), the apparent single-minded focus on revenue generation assumes, erroneously, that everything else is in order. However, all that revenue can achieve is to paper over the cracks that appear on the face of higher education. Magoqwana (2018) warns that focusing on commercial interests will not address the structural challenges within higher education and will only benefit those with a personal stake in the status quo. The adoption of these cultures means that the university curriculum is shaped by market forces which have had profound effects on academic staff, students, and knowledge production (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017).

One of the outcomes of the corporatisation of higher education institutions is that education and knowledge have begun to be viewed as commodities and students as consumers (Magoqwana, 2018; Methula, 2017). Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) observe that the corporatisation of higher education, which emphasises the internationalisation of the curriculum, has also skewed the discussion about curriculum responsiveness. The weight of the commercialisation of higher education was felt keenly during the #feesmustfall protests.

The constitutional and legislative changes post-1994 promoted equal access to opportunity; however, the #feesmustfall protests suggested that this equality of access remains elusive (Becker, 2017; Mayaba et al., 2018). The protests illustrated that even though equality is proclaimed, and some changes have occurred, most Black and middle-class students were effectively poor in a market-driven society where access to higher education depends on access to resources (Becker, 2017). According to Becker (2017), the protests made it painfully clear that poor Black and middle-class students could not compete in a market-driven society. Methula (2017) is critical of the commodification project in higher education and suggests that getting an education is more complicated than merely acquiring skills or purchasing products. The process of gaining knowledge must also include developing academic virtues, personal growth and transformation and contributing to the development of the disciplines; these aspects cannot just be purchased (Methula, 2017). Furthermore, Jackson (2013) suggests that this commodification of education has contributed to the appropriation and oversimplification of complex Indigenous concepts for consumption in the global marketplace. Barnes (2018) points out that this oversimplification often reduces the rich and complex experiences of Indigenous people to shallow representations of language, culture, and spirituality, contributing to the perpetuation of certain racist and sexist representations.

These critiques point to the reductionist tendency that comes with the commercialisation of higher education and has reduced universities to businesses in knowledge production. This proclivity to reductionism poses a critical problem for in-depth research, quality scholarship and deep learning (Methula, 2017). However, the oversimplification is not entirely negative. Barnes (2018) suggests it can be a valuable tool to expose coloniality within psychological theory, research, and practice. Methula (2017) indicates that this is the greatest challenge facing African universities since the legal end of colonialism and apartheid. It undermines African intellectual thinking and spiritualities, stifles transformation and maintains the status quo.

The HPCSA, market forces and the concomitant commodification of higher education have also influenced the curriculum and practice of psychology. These influences often conflict with the critical and decolonial approaches that have been gaining traction globally (Canham et al., 2022). Therefore, Canham et al. (2022) suggest that in the decolonial age, psychology appears to exist at the nexus of competing approaches. As a custodian of professional knowledge, it is influenced by the market forces and the HPCSA and as an object for decolonial study, it is influenced by the critique of stakeholders that appreciate its possibility for change.

The indication is that attempts have been made at various quarters to develop and implement curricula commensurate with decolonial ideals. However, despite these efforts, psychology remains beholden to the market forces and restrictive policies of the regulatory bodies, through the scopes of practice. Therefore, even though there is a recognition of the need to critique Western bias and change psychology when the rubber meets the road, economic realities and the influence of the regulatory body hold sway when it comes to devising the curriculum and practice of psychology (Canham et al., 2022; Fynn & van der Walt, 2020).

The current scope of practice in research psychology, which guides curricula and practice, has been described as generic and only outlines specific aspects of the research process as required competencies (Fynn & van der Walt, 2020). Therefore, the scope of practice of research psychology requires further reviewing to include aspects of decolonisation and indigenisation. Furthermore, it appears that entrepreneurial skills are also a gap in the curriculum that needs attention (Canham et al., 2022; Fynn & van der Walt, 2020; Senekal & Smith, 2021). Furthermore, Senekal and Smith (2021) suggest that one of the training goals should be to train students to secure long-term employment or equip them with the capacity to earn an income long-term. It is a crucial point to consider because many students pursue higher education to escape poverty. This point is made even more pertinent when the poor economic growth and employment challenges in the country (Senekal & Smith, 2021).

Within market-driven contexts, employability becomes a key concern for many students and practitioners. The primary driver of the choices psychologists make is employability within challenging economic conditions, and it is also linked to the commodification and monetisation of healthcare, psychology included (Canham et al., 2022; Fynn & van der Walt, 2020). Canham et al. (2022) suggest that the prevailing economic and material conditions may influence how psychologists approach the practice of their profession. The indication is that under these circumstances, the market-related concerns cannot be wished away and are a reality when considering the possibilities of decolonised curriculum within psychology. Such realities complicate the journey towards decolonisation (Canham et al., 2022).

2.4.4 Power dynamics within the classroom

Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) suggest that a critical site for decolonisation is the classroom, as it is characterised by extensive power differentials that continue to privilege Western scholars. Moreover, psychology is a prime example of this tendency. The power dynamics continue to silence the multiplicity of voices inside and outside the classroom, thus further entrenching coloniality and contributing to the crisis of relevance within psychological theory, research, and practice. Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) suggest that the classroom must be revolutionised and the traditional power relationship between students and academic staff must evolve to the point where students and lecturers become co-learners.

Chiodo et al. (2014) suggest that the current psychology curriculum does not adequately prepare students to work collaboratively with marginalised and Indigenous communities. According to Heleta (2016), it presents skewed perspectives, promotes epistemological blindness, and silences other forms of knowledge. He suggests that this amounts to epistemic violence. Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) acknowledge that much work has been done on developing African content within psychology. However, they point out that much of the curriculum content is currently located on the periphery of the psychology

curriculum as an add-on. This approach to curriculum development is favoured by those that would seek to maintain the status quo within the curriculum (Heleta, 2016).

The higher education landscape appears to be the playground of various power brokers. The power brokers include the corporate world, international donor and rating agencies, administrative and academic staff, students, and the wider community. Power and influence are unequally distributed among these power brokers. Thus, the more powerful players are likely to wield significant impact within the curriculum debate and determine the extent of the responsiveness of the curriculum. These power structures must be disrupted to ensure that all role players have a meaningful voice within the curriculum development debate.

Seehawer (2018) suggests that collaboration is essential to ensure that decolonisation unfolds from the ground up. Currently, higher education in South Africa appears compromised and at a nexus of competing interests, contributing to the slow pace of decolonisation. Thus, to make progress towards decolonisation, academic staff, students, and other stakeholders should instead focus on the aspects of this process that are within their control. Therefore, as psychology moves into the future and deliberates on decolonisation, this history, and the neoliberal influence on the growth of psychology should remain front and centre.

The future of the field will not depend solely on the factors within the discipline itself but will continue to be affected by external factors (Long, 2016). Furthermore, Long (2016) points out that psychology has a long history of aligning itself with powerful and dominant groups. This tendency opens the discipline up to co-optation by these powerful entities and could make psychology increasingly less relevant to the needs of most South Africans. However, in the current climate, alliances among different stakeholders are necessary. The building of alliances with different stakeholders does not preclude speaking the truth to power (Castell et al., 2018; Long, 2016).

2.4.5 Race and language dynamics in universities

Costandius et al. (2018) point out that Black and White students experience university life differently. They suggest that White students and academic staff generally find university natural and feels like home, while Black students experience it as violent, alienating and disempowering. Consequently, Black students tend to struggle to complete their degrees. Furthermore, some Black psychology students have reported racial discord among students and between students and academic staff (Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016). These struggles have been attributed to a wide range of causes, including, among others, language.

Language is critical because it is the means through which knowledge is transmitted; therefore, it can play a significant role in unmasking power relations, ideologies and struggles embedded in the curriculum (Mayaba et al., 2018). Segalo and Cakata (2017) point out that language has also been crucial in bringing about mental enslavement. The imposition of colonial languages within the African continent contributed to the inferiorisation of indigenous languages and identities. Academia has also taken up the baton of the inferiorisation of African languages by embracing colonial languages at the expense of local languages. The devaluing of indigenous languages has created a circumstance where African people despise their language. Through its history of racism, stereotyping and labelling, psychology is also complicit in the inferiorisation of indigenous languages (Segalo & Cakata, 2017).

Within psychology, language plays a critical role because the entire profession is based on talking to achieve optimum functioning – otherwise referred to as the talking cure. However, this talking cure in the South African context occurs using English (Long, 2017). The same is true even among African psychologists who appear to be among the most Westernised themselves. The driving force behind the Westernisation of African psychologists is that most have grown to distrust their languages due to the hegemony of English within psychology training (Chitindingu & Mkhize, 2016)

Baloyi and Ramose (2016) suggest that every language has unique sets of images which express the ways of looking at specific people. The implication is that it becomes problematic to use Western images and literary manners to express African and Indigenous ideas. The ideas being expressed, and the language being used to express those ideas are incommensurate. Therefore, there must come a point where the language becomes inadequate in articulating indigenous ways of looking at things (Baloyi & Ramose, 2016). Within psychology, the lives and experiences of African people are explored and explained using foreign languages. The implication is that the theory that undergirds African life can never be completely and authentically accounted for within psychology.

Language is essential in South Africa because of the multilingual nature of its society. Practically, this means that when psychologists and other professionals finish their training, they must work within multilingual and multicultural contexts. Decolonisation advocates collaborative and participatory approaches to developing and disseminating knowledge; multilingual approaches will facilitate these processes (Mheta et al., 2018). Furthermore, the political will to implement complex multilingual policies appears to be lacking (Lockett, 2016). Lockett (2016) suggests that this lack of political will and hegemonic use of colonial languages works as a serious restriction to the academic achievement of Black African students in monolingual universities.

Within multicultural and multilingual contexts, the ability to translinguate is critical in ensuring that traditional power relations are not reinforced and in making psychology accessible (Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Segalo & Cakata, 2017). For this reason, Mayaba et al. (2018) suggest that the question of language should occupy a prominent role in the curriculum debate. Therefore, going forward, psychology has to create space to realise the promise and wealth contained within the indigenous language. One such promise is the recovery of lost wisdom, enabling indigenous people to reclaim their right to define themselves. In this way, African people can begin to see the world in a manner that does not valorise European

language and epistemology (Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Mayaba et al., 2018; Segalo & Cakata, 2017).

2.4.6 Strict adherence to the audit culture

Another impediment to the meaningful conversation on decolonisation within psychology may be the strict adherence to the audit culture, including standardised assessments and normalised professional practices to meet accreditation requirements (Watkins et al., 2018). The Western approach to psychology is based on a restrictive philosophy that develops strict principles to explain human behaviour and society. The restrictiveness of this philosophy is found in the HPCSA regulations, ideologically conservative ethics committees and, consequently, in the curriculum (Nwoye, 2020; Ratele et al., 2018). Maldonado-Torres (2016) adds that it is challenging to decolonise the curriculum if universities insist on uncritical participation in the definition of excellence through Western standards and teaching.

Urson and Kessi (2018) suggest that adherence to these Western-inspired standardised assessments and normalised professional practices is perceived to mean a higher quality of education. In contrast, the transformation and decolonisation of university curricula and research have been linked to lowering educational standards and scientific rigour (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019; Urson & Kessi, 2018).

Masaka (2019) is critical of the arguments about the standards of knowledge that some scholars have advanced. These arguments have been advanced by those keen on the idea of the Western canon existing alongside Indigenous knowledge, which suggests that Indigenous knowledge is inferior and could harm the good reputation of the Western canon. Therefore, maintaining standards means maintaining the status quo, meaning that the dominance of the Western canon will be maintained (Masaka, 2019).

2.4.7 Psychology in a multicultural society

South Africa is considered a multicultural society, and each culture has different origins and histories. These varied cultures espouse different perspectives on the nature of reality, spirituality, knowledge, ethics, and beliefs. These aspects contribute to the regulation of behaviour in those contexts. The multiculturalism of South African society means that ill-being and well-being must be understood from a much broader perspective.

For psychology, this situation presents unique challenges but also precious opportunities. The challenges are based on the fact that the profession remains steeped in coloniality and neoliberal ideology but is required to service a population mired in complex socio-political and economic challenges (Mogorosi, 2018; Tamburro, 2013). Joosub (2021) suggests that students who train under these circumstances are not necessarily equipped to work in local contexts and, thus, do not sufficiently consider the role of economic and structural inequalities in the development of psychological distress.

Opportunities within these complexities and diversities rest on the possibility of new knowledge, methods and ways of life that could make it possible to manage a wide range of human situations (Chiodo et al., 2014; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Tamburro, 2013). The ability to create these opportunities depends on how spaces encourage the inclusion of the voices of Indigenous South Africans (Tamburro, 2013). Watkins et al. (2018) point out that psychology alone is not enough to address people's challenges. They suggest the need for a transdisciplinary approach to achieve social justice.

2.4.8 Coloniality within the psychology curriculum

Adams et al. (2017) state that psychology is concerned with the growth and happiness of individuals removed from their social contexts. They find this because these ideas are often applied uncritically across contexts, and many non-Western peoples consider the connectedness of people to their context as integral to their growth and happiness. Dudgeon and Walker (2015) argue that the colonial disruption of the Indigenous people's lives brought

profound grief and a deep-seated longing to reconnect with their cultural heritage and ancestry.

However, mainstream psychology has long ignored this profound and enduring sense of loss and, consequently, its influence on the lives of Indigenous people worldwide (Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Oelofsen, 2015; Tamburro, 2013). Through this process, some well-meaning psychology practitioners can contribute to cultural racism and cause harm through their uncritical application of psychological theory.

Dudgeon and Walker (2015) suggest that uncritical use involves applying mainstream psychological theory and praxis to interpret and provide meaning for Indigenous people without making space for Indigenous people to name and explain their experiences and behaviour. Therefore, space must be available for Indigenous people to contribute to the disruption of this epistemic violence by contributing to forms of historically and ecologically relevant intervention.

Cooper (2014) concurs and states that the challenge for psychology in the next few decades will be to focus on addressing the concerns within a context where psychology is perceived as an elitist profession that is not relevant to the economic emancipation of most people in South Africa. For psychology to play a role in the transformation of society, it can no longer exist in its silo but needs to create spaces for transdisciplinary collaborations and move closer to Indigenous communities (Chilisa, 2017; Watkins et al., 2018).

Van der Westhuizen et al. (2017) support the idea of transdisciplinary collaborations and bringing the Western and Indigenous perspectives together. Cooper (2014) adds that what is needed is for psychology to be open to all realities and reject the idea of contrived singular universal truths that have marked the profession. Furthermore, Tamburro (2013) states that the helping professions need to be conscious of the history of colonialism and its influence on current issues to be effective and relevant.

Long (2017) suggests that a decolonised education produces knowledge that has the potential to shape the material conditions of the majority of South Africans. He suggests that the apparent inability of psychological theory, research, and practice to address the material needs of the majority of South Africans is one of the cardinal failures of the profession. This failure has contributed to the crisis of relevance as psychology seems to occupy minimal space within the conversation about the transformation of society. The goal of transforming society requires an approach that contributes to the rethinking and reconstitution of psychological theory, research, and practice (Heleta, 2016; Lacerda, 2015; Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

The process of rethinking and reconstituting psychological theory, research and practice should begin by linking the colonial and apartheid history of the field to the present. The focus should also be on disrupting the epistemic injustices experienced during the knowledge creation process and enhancing students' capacity for analytical thought, critical reflection, and collaboration across contexts (Barnes, 2018; Kessi, 2017).

Maldonado-Torres (2016) points out that this is essentially a process of rehumanisation that involves the production of counter-discourses, counter-knowledge and counter-practices to dismantle coloniality and open possibilities. These processes are not necessarily easy; they are marked by resistance, pain, and discomfort. It is human nature to avoid these feelings and the life experiences linked to these emotions. However, they can be instrumental and bring transformative learning experiences (Watkins et al., 2018). Therefore, this process requires clarity of intention (Watkins et al., 2018), commitment, courage, and perseverance from staff, students, and the broader community (Keikelame & Swartz, 2019).

Adams et al. (2017) suggest that a focus on the study of coloniality can help in understanding how these Eurocentric ideologies reflect and reproduce the racialised violence of colonial domination. Decolonial perspectives also make it clear that these individualistic ideas are not politically innocent products of cultural advancement but are outcomes of epistemic violence. They suggest that one of the consequences of these individualistic and

promotion-oriented pursuits of growth is the reproduction of violence through the unequal distribution of resources and environmental degradation. Thus, these modern, individualistic ways of being are a source of rather than a solution to global inequalities and suffering (Adams et al., 2017; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018). The study of coloniality enables us to understand and dismantle the pervasive impacts of the colonisation of Indigenous lands and their peoples (Watkins et al., 2018).

2.4.9 Coloniality within psychological research

Barnes (2018) states that the decolonising of research methodologies emanated from general unhappiness with knowledge production that is primarily rooted in Western epistemology. The aim thereof is to disrupt the tendency to universalise specific ideas about the human condition and give voice to the marginalised (Costandius et al., 2018).

Chilisa (2012) questions the uncritical and universal application of social sciences research methodologies developed in the West to gather data across contexts that place researchers, practitioners, and students in a position where they are presenting research methodologies that blur any fundamental differences that may exist between the colonisers and Indigenous communities.

This tendency is driven, to no small degree, by international organisations located primarily in Europe and North America that fund research worldwide. This approach, together with the inherent subjectivity of researchers, has created a body of literature that spreads knowledge, especially about Indigenous people, which has a questionable basis (Chilisa, 2012). The belief that Indigenous knowledge and problem-solving abilities that have stood the test of time have no place in the modern world lacks economic and strategic sense (Tamburro, 2013).

Reiter (2019) critiques the doctrine of universalism and decontextualisation and suggests that all knowledge is idiographic. The idiographic nature of knowledge means that all knowledge is embedded within the context where it developed and, therefore, cannot be

fully and deeply understood outside that context. The apparent infatuation of the West with rendering Western epistemology universal is part of the colonial and imperial agenda. In response, Reiter (2019) advocates a manifold and pluriversal explanation of the world, with each perspective limited, contextual and aware of its limitations.

Therefore, the social sciences require decolonisation because the Western epistemological tradition applied within the social sciences does not contain the tools required to capture, analyse, and understand the world fully and deeply. Furthermore, modern psychological research has also not made a meaningful contribution to epistemic justice and the improvement of the material conditions of South Africans. Conversely, it must be admitted that the Indigenous epistemologies have similar limitations in a global sense (Barnes, 2018; Carolissen et al., 2017; Long, 2017; Reiter, 2019; Watkins et al., 2018).

Carolissen et al. (2015) advocate a decolonial reframing and repair as part of the exorcising process that Pillay (2017) suggests. However, Carolissen et al. (2015) also state that even after this decolonial framing, healthy scepticism should be maintained, and there should be an openness to the idea that mental health is variable and dynamic. The tools to describe mental health should remain similarly dynamic and variable.

Long (2016) critiques the current Black elites for using hegemonic racialising discourse to protect, consolidate and expand their class interest. The employment of hegemonic racialising discourse means that the focus is almost always on the past, which means the present injustices perpetuated by governmental policies escape notice. Therefore, it should be recognised that Indigenous epistemologies will also have limitations, will not necessarily provide a comprehensive account of human psychology and spirituality, and may not lead to an extensive transformation of the material conditions of the downtrodden masses in South Africa.

Indigenous knowledge can provide new insights and tools to understand the world and perhaps open spaces for new voices to contribute to psychology and research. Therefore, it

should be approached critically and dialogically and appreciated for its potential value in sparking creative agency among students and other stakeholders. Thus, Chilisa (2012) challenges researchers to reflect critically on the literature that informs research. The points of reflection would be on the availability of literature on the Indigenous people, the location of the scholars that disseminated the literature and how to manage the oral literature produced by the Indigenous people.

Adams et al. (2017) suggest that many researchers are at a distance from the lived experiences of Indigenous communities and are thus unaware of the conceptual distance between hegemonic psychology and the lives of Indigenous people. Adams et al. (2017) advocate a more significant interaction between Indigenous and Western epistemologies. Barnes (2018) puts forward specific questions that could guide the decolonisation of methodologies. These questions include who the focus of the research is, the types of questions that are asked, the relationship between researchers and participants, what can be inferred from the study and the contributions to equality and justice.

Another critical perspective of the development of research unmasks the philosophical, theoretical, and methodological hegemony that perpetuates Western domination over the knowledge production process (Chilisa, 2012, 2017). This practice amounts to academic imperialism, which Chilisa (2017) defines as the practice where conceptual and theoretical frameworks, research questions, research designs and research techniques were developed to benefit Western thought systems and build deficit theories that perpetuate distortions of African experiences.

Although the inherent value of Indigenous knowledge in eradicating poverty and addressing challenges within the continent has been recognised, the unequal power relations represent a structural impediment to the meaningful co-existence of Western and Indigenous paradigms. Therefore, the potential of Indigenous knowledge to develop home-grown solutions to local challenges remains underexplored (Chilisa, 2017; Sonn et al., 2017).

Kessi (2017) points to specific examples of research approaches, such as studies that link Black people with violence, women with irrationality, the poor with ignorance or young people with deviance, that perpetuate this violence and suggests that these illustrate how research re-enforces the process of inferiority. These violent ideas then become common sense knowledge perpetuating racialised, gendered and class discrimination (Kessi, 2017).

2.5 Challenges with decolonisation in psychological theory, research, and practice

The need for the decolonisation of research was outlined in the previous section. Watkins et al. (2018) suggest that decolonisation is not an endpoint, but a process borne out of struggle. The literature indicates that various critical points of struggle impact the trajectory of the decolonial process in higher education. The points of struggle include the apparent discomfiture about decolonisation (Alemán & Gaytán, 2017), the reticence to develop concrete steps to facilitate decolonisation (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019), the need to overcome the audit culture in higher education (Carolissen et al., 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2017), the perception of the inferiority of Indigenous epistemology (Seehawer, 2018) and the superficial understanding of decolonisation (Adams et al., 2017).

One of the challenges to decolonisation is the apparent discomfiture that some role players have in discussing decolonisation. Alemán and Gaytán (2017) find that these discussions can unsettle all involved and elicit anxiety, anger, guilt, and frustration that seem to be at odds with the traditional logic-based learning process. Some students respond to the discomfort by remaining silent because they may feel it might be inappropriate to discuss race, colonialism, Whiteness, and epistemic injustice within a classroom context (Alemán & Gaytán, 2017; Costandius et al., 2018). Some also avoid engaging in these conversations by suggesting that if Indigenous people are unhappy, they should find other universities (Costandius et al., 2018). In other words, decolonisation can sometimes be met with various forms of resistance from multiple stakeholders, including students themselves and academic and administrative staff.

Villanueva (2013) recounts her experiences of the various forms of institutional resistance that accompanied her introduction of Indigenous content in the curriculum at an American university. She points out that her attempts were met with questioning from colleagues, pressure to change her approach and violation of academic freedom. Watkins et al. (2018) suggest that, on a deeper level, the obstacles are founded on White fragility, which involves a degree of epistemic xenophobia that contests the ideas of centring non-Western epistemology. They caution that decolonial scholars should guard against non-Western epistemology occupying a subordinate position to Western epistemology in an integrated curriculum.

As is the case in other professions, the decolonisation of psychology will likely receive resistance from those who benefit from the status quo (Maldonado-Torres, 2016; Pillay, 2017). However, Chiodo et al. (2014) suggest that presenting counter-discourses to decolonisation can be good. Considering these counter-discourses as resistance could rob those involved of the opportunity to consider decolonisation from a unique perspective.

The idea that much of the discussion about decolonisation within psychology is heady and philosophical and has provided few concrete guidelines on how to bring about change is a challenge (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019; Long, 2017). Seehaver (2018) suggests that it is challenging to decolonise and integrate Indigenous epistemologies within the higher education context if the academic staff is not adequately trained in Indigenous epistemologies and how to incorporate them in an academic context.

These concerns, although valid, also expose the perception that the academic staff is meant to be the all-knowing experts and students, the empty vessels – characteristic of the banking model of education. It fails to acknowledge that all the role players inside and outside the classroom can be active in the knowledge creation process. It may also reflect the insecurities among some academic staff to relinquish control and their position as experts (Carolissen et al., 2017; Watkins et al., 2018).

There have been several critical questions that have been advanced to guide the decolonial conversation forward. In the first place, some of the questions relate to how to create spaces for engagements with social actors outside the institution of higher learning to collaborate to explore how psychology can contribute towards social justice within the context of vast inequalities. We must consider strategies to create genuine collaboration with activist movements and other community stakeholders to create opportunities to learn from each other in pursuit of a decolonial future.

Secondly, other questions are related to the challenge of overcoming capitalist neoliberal perspectives entrenched within higher education and society. The influence of these perspectives has also been seen within regulatory bodies through policies and practices adopted. These policies and practices have seemingly hamstrung the decolonial project in some ways. In this case, strategies must also be considered to challenge the capitalist neoliberal perspectives that are the dominant cultures within higher education (Sonn et al., 2017).

Thirdly, as much as there is a need for collaboration as part of the decolonial project, academic frameworks and platforms can still be exclusionary and alienating. Therefore, the conversation should still focus on who is being excluded and included when we proceed with performing academic rituals. Therefore, there is a need to consider how to facilitate inclusion in terms of access, language and setting to challenge hierarchy (Sonn et al., 2017). Seehawer (2018) suggests that finding a solution to these and other questions is an ongoing process that focuses on creating space for multiple knowledge systems within higher education.

Seehawer (2018) points out that the perception that Indigenous epistemologies are inferior to Western epistemologies is pervasive. Cloete and Auriacombe (2019) suggest that this is based on the perception that Indigenous epistemologies have no basis in evidence and appear unscientific. Thus, some suggest that bringing these other epistemologies into the curriculum will consequently reduce the quality of education. The perception has contributed

to reinforcing the status quo and further entrenching power in Western epistemology, shaping the relationships between academic staff and students, researchers and participants and affecting curriculum responsiveness.

The audit culture that marks life in contemporary higher education contributes to the erosion of decolonisation. The audit culture imposes strict standards of competency and excellence based on Western thought. Carolissen et al. (2017) suggest that these prescripts produce conformity and uniformity, are not responsive to context and do not sufficiently develop critical and analytical skills in students. Within psychology in South Africa, this ideology is animated through the HPCSA and is a constraining factor in the decolonisation of psychology.

Another dimension of this idea that also affects decolonisation is the prioritisation of international ranking systems for universities (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). The ranking system sets out performance parameters for universities which means that universities strive towards these frameworks. One possible outcome is that the dominant Western epistemological frameworks remain firmly entrenched and the curriculum remains unresponsive to the contexts wherein they are located. Maldonado-Torres (2016) points out that this culture is also one of the critical obstacles on the journey to decolonisation.

Decolonisation is not concerned about adherence to the normative structure that has left most of the world holding the short end of the stick. It is concerned with challenging these normative structures and developing new ways of thinking and unique philosophies founded within a decoloniality, which is opposed to coloniality. Maldonado-Torres (2016) suggests that one way to end the tension between decoloniality and coloniality is to resign from seeking recognition and validation within the modern and colonial world.

Adams et al. (2017) suggest that some of the attempts at decolonisation have been superficially approached. They offer that these have mainly centred on merely populating psychology with local researchers or focusing on Indigenous people who have been previously

neglected. In line with the theme of superficiality, Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) point out that some researchers have focused on the idea of taking Western text and supplementing it with local examples. This approach overlooks the reality of the geolocation of knowledge production that is even now rooted in the Global North. Furthermore, the assessment processes used within such curricula are still based on traditional Western strategies (Castell et al., 2018).

Jackson (2013) questions the likelihood of Indigenous voices having a fair opportunity to be heard within these frameworks of domination. Thus, according to Adams et al. (2017), these methods provide no guarantee that the oppressive epistemic structures will change. Furthermore, the focus of research on Indigenous communities is likely to reproduce and reaffirm coloniality rather than disrupt it unless accompanied by a radical shift in epistemic standpoint.

The current configuration of the power structures within higher education can influence the trajectory of the decolonial project. Their influence on the decolonial project centres on their ability, as the elites within higher education, to affect the development and implementation of policy. Practically, this means that the power structures within higher education can affect curriculum responsiveness, stifle the conversation about decolonisation and regulate access to higher education (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Through this process, universities can ensure that any threat to the status quo is limited and regulate the demographics at universities (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

The institutional power structures have also emboldened some academic staff to label student protests about access and decolonisation as irrational (Costandius et al., 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Maldonado-Torres (2016) points out that the critique against student movements can be problematic, especially if it comes from academic staff deeply embedded within institutional structures and cultures. The embeddedness of the staff means that they have a personal stake in the institutional status quo, and their objectivity is thus open

to question. Furthermore, it is possible that such critique could be based on an incomplete understanding of students' struggles within the higher education context (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

2.6 Roles of students in decolonisation

Decolonisation involves the active and critical participation of various stakeholders (Chilisa, 2017; Long, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2017). Students are some of the stakeholders that have been marginalised in the curriculum debate. The side-lining of students has been based on the idea advanced by banking educational approaches that perceive students as not being active and effective collaborators within the knowledge creation process. These approaches overlook the experiences that students have and can bring to the classroom to enhance the learning process (Watkins et al., 2018).

The 2015 and 2016 student protests across South Africa disrupted this perception and highlighted the fundamental issues that students were experiencing in higher education institutions. The demonstrations came to be known as the #Rhodesmustfall, #sciencemustfall and the #feesmustfall movements, and they catapulted the conversation on the transformation and decolonisation of higher education into the mainstream and made it socially relevant (Becker, 2017; Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020; Meda, 2019).

The #Rhodesmustfall movement was based on students' disenchantment with colonial figures and cultures that marked university life at some higher education institutions. The flashpoint of this movement was the demands by students for the removal of the statues of Cecil John Rhodes and other colonial figures at universities and in other public spaces (Costandius et al., 2018). The #Rhodesmustfall movement captured the nation's imagination, and as students brought to the fore additional issues that plagued higher education, the movement evolved into what would come to be known as the #feesmustfall movement.

The crux of the #feesmustfall movement was the protestation against the increasing cost of university tuition and demands for a reduction or even the overall cancelling of

university fees for free higher education. The other issues included the need for a decolonised curriculum, the low number of Black South African scholars, the questionable quality of teaching and learning to ensure meaningful opportunities and success, the outsourcing of staff and an immediate solution to the shortage of student accommodation (Costandius et al., 2018; Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020; Meda, 2019).

One of the critical outcomes of the protests was the provision of a space for students, as affected stakeholders, to engage on what a decolonised higher education should look like and how it was to be brought about to overcome Western bias in higher education (Amosun et al., 2018; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018; Oelofsen, 2015). Távara and Moodley (2017) suggest that these engagements are critical, and when they occur within a safe space praxis, they create opportunities for students to contribute to change within the higher education landscape. With the decolonisation and #feesmustfall movements going mainstream and the growing interest in decolonisation from academics and funding institutions both locally and abroad, it is essential that students' voices do not disappear and that they continue to occupy a prominent role in the decolonial project.

The literature suggests that students' voices on decolonisation are complex and dynamic, ranging from resistance to embracing and advocating decolonisation. These responses indicate that continued conversations about decolonisation within psychological theory, research and practice may be similarly complex, thus necessitating safe spaces. Safe spaces and inclusiveness for decolonisation are vital because, as Cornell and Kessi (2017) point out, universities can still be violent, exclusive, and isolating places that impact students fundamentally.

Furthermore, Madden and McGregor (2013) caution that it might be challenging to create safe spaces within institutional contexts marked by contradictions about decolonisation. They state that it may not be safe for students who are vulnerable to speak in such instances. Therefore, before entering deliberative spaces involving decolonisation, the context, people,

time, and place, it is prudent to consider how these may shape the critical engagements and reflections (Madden & McGregor, 2013).

Academic staff in psychology need to show commitment to creating safe spaces for critical reflection with psychology students on decolonisation. Part of the critical reflection must involve the consideration of the meaning of decolonisation within psychological theory, research, and practice in South Africa (Watkins et al., 2018). Furthermore, it must involve the critical consideration of the role of colonialism and apartheid in the development of psychology and the complicity of psychology and research in psychology in the proliferation of colonialism and apartheid (Cooper, 2014; Dutta, 2018; Villanueva, 2013).

In addition to the collaboration among students and staff, local Indigenous communities must also participate in these collaborative spaces to consider decolonial psychology within the South African context (Costandius et al., 2018; Meda, 2019; Watkins et al., 2018; Zwane, 2019). Razack (2009) suggests that as academic staff and students enter these deliberative spaces, there must be a degree of awareness of the spaces they occupy in relation to power, privilege, knowledge, dominance, and subordination.

Furthermore, they must also be aware of their role in producing racialised spaces in the classroom. Decolonisation within psychology requires a radical shift in the consciousness of many students, especially those raised in privileged contexts (Watkins et al., 2018). As students begin to explore their histories of privilege and are exposed to the colonial ideas that have placed them in either a dominant or subaltern position by their race, place of birth or education, they may find themselves unsettled (Silva & Students for Diversity Now, 2018; Watkins et al., 2018).

Academic staff should be aware of the various subjectivities within the classroom, be mindful of how the voices of some students may be silenced and how these students may not feel safe to share their thoughts on issues (Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Razack, 2009). It is crucial for faculty and staff to be models for students by sharing their struggles with and confrontation

of colonial ideas (Watkins et al., 2018) and to act in solidarity to support decolonisation (Costandius et al., 2018)

The processes involved in decolonisation have elicited a great deal of discomfort from a range of stakeholders, including students and academic and administrative staff (Castell et al., 2018; Chiodo et al., 2014; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015; Watkins et al., 2018). Chiodo et al. (2014) point out that this discomfort is potentially useful when it is engaged, understood, and reflected upon critically. In such cases, it can enable students and staff to make sense of discomfort and resistance.

Castell et al. (2018) advocate the strategic employment of discomfort to enable students to confront their attachment to structural injustices. Chiodo et al. (2014) suggest that this discomfort is based on the decolonial suggestion that some students benefitted unfairly from privilege. Such discomfort could contribute to the disruption of one's sense of belonging.

Thus, supportive, and emotionally and intellectually challenging spaces must be created within the classroom as these decolonial conversations unfold. Castell et al. (2018) acknowledge the need for safe spaces within the classroom as the use of discomfort is engaged. However, they caution that students should not be perceived as vulnerable, naïve and one dimensional. Student bodies are diverse with diverse experiences and those should be acknowledged and be part of a decolonised education.

2.7 Possibilities of a decolonised curriculum

Castell et al. (2018) aver that decolonisation goes further than just the demographic composition of staff and students. It also goes beyond the superficial discussions about the positioning of Indigenous epistemologies relative to the Western canon. Moreover, it is undoubtedly more complicated than questions about which part of the Western canon is problematic. Kessi (2017) notes that discourses within higher education have moved from transformation towards a decolonial stance.

The decolonial stance advocates epistemic justice as the basis for all activities in higher education. Furthermore, it advocates the employment of critical reflexivity as the basis for interactions between students and academic staff. Castell et al. (2018) suggest that critical reflexivity is essential to understanding one's worldview and working towards decolonisation. Furthermore, when this approach is practised within the classroom, it provides students with rigorous tools to critique the context in which they are embedded and reflect on their thinking processes (Castell et al., 2018).

The method of critical reflexivity contrasts with the traditional banking model of education and deficit theorising that has marked the psychology curriculum (Alemán & Gaytán, 2017). Watkins et al. (2018) argue that for psychology, the benefit of this approach is that it enables students to engage dialogically with the theoretical content and in critical reflexivity concerning the practical side of the course.

Kessi (2017) states that the role of higher education should go further than just living out the neoliberal imperatives of teaching skills for the marketplace. Higher education must focus on creating knowledge that seeks to transform society. Masaka (2019) adds that decolonisation and epistemic justice should not be ends in themselves. They should lay the foundation of an education curriculum that empowers students and awakens their agency.

2.7.1 Broad approaches to the decolonisation process

The decolonisation of the curriculum requires a radical shift that is grounded in the acknowledgement of colonial wounds. This radical shift must further be grounded in the commitment to develop new psychological theories during the decolonial turn (Kessi, 2017). It must focus on opening spaces for multiple modes of knowledge and placing Indigenous people and communities at the centre as knowers, thinkers, and theorists (Dutta, 2018).

The literature suggests that the decolonisation process should occur in a phased approach that is necessarily slow (Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). For instance, Chilisa (2012) outlines five steps that she suggests decolonisation should take. Also, Fanon (1959) (as cited

in Ally & August, 2018) advances that decolonisation comprises three aspects: the recognition of subjugation and assimilation, returning to the roots through the reclaiming and recall of history and realigning with the course of national independence and producing relevant and revolutionary literature. Similarly, Villanueva (2013) refers to the decolonial process as having phases that include the recovery and rediscovery of Indigenous knowledge that lead to greater awareness, confrontation of the various forms of resistance which can consist of guilt, shame and pain, dreaming of alternatives and the development of actions to turn the dream into reality.

The processes that these scholars have put forward appear to share similar features. For instance, these broad approaches engender a critical awareness of the colonial nature of society, higher education, and psychological theory, research, and practice. They include strategies and tactics to address this colonial nature and create new possibilities for a decolonised society, higher education, and psychological theory, research, and practice (Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Villanueva, 2013).

One of the tactics that various decolonial scholars have mooted is the practice of safe spaces. Several scholars have articulated the importance of creating safe spaces within classrooms as a basis for conversation about decolonisation (Castell et al., 2018; Távora & Moodley, 2017). It is essential to understand and reflect on the meaning of safe spaces within a higher education context.

The idea of spaces is contrasted with the notion of places. Távora and Moodley (2017) explain that spaces are temporal and impermanent opportunities that open within specific places. The places are more permanent and are shaped by those with the power to own, manage and police space. University classrooms and the institutional power dynamics that shape those classrooms are examples of these places.

Creating safe spaces within higher education places requires an intentional and mindful application of specific tactics to facilitate intersectional thinking, organising and

transdisciplinary solutions. These spaces are not just there to critique psychological theory, research, and practice; they are there to spark creativity for the possibility of a decolonised psychology curriculum. Focusing only on the critical aspect invites despair; thus, the spaces should also engender hope which will form the basis for creative effort (Villanueva, 2013).

The practice of safe space is vulnerable to power disparities within the classroom; thus, academic staff who engage in the practice need to be mindful of these dynamics. Safe spaces are indispensable for critical reflexivity because they can be deeply personal, thus making students and academic staff vulnerable. The potential for transformative learning rests on the sincerity and honesty with which stakeholders engage in this reflective process. Therefore, academic staff embracing the decolonial turn must be aware of these issues and, together with students and other stakeholders, reflect critically on the meaning of safe spaces and the tactics to develop such spaces within potentially hostile institutional cultures.

Creating spaces for critical reflection by marginalised voices within higher education could represent a threat to the entrenched power structures at universities. Currently, the institutional power structures function as proxies for external influence peddlers. These external role players include the state, market and commercial interests and international funding and rating agencies; these entities are interested in maintaining the status quo. Consequently, matters concerning curriculum responsiveness, decolonisation and mother-tongue instruction at universities appear to receive lip service (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; Heleta, 2016; Magoqwana, 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2011; Távora & Moodley, 2017).

2.7.2 Broad approaches to the decolonisation of psychology curricula

Participatory engagements and the development of critical consciousness are critical in the decolonisation process. These ideas should be the guiding principle for decolonial curricula in psychology. However, achieving this within a neoliberal university steeped in coloniality could be profoundly challenging (Carolissen et al., 2015). Thus, the risk is that under these circumstances, decoloniality could end up being metaphorical (Watkins et al., 2018).

Decolonising the curriculum is intimately connected with the knowledge production process. Therefore, the knowledge production process must receive focus because the knowledge presented in textbooks should be developed based on decolonial ideals. It is not enough to supplement Western textbooks with local examples. This approach would fail to consider the geolocation of knowledge because to speak is to speak from a place on a map (Long, 2017; Lockett, 2016; Roy, 2016; Watkins et al., 2018).

Furthermore, there should be critical reflection on the possibility of integrating global knowledge and Indigenous knowledge, understanding and skills (van der Westhuizen et al., 2017). Masaka (2019) appears to be at odds with the notion of Indigenous and Western epistemological transition being placed side by side. The argument is that this co-existence does not necessarily equate to epistemic justice. Epistemic justice must impel stakeholders to consider how the psychology and research curriculum can inspire creative agency among all, especially students, to find home-grown solutions to African challenges (Masaka, 2019).

Another criticism of the co-existence method of decolonisation is that traditional hegemonic psychology does not reflect on its complicity in reproducing violence through conventional research and practice. For this reason, proponents of critical reflexivity have viewed such reflection as indispensable to the decolonial project. Western coloniality needs to be studied and exposed, not reproduced. The discussed curriculum approaches use critical reflexivity, transdisciplinary and collective efforts by stakeholders to address challenges.

The process of decolonising the curriculum must cast a critical eye on the development of psychology as a field, including the colonial and apartheid history of the profession and the inherited canon (Lockett, 2016). At the centre of this critical deconstruction is the acknowledgement of the indefensibility of the proclivity to the universalisation of the inherited psychological canon. Lockett (2016) suggests that the curriculum should provide students with the critical, analytical, and methodological tools to critique the proclivity to universalisation within psychology.

Several scholars have developed and implemented curricula and pedagogical approaches that contribute to decolonisation, both locally and internationally (Carolissen et al., 2017; Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Villanueva, 2013). Internationally, Villanueva (2013) advocates a pedagogical approach referred to as Barrio pedagogy among the Chicano people in the USA. Barrio pedagogy is a method of instruction derived from the integration of existing and evolving knowledge that comes from the communities where institutions are located, students and their families, and the personal biographies of academic staff. It was initially developed for use within Chicano communities; these are communities of Mexican descent but living within the USA. Integrating the existing and constantly evolving knowledge systems that emanate from these Chicano communities enables the students to navigate the multiple spaces they occupy as university students and members of those Chicano communities. Furthermore, it honours the experiences of local communities and the experiences of students that come from those communities. This approach also advocates a pedagogical approach that creates a critical consciousness among students.

These spaces are a break from the traditional approaches to teaching and learning and thus challenge the epistemological and ontological perspectives of all stakeholders involved (Romero et al., 2009; Villanueva, 2013). The sharing of knowledge and honouring of experiences that contain that knowledge is based on authentic love and caring for the self and the other and aims to create connections between the role players (Irizarry & Raible, 2011). It is based on the understanding that whatever befalls the other befalls the self. This idea is communicated in the Mayan adage, "You are my other me." (Villanueva, 2013). This approach is founded on vital decolonial ideals, including opening spaces to stakeholders that have been side-lined in the classroom. The content and focus of the classroom would be chiefly determined by the context. The context wherein it is applied is, in part, within students and communities of Mexican descent within the US.

Another decolonial approach pioneered by Freire (2007) relates to the development of critical consciousness among students. Critical consciousness is essential in uncovering

coloniality in society, higher education, and psychology (Carolissen et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2013). It focuses on studying the underlying social systems and structure and their role in social and epistemic injustice and its influence on human behaviour. The process of uncovering these oppressive structural issues is facilitated through problem-posing education (Freire, 2007). The approach engages students to theorise about the issues in the environment and the underlying structures that contribute to those issues, and it asks students to critically consider solutions.

This form of education is often contrasted with the banking model of education that focuses on book learning and textual analysis. Villanueva (2013) points out that these approaches require an understanding of all the elements of life that cannot be fully achieved through a single-minded focus on theory, textual analysis, and the limited exploration of the mind. Carolissen et al. (2017) appear to support this approach in that it seeks to challenge rather than broadly reinforce the hegemonic power relations within curriculum debate and higher education.

Watkins et al. (2018) developed a curriculum approach that they refer to as Psychologies of Liberation. The fundamental aim of this approach is the transformation of the self and communities. They suggest that the transformation of the self occurs through the process of conscientisation as conceptualised by Freire (2007). The transformation of communities and society is driven by working in solidarity with other disciplines, Indigenous communities and the dialogical and dialectical interaction with multiple epistemologies from multiple locations. Watkins et al. (2018) point out that working in solidarity with these stakeholders is critical because traditional psychology alone cannot deal with the challenges people and communities face.

Practically, Watkins et al. (2018) work in solidarity by having their students engage experientially with Indigenous groups and communities. They argue that the traditional banking education system does not prepare students for these decolonial approaches.

Therefore, the academic staff tends to model this approach for the students by admitting their struggles, co-construction of knowledge and co-authoring publications with Indigenous communities. From a research standpoint, they focus on qualitative and multidimensional approaches to research with an emphasis on PAR and critical data reduction methods (Watkins et al., 2018).

Locally, Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) advocate the Ubuntu-Currere approach to curriculum development. It is based on the ideals that underlie the Southern African concept of Ubuntu which requires respect for and recognition of all people and the inclusiveness of all knowledge systems (Chilisa, 2012). Thus, Ubuntu-Currere, as a curriculum framework, moves away from the individualistic, top-down, universal education systems and focuses primarily on the context within which the curriculum is enacted. From this perspective, the curriculum should be relevant to the context, and this relevance is encouraged by creating spaces for local communities to make inputs in the curriculum development and knowledge production processes.

The Ubuntu-Currere approach is founded on the principle of Ubuntu and thus embraces a dialogical construction of subjectivity encapsulated in the adage 'I am because we are.' Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) decry the current teaching and learning methods driven by an audit culture without accounting for the South African context. They point out that these approaches run counter to the ideals of Ubuntu-Currere.

Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) suggest that when this framework is applied to the South African higher education context, it calls for the participation of all stakeholders. Participation ensures greater awareness of the context and the material conditions of the places where the curriculum is enacted. The practice of collectivism within curriculum development means that Western epistemologies and local Indigenous approaches occupy the same dialogical spaces within the classroom. Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) suggest that

this approach must be undergirded by academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and critical dialogical engagements between stakeholders within and outside the institution.

Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) refer to the pedagogical approach to African psychology implemented within the South African higher education landscape. They describe it as a critical psychology approach that looks at the individual, society, and mental health differently. The difference between this approach and traditional psychology is that it foregrounds the importance of contextual understanding. It seeks to bring together pre- and postcolonial psychologies to achieve a collective understanding of people.

In a practical sense, Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) state that this approach integrates both the traditional psychology approach and the socio-political history of psychology in South Africa. Therefore, the approach encourages critical dialogue between the traditional psychology approach and African psychology, focusing on the ontological and epistemological premise of the self. The exposure to multiple epistemologies begins a process of critical reflexivity within students, which plays out within the rest of the curriculum. Furthermore, the text from this framework includes both traditional psychological text, text from African scholars within the continent and the diaspora and decolonial text. Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) add that they also take students on walkabouts within local communities to encourage critical and dialogical engagements with those communities as part of theorising about the world.

In the application of this approach, the academic staff involved in this process at this institution highlighted a number of critical lessons that facilitated the further development of this approach to teaching psychology (Terre Blanche et al., 2021). One of the lessons was that there was a need to appreciate that students had been exposed to the Eurocentric approaches and the introduction of decolonial approaches required unlearning of these Eurocentric approaches. The process of unlearning these Eurocentric approaches could be painful. The interesting point that Terre Blanche et al. (2021) make is that their project enjoyed support from their university, and that was helpful. It is important to note that this sort of

institutional support is not always available in other universities, and it has been a stumbling block for other academic staff wanting to embark on the decolonial project (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

Terre Blanche et al. (2021) report that the redesigned program was based on the complex understanding of individual subjectivity and appreciation of the need for collective action and respect for diversity. Practically, students in this program received a sizeable collection of academic readings accompanied by a tutorial letter and had to submit assignments. The students received marks and additional feedback and were ultimately subjected to a summative examination. The focus of the examination was less on the reproduction of information but more on applying theoretical ideals to specific social issues in the form of carefully constructed essays. Secondly, it sought to integrate the personal biographies of students while challenging them to venture into new intellectual and social contexts. It involved taking students on walkabouts and having them reflect on the phenomena they encountered. After the initial conscientisation, students were required to get involved through participatory action and carry out reflections (Terre Blanche et al., 2021).

Joosub (2021) writes about the processes and experiences of students of a post-graduate module that was developed and presented in line with principles of decolonisation at another South African university. The module involved students conducting group seminars with each other to critique the knowledge distributed in their textbooks. The textbooks were developed in the USA and mainly contained Western concepts and experiences. In these seminars, students were also asked to discuss South African and African sources. The approach that Joosub (2021) took challenged the idea that students are just passive recipients of information and advocated for the idea of students being active and driving their learning process. After the seminars, students had to compile blogs reflecting on their experiences as part of this process. The blogs indicated that students enjoyed learning from each other and that this approach made psychology relevant and took them closer to becoming African psychologists.

Baloyi (2021) also writes about including the *Swa Moya* modules in the clinical psychology training at a South African university. In simple terms, *Swa Moya* relates to spiritual matters and focuses on the discerning life power of the soul. The *Swa Moya* approach that Baloyi (2021) adopted was critical because it provides the means to understand African epistemology for psychologists that ply their trade within indigenous communities. The inclusion of this approach in the training of clinical psychologists is based on the realisation that psychologists working in indigenous communities should be able to demonstrate cultural sensitivity and competency. The need for cultural sensitivity and competency is both an ethical issue and a relevant issue. For this reason, awareness of the *Swa Moya* approach is critical for every psychologist.

Practically, the *Swa Moya* module forms part of the program at the first- and second-year master's level within this university. In the first year of the program, the *Swa Moya* focuses more on theory and practical application in the second year of the master's program. The theoretical part of the program focuses on research from an African *Swa Moya* perspective, the *Swa Moya* theories, history, ethics, and Ubuntu. The students are also introduced to seminal works from African philosophers and scholars. The approach also creates space for students to locate themselves in the families and communities with which they work. There is also a focus on the psychological impact of contemporary social challenges in South Africa. The focus of the second year of the program is the practical application of the *Swa Moya* approach. The practical application is based on weekly practicums in clinical settings. During the practicums, the students would be exposed to the basic principles and ethics of African *Swa Moya*, the mental health issues of African indigenous people and the *Swa Moya* therapeutic modalities that are used (Baloyi, 2021).

The approaches that scholars take to contribute to decolonisation appear to focus on the inclusion, valuing and affirmation of Indigenous voices within psychological theory, research, and practice (Dudgeon & Walker, 2015). Understanding the complex and multidimensional aspects that influence psychological well-being and ill-being underlies this

inclusiveness. Carolissen et al. (2017) suggest that it may be helpful for academic staff to consider incorporating flexible visual learning methods inside and outside the classroom. These include, but are not limited to, photographs, drawings, mapping, transect walks, mood lines and problem and objective trees.

Kessi et al. (2021) point out that reflective practices, horizontal dialogue, student engagement and creative experimentation, which contrast with the top-down, path-dependent, and managerial approaches, are pathways to decolonisation. It is a practice that creates and strengthens new academic muscles, intimately connects theory and action and focuses on pursuing and sharing knowledge aimed at inclusive rigour, liberation, and justice. Nobles and Mkhize (2020) suggest that there is also a need to develop scholarly material to support decolonial education within psychology. They make examples of textbooks that could be developed for use in the African context. The textbooks would address clinical practice issues, counselling, treatment, and therapeutic interventions. The textbooks would foreground African language, logic, terminology, and concepts (Nobles & Mkhize, 2020).

Another way academic staff and students can explore the problematic nature of the universalist approach of psychological theory is to initiate dialogical engagements with the psychological research literature. More specifically, the apparent inability of psychology to develop knowledge that contributes meaningfully to the understanding of the politics of knowledge production and to address the material challenges that the majority of South Africans face can be brought to the fore.

Chilisa (2017) argues that this requires higher education and the research industry to involve researchers, especially in Indigenous communities, in setting the research agenda and throughout the research process. This approach will ensure that the research addresses the needs of the researched as defined by the researched and that more accurate information is distributed worldwide. Furthermore, this can highlight the need for psychology to work collaboratively with other disciplines inside and outside the humanities.

Maistry and Lortan (2017) point to universities in South America and the Asian sub-continent as examples of universities that pursued connectedness and embeddedness within local communities. They suggest that critical self-reflection helped unmask their current realities and lay the foundation for greater community engagement. Lacerda (2015) speaks of the same themes that drove the reconstitution of psychology after the Cuban revolution. Long (2017) points to the Cuban revolution as having transformed science and psychology from an elitist enterprise to a practice that is a part of everyday Cuban life.

2.7.3 Possibilities for psychological research

From a decolonial standpoint, research must play an emancipatory role by pursuing social justice and privileging the voices of the marginalised (Joosub, 2021). The literature suggests several approaches to disrupt coloniality within research and create possibilities for decolonial research. The approaches that emerge include the practice of critical reflexivity throughout the process, the practice of Indigenous research methodologies, the collaboration between stakeholders and the rediscovering and revaluing of Indigenous epistemologies.

Jackson (2013) and Keikelame and Swartz (2019) advocate reflexive processes within the research process and point out that they are just as important as deciding on the methodology because they provide the tools to understand the geopolitics of knowledge production and the influence of their positionality on the research process. Furthermore, this reflexive process enables researchers within psychology to uncover how psychological knowledge has been universalised and explore the limit of this supposed universality of knowledge (Barnes, 2018; Chilisa, 2012, 2017; Reiter, 2019; Watkins et al., 2018).

Additionally, this reflexive process creates an impetus for scholars to open research spaces for non-traditional players to contribute to setting the research agenda, thus creating possibilities for psychological research that contributes to social change. It means that the relationship between the researchers and the researched will similarly change and become more egalitarian, less hierarchical, and more reciprocal (Watkins et al., 2018). Keikelame and

Swartz (2019) add that psychological researchers can be transformed through this process as it requires courage and clarity of purpose.

Adams et al. (2017) suggest that a decolonial stance requires researchers to unmask and disrupt the colonial standpoint of standard scientific forms that pretend to be a politically innocent reflection of objective reality. As part of this process of unmasking and disrupting coloniality within research, several considerations should be borne in mind by researchers seeking to adopt a decolonial approach to research. Keikelame and Swartz (2019) suggest that researchers should critically reflect on the research methods they use and evaluate those methods on their potential to bring meaningful change to the lives of participants, especially participants in marginalised and Indigenous communities. Researchers should reflect on the possible psychological harm, humiliation, embarrassment, and other losses that these bodies of knowledge have inflicted on Indigenous people and the role Indigenous knowledge can play in healing and countering the hegemony of mainstream psychology (Chilisa, 2012, 2017).

Seehawer (2018) suggests that what is required is for decolonial scholars to be aware of and clear on their aims to ensure that some form of framework guides changes in the curriculum. The limitation of Western hegemonic psychology becomes obvious when researchers begin to explore areas that mainstream science has dismissed as sorcery (Chilisa, 2012). Mogorosi (2018) suggests that this is the consequence of misguided colonial attempts to apply colour-blind, ahistorical, and apolitical approaches in complex multicultural societies.

Research within this context requires additional tools and data sources to enable researchers and the academic community to access this knowledge. Some scholars have suggested that decolonial research should pursue a more participative design approach to research (Watkins et al., 2018). The participative design approach could include methodological approaches such as arts-based methods, including photovoice (Kessi, 2018),

storytelling (Chilisa, 2012; van der Westhuizen et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2013), folklore and myths (Chilisa, 2017) and narrative analysis (van der Westhuizen et al., 2017).

Cloete and Auriacombe (2019) suggest that what is needed for the decolonisation of research is a culturally sensitive participatory research approach that is responsive at all stages of the research process. Furthermore, Távora and Moodley (2017) point out that participatory research that occurs within the practice of safe spaces has the potential to be disruptive, address structural inequalities and contribute to social justice (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Maistry & Lortan, 2017; Távora & Moodley, 2017).

Kessi (2017) concurs with this idea and adds that participatory research approaches have the potential to develop knowledge that challenges epistemological violence. This approach necessitates extensive consultation regarding the recruitment of co-researchers, data analysis, member checks and the dissemination of research output (McNamara & Naepi, 2018). With that being said, it is essential to note that the methods and data sources outlined are by no means exhaustive. Many traditional data gathering methods can be employed decolonially, depending on the initial intent and the research objectives.

As mentioned previously, decolonial scholars have advocated participatory research design approaches (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Kessi, 2017; Távora & Moodley, 2017; Watkins et al., 2018). However, Barnes (2018) cautions that the attempts of decolonial scholars to apply decolonial methodologies within traditional research and psychology paradigms may lead to the oversimplification of complex Indigenous theories and ideas. The reason for this is that the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underlie these paradigms may not align with the purpose and intent of decolonisation. Additionally, this can contribute to decolonised methodologies being different methodological tools used in traditional hegemonic psychology rather than tools to critique and disrupt coloniality within psychology.

A decolonial mindset denotes a more collaborative and collective approach to research. The collaborativeness and collectiveness of decolonisation appear in line with the

Ubuntu ethic that marks many Indigenous communities (Chilisa, 2012; Reiter, 2019). In line with this idea, Jackson (2013) suggests that researchers should strive for more collaborative approaches and participatory methods as they are more direct in unmasking power relations and attempting to mitigate their impact. Knowledge is neither impartial nor politically innocent; it came from somewhere and was located within a temporal framework. Therefore, Jackson (2013) suggests that interested parties critically examine how they affect the nature and outcome of the research.

Kessi (2017) suggests that decolonial praxis should engender research processes that actively promote the participation of marginalised communities. The purpose of this approach would be to bridge the gap between the academy and the lived experiences of marginalised people. Kessi (2017) argues that this can help mitigate the epistemic violence that tends to be perpetrated against research participants.

Ally and August (2018) concur with this perspective and suggest that any theory developed outside South Africa should be subject to critical evaluation in terms of applicability and relevance. Thus, decolonisation necessitates developing alternative concepts and tools to facilitate decolonisation (Adams et al., 2017). This approach suggests that researchers and practitioners move away from their comfort zones and move towards marginalised communities that still struggle for social justice. When the researchers and practitioners enter these spaces, they do so not as saviours coming to liberate the members of these communities but as collaborators aiming to engage in a joint effort to restore their and the community's well-being.

This perspective is opposed to the role that psychology typically plays – a role that is founded on ideas of positivism and the religion of scientism, with psychologists playing experts that dictate to their clients and their communities (Adams et al., 2017). Some scholars also provide a word of caution for researchers and practitioners that employ this design approach. For instance, Kessi (2017) points out that this approach can also be vulnerable to the influence

of institutional power structures that can reinforce power disparities and undermine critical consciousness. Cloete and Auriacombe (2019) also concede that the researcher will need to retain a measure of control of the process to ensure that the proper research decisions are made. However, this means that the researcher retains the power and privilege to extract local knowledge and repackage it for professional and academic gain.

Decolonial approaches to research necessitate the rediscovery and revaluing of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies to disrupt the universalist tendency of hegemonic research. Exploring the potential value of Indigenous knowledge requires researchers to move away from the high walls of academia to co-design and co-frame research problems, co-create methodological frameworks that support the integration of knowledge systems, co-create solution-oriented knowledge, and apply it to address complex issues (Chilisa, 2017).

Chilisa (2017) points out that one of the critical issues is addressing the power imbalances in Western and non-Western knowledge. Naude (2019) states that this task is made doubly difficult because the intellectual journey of African scholars typically starts in Europe. African scholars learn about the intellectual contribution of European scholars and through this process, their hermeneutical lenses are shaped. As African scholars begin to reflect on Indigenous epistemologies and ontology, they do so with a colonial gaze (Chilisa, 2017; Naude, 2019).

The implication is that whatever knowledge is found within Indigenous frameworks must be legitimised through Western standards. Thus, Chilisa (2017) considers collaboration within this context as a form of colonialism as these Western-educated researchers drive the application of research, framing the studies and methodologies adopted and the dissemination of research while Indigenous communities are reduced to being mere data sources. For Indigenous people, being just data sources means that their knowledge does not form part of the research process, receives no acknowledgement in publication and does not have access

to the produced knowledge as it is packaged in inaccessible ways and ways that make it difficult to use (Chilisa, 2017).

Maldonado-Torres (2017) suggests that researchers adopt a questioning practice based on the desire to understand and not to judge and paternalise throughout their interactions with Indigenous communities. This approach to questioning should be practised in these communities, but researchers and practitioners can also employ it to understand themselves better. Understanding the self and the colonised other is, in essence, a process of discovering and expressing one's humanity and acknowledging the humanity of another (Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

Fomunyam and Teferra (2017) find that one of the ways to disrupt the hegemonic power amassed within higher education and psychology is by creating space for a plurality of voices within curriculum discussion. This plurality must include the voices of stakeholders, such as students, local communities and Indigenous peoples who have been forced to the margins of curriculum discussion. The plurality of voices creates opportunities for higher education to understand the needs of communities and societies and to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to those needs. The plurality of voices can contribute to the plurality of representation in higher education and the psychology curriculum.

This plurality of voice and representation implies that there will be greater epistemological diversity within the curriculum and the higher education landscape (Adams et al., 2017; Carolissen et al., 2017; Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017; Villanueva, 2013). Critical reflexivity, as far as it enables the exposition of underlying historical and cultural assumptions occurring within safe spaces, also has the potential to disrupt the status quo.

2.8 Conclusion

Chapter 2 explored the literature on decolonisation in detail. The definitions of many key concepts were explored at the beginning of the chapter to clarify how these concepts were understood and applied in the study. With the understanding of these concepts in place, the

influence of colonialism and apartheid was explored to gain a better perspective on their role in shaping contemporary psychology and, by implication, the psychology curriculum. Through this exploration, the need for the decolonisation of psychology was made clear and the specific aspects of the curriculum that drove this need were explored.

The process of decolonisation is not without issues or challenges. Even though decolonisation is needed, various aspects have become stumbling blocks to the process. These aspects were also explored in this chapter. It emerged that sometimes the possible contributions that students can make to the decolonial process and curriculum transformation are not always appreciated, and thus students tend to be overlooked. This study challenges this notion and creates a space for students to contribute. Therefore, in this chapter, the possible role that students can play was also explored.

Lastly, the literature review revealed that decolonisation of the psychology curriculum is taking place worldwide and scholars both locally and internationally are actively making changes. Examples of such projects were also explored.

The next chapter introduces and explores the theoretical point of departure of the current study. The theoretical point of departure is postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory provides the conceptual tools to understand and critique the influence of colonialism in psychology. It further provides ways to construct a future where various epistemological approaches could converge.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2, the literature review, focused on introducing and exploring, among others, concepts such as colonialism, coloniality, neoliberalism, decolonisation, and curriculum. The chapter explored the relationship between these concepts and psychological theory, research, and practice. The possible implications of these concepts for the research curriculum in psychology were also explored. The exploration illustrated that colonialism and coloniality are woven into higher education, including psychological theory, research and practice and the psychology curriculum.

A case is made for decolonising psychology by exposing the pervasive patterns of coloniality within psychological theory, research, and practice. Decolonisation critically explores the colonial history of the research curriculum in psychology and how these roots influence the discipline today. Furthermore, it seeks to create space for a plurality of voices within psychological theory, research, and practice, ensure that psychology is made more relevant and contribute to managing the challenges that most South Africans face. The literature suggests that postcolonial theory can serve as a lodestar to guide this critical exploration (Chilisa, 2012, 2017; Gandhi, 2019; Gyamera & Burke, 2018; Lunga, 2008; van der Westhuizen, 2013). Thus, the theoretical point of departure for this study is postcolonial theory.

Postcolonial theory connects to this study in various ways. It connects with decolonisation in that it seeks to critique the deterministic, universalistic, and ethnocentric inclination of Western epistemology that has marginalised Indigenous peoples, epistemologies, and cultures. Furthermore, it seeks to provide alternatives to Western epistemologies by creating space for marginalised people and for their epistemologies to take centre stage (Gandhi, 2019; Lunga, 2008).

From a research perspective, postcolonial theory critiques the unequal power relations between the Global North and Global South, between researchers and participants and between the resourced and under-resourced. The critique points to the impact of unequal power relations in setting the research agenda, deciding on research questions, and disseminating research findings (Chilisa, 2012, 2017).

Methodologically, postcolonial theory and decolonisation appear to have an affinity with collaborative and participatory methods. The affinity with participatory methods is based on the idea that these methods seek to disrupt the traditional relationships between researchers and participants and create a more equal distribution of decision-making power.

This chapter explores postcolonial theory in more detail and draws connections between postcolonial theory and the different aspects of the study. Furthermore, the history of postcolonial theory and its application in higher education and research is explored. In discussing the basics and application of postcolonial theory, the following guiding question will frame the discussion: What makes postcolonial theory relevant today, and how does it relate to the current research?

3.2 Postcolonial theory: A historical perspective

Ashcroft (2017) traces the origins of postcolonial theory to post-World War II when it was applied to describe the post-independence period in colonised states. The birth of postcolonial theory is attributed to Edward Said, whose publication called *Orientalism* in 1972 is considered the foundational text of postcolonial theory (Gandhi, 2019; Kapoor, 2002; Kayira, 2015; Saada, 2014; Subedi & Daza, 2008).

Postcolonial theory emerged from literary studies, where it was used to analyse and critique the representation of Western culture within Western literature and media (Kapoor, 2002). The initial primary focus was on English language literature related to the expansion and decline of British imperialism. Practically, it involved a critical reading practice applied to the literature that fell within the focus of postcolonial theory and was not entirely related to

historical periods. The critical reading practice was intended to understand and critique the privileging of some literature over others and thus provide context and impetus for subversive literature (Gandhi, 2019).

Gandhi (2019) suggests that, around the 1980s, greater recognition of the impact of cultural materialism on the literature occurred. Furthermore, the embeddedness and implication of economic and political circumstances in the literature were recognised. Thus, the passage of time brought a more significant appreciation of the role that literature and text play as instigators and purveyors of colonial power and postcolonial resistance.

Around this time, the value of this approach to the text became visible outside the traditional literary space. Consequently, the application of postcolonial theory in other disciplines gradually increased. For instance, postcolonial theory began to draw the attention of cultural critics interested in exploring and critiquing the nature of the social, political, and cultural interactions between Western and colonised peoples worldwide (Ashcroft, 2017; Gandhi, 2019).

Furthermore, cultural critics also began to employ postcolonial theory to explore the overall impact of colonisation on the Indigenous people (Ashcroft, 2017). The critical reading, in this period, focused on the representation of colonised peoples and how the text ascribes inferiority to the colonised while promoting the superiority of the coloniser (Mapara, 2009).

The growth of postcolonial theory continued into the 1990s. Ashcroft (2017) attributes the growth of postcolonial theory in the 1990s to the apparent need that emerged for theoretical tools to understand the diversity of cultures and their respective places within intersecting global cultural production. However, as Gandhi (2019) demonstrates, the theory has lost contact with its literary roots.

Currently, postcolonial theory has come to be applied in a variety of contexts, including disciplines such as anthropology and political science (Lunga, 2008), history, psychological and cultural studies (Leone, 2019; Nwoye, 2017), theological studies (Rukundwa & van Aarde,

2007), higher education policy research (van der Westhuizen, 2013), urban planning (Roy, 2016), gerontology (Kunow, 2016) and comparative literature (Saada, 2014; Sawant, 2012). Sawant (2012) suggests that the application of postcolonial theory in these varied disciplines is motivated by the need to disrupt the residual effect of colonialism that is still prevalent in various disciplines within the humanities.

Postcolonial theory has thus become a meeting point and a place of contestation for various disciplines over the years. It has created space for interdisciplinary dialogue across the humanities and space for dynamic interplay among the myriad perspectives on the study of society. More specifically, the critical and conceptual tools that accompany postcolonial theory enable scholars to analyse and discuss questions of marginalisation, subalternity and othering as they manifest within disciplines (Saada, 2014). Saada (2014) also suggests that postcolonial theory has been increasingly used for educational critique and to explore the means to contextualise education.

Postcolonial theory can provide the conceptual tools to critique the curriculum and provide an opportunity to transform higher education (Gearon, 2001; Saada, 2014). With the historical perspective in place, the main propositions of postcolonial theory must be explored. Therefore, the following section explores some of the fundamentals of postcolonial theory.

3.3 Main propositions of postcolonial theory

This section explores the various definitions of postcolonial theory and the fundamental propositions that form part of its theoretical scaffolding.

3.3.1 Defining postcolonial theory

Related to definitions, Lunga (2008) suggests that postcolonial theory definitions can be classified into three categories. First, postcolonial theory can be considered as being descriptive of experiences within specific geographical areas. Within the decolonial framework, these geographical spaces are in the Global South or previously colonised

countries. Thus, postcolonial theory is unique because it provides the tools to explore the politics of location where people can be either centred or marginalised (Gandhi, 2019).

Exploring the politics of location is essential because, as Roy (2016, p.2) suggests, “to speak is to speak from a place on the map and a place in history”. Acknowledging that one speaks from a place in history and a place on the map is essential because it provides the basis for critiquing the proclivity to universalisation that is characteristic of psychology and other disciplines. Furthermore, it provides the basis to begin the process of critical reflexivity, which is fundamental to understanding the world and the self.

Second, Lunga (2008) suggests that postcolonial theory can be thought of as relating to a certain period, specifically, periods after the administrative conclusion of Western colonisation. Postcolonial theory examines the processes and consequences of colonialism for Indigenous people from the 16th century to the present. In other words, postcolonial theory explores the continuing impact of European colonial expansion into Africa. This temporal consideration of postcolonial theory has come in for some critique (Gandhi, 2019). This critique will be explored later in the chapter.

Third, postcolonial theory can be considered a critical approach to the realities of oppression and subjugation (Lunga, 2008). The critique of oppression and subjugation emerges from the acute awareness of the impact of colonialism and neoliberalism worldwide. Furthermore, the critique emerged from the appreciation of the asymmetries of power and representation that accompany colonialism and neoliberalism (Ashcroft, 2017; Kunow, 2016). Through the critique of colonialism and neoliberalism, postcolonial theory seeks to expose and deconstruct the notion of colonial power and superiority that has endured in various forms.

3.3.2 Key propositions of postcolonial theory

The development of postcolonial theory has been influenced by various disciplinary traditions (Gandhi, 2019; Lunga, 2008; Sawant, 2012; Subedi & Daza, 2008). The diverse influences of postcolonial theory mean that it offers a more comprehensive and radical view

of the construction of the Other. The diverse influences also mean that the possible application of postcolonial theory is similarly diverse. One other implication of the diverse origins of postcolonial theory is that settling on a single definition is problematic.

However, within this plurality of possible applications, Lunga (2008) suggests that some principal themes characterise postcolonial theory. In the first place, postcolonial theory focuses on both the colonial and postcolonial periods and gives special attention to questions of power, resistance, and identity formation. Roy (2016) agrees with this assessment and uses postcolonial theory to theorise about coloniality within the urban planning environment. He adds that focusing on colonial and postcolonial periods, power, resistance, and identity formation enables scholars to understand how historical differences between communities shape contemporary society and global urbanisation patterns.

Second, postcolonial theory resists colonial affinity to stable identities, origins, absolutes, and either-or paradigms. Therefore, it embraces an understanding of power, resistance, and identities as contingent, unstable, contradictory and in a constant process of becoming. Third, it acknowledges that all discourse is drenched in self-interest and agendas, including discourse about the postcolonial theory itself.

Adopting a critical stance even towards postcolonial theory is critical to avoid counter-hegemonic tendencies (Roy, 2016). For this reason, discourse within a postcolonial framework is critical, self-reflective, and constantly questioning its assumption and grounds (Lunga, 2008). Lunga (2008) suggests that these characteristics make postcolonial theory instrumental in unmasking the unequal power relations and inequitable resource distribution that emerge from colonialism and neoliberalism.

Several concepts, the most relevant of which are presented here, form the theoretical building blocks of postcolonial theory. These concepts provide the vocabulary to explain colonial and postcolonial positions, relationships between dominant and subaltern groups and

themes of power and resistance. The concepts include Orientalism, othering, subalternity, hybridity and amnesia.

The first concept that forms part of the theoretical building blocks of postcolonial theory is the idea of Orientalism (Gandhi, 2019; Mapara, 2009). One of the critical figures within postcolonial theory was Edward Said. He developed the idea of Orientalism to illustrate the relationship between European colonialists and Indigenous Arab communities. These communities, including those of the broader Asian continent, were labelled as the Orient. In his work, the Orient is represented as inferior, strange, bizarre, irrational, and having a history separate from the West. Furthermore, the West is represented as masculine, active and dominant; the Orient is viewed as feminine, passive, and submissive (Mapara, 2009).

Saada (2014) avers that Orientalism represents a colonial discourse that underlies the self-representation and self-definition of the West through the othering of the East. These representations have contributed to the perceived tendency of ascribing certain deficits as inherent to certain groups around the world and generalising the characters of people. Consequently, Orientalism represents a theory and practice that reproduces these narratives about the West and the rest of the world throughout the academy, social institution, and life (Gandhi, 2019).

As a theoretical proposition, Orientalism relates to Western epistemology, including research, writing, ideas, and images. As a practical proposition, Orientalism speaks to the accompanying socio-cultural institutions and structures such as universities (Kapoor, 2002). Therefore, Orientalism can be understood as a way of thinking based on perceived ontological and epistemological distinctions between the West and the East and the rest of the world. From this perspective, the non-Western world is framed as exotic, deviant, and different and only exists meaningfully in relation to the dominating, restructuring and authoritative West (Subedi & Daza, 2008). Subedi and Daza (2008) suggest that within the educational context,

the ontological and epistemological approach of Orientalism has shaped the curriculum and, consequently, the students who experience that curriculum.

Postcolonial theory also uses the concept of othering to explain the relationship between the colonisers and the colonised (Saada, 2014). Othering can be understood as a hierarchical and dualistic concept that frames some as superior and others as inferior and, therefore, requiring betterment. This idea was thus the basis of colonial control. For example, Kayira (2015) points out that colonial writings about Africa by anthropologists seem to cast the continent as brutish, treacherous, and superstitious, among others. These descriptions helped frame Africans as radically different from Europeans, thus, requiring help, further justifying oppression.

The idea of the other is based on the notion of Orientalism that Edward Said introduced. In it, the colonisers used the concept to frame themselves as diametrically opposite to the colonised people. The colonised people are socially constructed as the ultimate other in history, culture, music, and other meaningful metrics. Furthermore, it also spoke of the other as inherently inferior because they were not European, Christian, or male. They considered these qualities endowed with an inherent superiority, thus, placing an obligation on them to save the rest of humanity that was different. Of course, the saving meant turning the rest of humanity into a reflection of Europe (Gandhi, 2019; Kapoor, 2002; Saada, 2014).

Practically, this meant applying Western and European values and standards to the other. Saada (2014) refers to this proclivity as epistemic violence. In the context of higher education, Saada (2014) suggests that institutions and faculties should approach the curriculum in a manner that enables students to learn about the other from their perspective and not employ a Western perspective as the standard for civilisation and colonial desire (Saada, 2014). Furthermore, Saada (2014) offers that academic staff should, within their classrooms, create space for marginalised voices inside and outside the academy to reflect

on their identities. Furthermore, it could also be helpful to acknowledge and recognise their struggles against colonialism.

Saada (2014) calls for a broader understanding of othering that goes further than the binary explanations of East and West as initially posited by Edward Said. He points out that every context has its social structures which define normality and acceptability – who is the other or the subaltern, and who can have a voice and express their needs? Thus, from this perspective, society appears to be arranged in networks of power disparities and, consequently, networks of epistemic violence.

The third concept that forms part of the theoretical building blocks of postcolonial theory is the idea of subalternity (Ashcroft, 2017; Gandhi, 2019; Kunow, 2016; Lunga, 2008). As Lunga (2008) points out, postcolonial theory can be considered a critical approach to the realities of oppression and subjugation. Thus, it seeks to theorise about the relational contact points between the dominant groups that perceive themselves as superior and the less dominant groups. Part of the theorisation involves creating a vocabulary to describe the various groups and the relationships between these groups.

The subaltern concept, introduced by Gayatri Spivak, has its roots in Marxism, where it was used to describe the economic underclass (Kunow, 2016). It is employed in postcolonial terms to describe an individual or group positioned outside the powers and voices of representation. Such individuals, groups, societies, and cultures inhabit positions of difference. The positions of difference are subordinated and resistant to power hegemonies both in colonial and postcolonial contexts.

Perceived differences characterise subaltern groupings and are thus associated with certain critical deficiencies. Through these imagined deficiencies, access to mainstream culture, including access to higher education, is regulated. Regulating access to mainstream culture through coercive assimilation or extermination is a way to neutralise and purge

differences and heterogeneity within subalternity and broader society. The positioning of this nature means that subalternity is heterogeneous (Kunow, 2016; Viruru & Persky, 2019).

This study constructs the subaltern in several ways at differing levels. In the first place, the subaltern is understood as the student population in totality. As mentioned, students are routinely excluded from dialogue on matters of curriculum development. Students are rarely, if ever, provided space to contribute to debates. Academic and administrative staff occupy centre stage, and students typically get shifted to the periphery. In the second place, within the student body, differing degrees of exclusion largely depend on the colonial and apartheid history of South Africa that still pervades university life. Therefore, since colonial and apartheid times and through to the current neo-colonial period within South Africa, Indigenous students have been systematically excluded from accessing higher education. After the end of apartheid, access was increased, but Black students in South Africa still find higher education excluding and violent (Cornell & Kessi, 2017).

The fourth critical concept that forms part of postcolonial theory is the idea of hybrid spaces and hybridity. Postcolonial theory theorises about the relational contact points between historically dominant and subaltern groups (Viruru & Persky, 2019). The contact points between the groups occupying different positions on the totem pole of power are considered hybrid spaces or third spaces (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006; Rukundwa & van Aarde, 2007; van der Westhuizen, 2013; Viruru & Persky, 2019).

Hybridity flies in the face of the imagined dichotomies of dominant or subaltern groups that have characterised colonial history. Thus, hybridity encompasses multiple voices and epistemologies and possibly multiple perspectives on many issues, including decolonisation. The notion of hybridity is vital because singular voices and epistemologies are inherently flawed and unstable and thus not complete on their own (Kapoor, 2002). Therefore, the advocated approach involves modes of negotiation and critique that unsettle dominant

discourses and create different possibilities (Gandhi, 2019; Kapoor, 2002; Miller & Miller, 2020; Nibafu et al., 2021).

The outcome of interaction within these hybrid or third spaces would not be to reproduce pre-colonial or colonial psychologies, nor would it be to bring about new psychology. Rukundwa and van Aarde (2007) suggest that these hybrid or third spaces are dialogical and dialectical contact points between Western and Indigenous epistemologies, subalterns and dominant groups that can create localised epistemologies and identities and psychologies.

These spaces facilitate learning and diversity because students can navigate between and across cultures. Thus, these spaces represent possibilities within a postcolonial lens in higher education and should be subject to analysis, theorisation, and critique. According to van der Westhuizen (2013), these are spaces of displacement, change and transition because dominant assumptions are disrupted, and new hybrid forms of power and identity emerge.

The idea of hybridity suggests that the decolonised research curriculum will be a hybrid formation that comprises multiple epistemic traditions whose configuration will be driven by current needs within a specific context. Therefore, the decolonised curriculum is hybridised, contextual and contingent (Tikly & Bond, 2013).

Gandhi (2019) suggests that the idea of hybridity is not without limitations. She suggests that many within oppressed communities are still wrestling with the material consequences of oppression, and, for them, the fight is not over. Thus, the idea of hybridity would not be enough to address the issues brought about by oppression and colonialism. In higher education, the material consequences with which students still wrestle include satisfying their basic needs, such as food and housing (Long, 2018).

Another point of concern that Gandhi (2019) raises is that hybridity can contribute to the destabilisation of colonised cultures because the meeting point of these groups is always on the turf of the dominant group. These meeting points can sometimes mask the severe

underlying material issues brought about by economic and political subjugation. Thus, the advocacy of hybridity should also be subject to critical reflection and the acknowledgement that it is not the only enlightened response to oppression and colonialism (Gandhi, 2019; Kapoor, 2002; Roy, 2016; Viruru & Persky, 2019).

The fourth critical concept that forms part of postcolonial theory is the idea of postcolonial amnesia that emerges as the possible aftermath of colonial domination within oppressed communities (Currier, 2010; Falcous & Newman, 2016; Gandhi, 2019; Salem, 2020; Waliaula, 2012). In its insistence on remembering and recovering memories, postcolonial theory acts as theoretical resistance to the proliferation of this apparent amnesia. As part of the resistance, Gandhi (2019) suggests a need to understand the types, manifestations, and underlying motivations of amnesia. These types include neurotic repression, psychotic repudiation, and the politically expedient acts of amnesia (Currier, 2010; Gandhi, 2019; Kossler, 2015).

Repression censors and, thereby, disguises the various painful memories of colonialism and apartheid. On a collective basis, amnesia assumes that it may obliterate the painful memories of colonial history and spare people the effort of addressing these painful memories (Gandhi, 2019). On the other hand, repudiation transforms the troublesome past into a hostile delirium manifesting in various oppositional frames.

Politically, the need to forget is sometimes motivated by the desire for nation-building and a recognition that addressing these memories may be divisive (Currier, 2010; Waliaula, 2012). In such cases, selective recollection of specific memories deemed helpful for political and economic objectives occurs. The memories favoured for recollection are understood as nostalgia and those unpleasant memories that do not accord with the politics and economics of the day are understood as amnesia (Kossler, 2015). The colonial aftermath gives rise to an amalgamation of these forms of amnesia.

The underlying motives for forgetting are driven by the desire to break away from Europe and forge new ways of being, thinking and living. The progress of these new ways of being, thinking and living sometimes depend on silencing the colonial past, obscuring the role of colonialism in the creation of contemporary society and a belief in the immateriality of history. Thus, the history of colonialism is managed through forgetting or repressing and not necessarily surpassing it (Falcous & Newman, 2016; Gandhi, 2019).

Tikly and Bond (2013) point out that it is essential to excavate these memories because the processes of revisiting, remembering and interrogating reveal complex and interesting relational permutations between the colonisers and the colonised groupings. These relational permutations reveal a history marked by violent contestations and resistance to oppression and also reveal themes of complicity (Currier, 2010; Mazrui, 2013a; Waliaula, 2012). However, the history and cultures of colonised people have, at times, been sanitised and presented in such a way that they do not challenge the narratives of neoliberalism (Falcous & Newman, 2016; Kühne, 2012).

Some have suggested that interest in the recovery of culture and information is driven by the realisation that there may be economic benefits for the power brokers by putting these aspects in public (Falcous & Newman, 2016; Kühne, 2012; Waliaula, 2012). Thus, the archive is not just a collection of neutral and apolitical experiences and practices to be studied in a high-brow and detached manner (Gandhi, 2019). Instead, it is a space rich with discursive and conceptual activity marked by thought and writing about the cultural and political identities of colonised subjects (Mazrui, 2013b).

Gandhi (2019) suggests that this remembering process is not necessarily a quiet and contemplative period. Instead, it can be a painful process that involves putting the dismembered past back together to make sense of the present trauma. Thus, this process can also be understood as a re-remembering. Some aspects of colonial experiences and memories are accessible to consciousness, while others remain repressed and bubbling in the

unconscious. These repressed memories have a way of causing certain inexplicable symptoms that emerge in everyday life. Gandhi (2019) suggests that the value of the theory is that it can elaborate on forgotten and suppressed memories. Thus, postcolonial theory seeks to facilitate the long and complicated psychological and historical recovery and the liberation project.

One of the processes contributing to psychological and cultural liberation – the fifth aspect – is conscientisation or conscious raising practices (Freire, 2007; Hook, 2005). The process of conscientisation involves critical reflection and dialogue about the circumstances of oppression. Postcolonial theory provides the conceptual tools, language, and impetus to facilitate critical reflection and dialogue to uncover the impact of colonialism on the social institutions and the lives of marginalised Indigenous people. Applied within a decolonial framework, this can illuminate colonial and neo-colonial influence on everyday conditions (Lunga, 2008; Parsons & Harding, 2011; Viruru & Persky, 2019).

Hook (2005) suggests that it is vital that psychology not be abandoned as a means of conceptualising oppression and confronting racism. Historically, psychology has always contributed to reproducing significant forms of inequality and oppression; however, it can also play a critical role in conceptualising oppression and confronting racism because racism is both psychological and political. Furthermore, the psychological aspects of liberation projects cannot be ignored as they give insight into the issues surrounding desire, identification, ambivalence, and sexuality that contribute to the reproduction of power formations (Hook, 2005; Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

Hook (2005) points out that it is essential to understand the psychological and political and understand how psychological factors may reproduce political structures and vice versa. Therefore, it is crucial to study these aspects to understand society, oppression, and liberation. Hook (2005) refers to Steve Biko's work to suggest that both psychological and cultural liberation are necessary for political emancipation within Indigenous and marginalised people.

Freire (2007) also suggests that it is not only the marginalised that require psychological and cultural emancipation but also those in dominant positions.

As cited in Gandhi (2019), Mahatma Gandhi also suggested that the colonisers needed to be liberated from their worst selves and the oppressed were best positioned to accomplish that task. This realisation implies that the ending of institutional suffering, the facilitation of human liberation and even curriculum reform will depend on recognising the continuity and interface between dominant and oppressed groups. The recognition of connectedness and shared destiny challenges the discrete and pure identities of the victim and victor. Therefore, this is a process of rehumanisation after a long history of dehumanisation (Freire, 2007; Kumalo, 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2016)

3.3.3 Postcolonial theory and higher education

Higher education is considered irretrievably heterogeneous, with a broad range of stakeholders, each with varying interests and agendas (Kunow, 2016; Parsons & Harding, 2011). The acknowledgement of this heterogeneity has not always extended to students who tend to be perceived homogeneously. The colonial history of South Africa and the current neoliberal ideologies have contributed to this framing of the student population. They have further framed the relationships between stakeholders, including students, and have ascribed relative institutional power accordingly. Therefore, the colonial history of South Africa and the current neoliberal ideologies have left an indelible mark on higher education.

Different stakeholders, within and outside institutions, have different interests and relative influence on institutional knowledge production and administrative processes. Thus, every aspect of higher education is subject to control by various power brokers who regulate epistemological issues, relationships between academic staff and students, the composition of the curriculum, access and language policy and the decision about who is qualified to teach. Viruru and Persky (2019) suggest that these circumstances contribute to creating classrooms

that are predictable, orderly, linear, progressive, cumulative and with a universalised learning process.

The doctrine of universalism, espoused by colonialism and neoliberalism, insists on the homogeneity of students and deviations from this homogeneity are interpreted as deficits. For instance, postcolonial application reveals that students from marginalised communities who represent a deviation from the traditional colonial student profile have typically been linked to lower academic standards. These ideas reproduce Africa's historical representation and institutions as inferior and unable to contribute to knowledge production and meaning-making (Gyamera & Burke, 2018).

This perspective locates academic failure on students' shoulders and fails to locate students within broader social contexts, educational structures and practices that reproduce these inequalities. These dominant discourses on learning and ways of being are maintained and reinforced through institutional power structures. Viruru and Persky (2019) suggest that this has pushed students from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and historical traditions in the same direction to benefit the economic and political elite.

When applied within a higher education context, postcolonial theory calls for the disruption and unlearning of deficit thinking trends to raise uncomfortable questions about the framing and application of the curriculum, pedagogy, and research. Furthermore, it enables scholars to enhance their understanding of differences and appreciate that people occupy multiple identities and negotiate these identities daily and that the monolithic understanding of race and culture requires critique (Subedi & Daza, 2008). Therefore, an appreciation of this fact means that scholars can arrive at a more complex understanding of the framing of students, especially those from marginalised communities.

The complex understanding of the framing of students creates an opportunity to realise that students are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with knowledge, as is the case with the banking model of education. Instead, students are complete human beings with experiences

and embodied knowledge that could be contributed to the classroom. Thus, students and academic staff can begin to learn from each other's experiences.

Regarding the academic staff, Gandhi (2019) uses the idea of hybridity to illustrate the position in which some decolonial scholars find themselves. As mentioned, hybridity involves a relational contact point between different groups that eventually gives rise to new identities and possibilities. Within higher education, these meeting points among ideologies, knowledge systems and scholarly traditions have typically occupied different positions on the totem pole of institutional power from which new institutions, epistemologies and cultures must emerge. However, Gandhi (2019) questions the likelihood of postcolonial and decolonial scholars, who face the ever-present danger of co-optation in those institutions, making meaningful contributions to decolonisation within institutions steeped in coloniality.

Stated differently, postcolonial and decolonial scholars often find themselves stuck between a rock and a hard place, sometimes disablingly. They find themselves in a situation where they advocate wholesale reforms of their institutions while financially dependent on those institutions. Therefore, these scholars are placed in a position where they must resist institutional pressures for co-optation while remaining progressive (Gandhi, 2019; Ngunyulu et al., 2020).

Epistemologically, postcolonial theory challenges the systematic undervaluing, destruction, appropriation and, in some cases, the weaponisation of the knowledge of Indigenous peoples (Lunga, 2008). Lunga (2008) further points out that even though colonialism has officially ended, many colonial ideas remain firmly entrenched, both in the formal and informal aspects of the curriculum. The basis of this entrenchment is that science is culture-free, and these colonial ideas become perpetuated under the guise of scientific neutrality. The perception of scientific neutrality and culture-free knowledge renders science insular and decontextualised.

According to Adams et al. (2008), there is little to no communication between institutional knowledge production structures and their local context. The implication is that science cannot help many people understand their lifeworlds, speak their language and solve daily challenges. One of the contributors to the paucity of communication is the language of science. Much of the communication in science, like in any other language, has a form of embedded logic. The language of science tends to privilege reductionist logic and discard non-dialectical, narrative, and metaphorical forms of logic (Adams et al., 2008).

The aim of contextualising scientific knowledge is not to erase Western epistemology; instead, it is to contest the hegemonic meanings embedded within various epistemologies and create space for different forms of logic to find expression within science. Parsons and Harding (2011) hold that an essential tool to help Indigenous people out of poverty is education. However, this education should be inclusive, relevant, and meaningful to all, including Indigenous peoples. This education should acknowledge different kinds of knowledge and ways of being.

Gandhi (2019) suggests that, epistemologically, postcolonial theory renders the knowledge production space more representative. The task of representativeness is achieved through two types of critical revelations. In the first place, Gandhi (2019) suggests that it reveals the interests that inhabit the knowledge production process. In the second place, it retrieves a wide range of illegitimate, disqualified, or subjugated forms of knowledge.

In terms of the curriculum, postcolonial application reveals how the discourse of internationalisation and globalisation of the curriculum and the neoliberal leanings of higher education institutions perpetuate the unequal relations that emerge from colonialism (Gyamera & Burke, 2018). Parsons and Harding (2011) assert that certain classroom behaviours – the selection of text, the recollection of history, viewing other cultures and privileging certain kinds of knowledge – perpetuate these hegemonic discourses and contribute to the marginalisation of certain groups. They suggest that, through these actions,

academic staff continue perpetuating the myth of the inferiority of non-Western cultures (Parsons & Harding, 2011).

Postcolonial theory compels academic staff and students to listen and critically reflect on the ongoing and often innocuous acts of inequality, stereotypes and exclusion that still take place in classrooms (Lunga, 2008; Parsons & Harding, 2011). Through critical reflection and listening, underlying hegemonic discourses and false universalisms are brought to light (Gyamera & Burke, 2018). Gyamera and Burke (2018) employ postcolonial theory to identify and explore specific hegemonic discourses within higher education. According to these authors, these hegemonic discourses cannot be understood independently; they should be viewed within the historical and sociological context that underlies contemporary globalisation.

Subedi and Daza (2008) suggest that some of the critical considerations of postcolonial theory are instructive in developing a more relevant and contextual curriculum. They suggest that postcolonial theory is concerned with the larger project of decolonisation and the construction of knowledge that transforms society. Part of this concern for decolonisation includes striving to understand how the power of the West manifests within the curriculum and how it is projected from the West to cross the borders of other countries.

A further point of consideration that relates to the curriculum is that postcolonial theory seeks to unsettle the claims of the universalisation of knowledge and the erasure of differences. The erasure of differences involves the dichotomisation of difference which masks the complexities that mark the experiences of people (Subedi & Daza, 2008). The approach, which can be instrumental in unsettling the tendency towards universalisation and the erasure of difference, is contrapuntal analysis (Saada, 2014). The basic assumption of contrapuntal analysis is that all text – educational, historical, and cultural – is embedded within a particular ideological formation that contributes to the othering of some groups. Therefore, a researcher must be alive to how the text proliferates this othering of some groups.

Contrapuntal analysis enables academic staff and students to understand the implicit meanings of a text, the social and political contexts of that text, the intention of the authors and the content that is excluded from the text. Therefore, contrapuntal analysis can assist scholars in questioning the implicit meaning of historical and political events and their connection to the construction of the other and how they excuse such an exercise of colonial power. Thus, this approach can interrupt the representation of Africa as uncivilised, timeless, and lost in space and enable it to be seen as it is in the present. Furthermore, listening to the voice of the other can also challenge this representation. From a curriculum standpoint, this approach can encourage academic staff and students to critically explore how the social sciences curriculum produces and reproduces an image of a dark and poor Africa (Saada, 2014).

3.3.4 Postcolonial theory and research

Decolonisation within the research curriculum focuses on developing research strategies that are contextually relevant and promote liberatory and democratic research. Therefore, making research strategies contextually relevant and empowering involves sensitivity to the colonial histories at play within local communities and critical reflection on paradigmatic assumptions and research practices. Furthermore, it involves developing strategies collaboratively among role players within the research space (van der Westhuizen, 2013).

Leone (2019) points out that postcolonial theory can offer valuable advantages for decolonising research within psychology. In the first place, these advantages are based on the idea that postcolonial theory is understood as being non-hegemonic and offers useful critical tools. Second, these critical tools enable researchers and scholars to understand the political, social, and psychological process that reproduces power imbalances. Third, it offers a way to resist any hegemonic pressure of imagined cultural superiority in self-assessed civilisation and thus contributes to recognising Indigenous cultures. Leone (2019) also points

out that a postcolonial approach to the colonial past can shed light on the risk that an uncritical version of history will be disseminated and come to be perceived as fact.

According to van der Westhuizen (2013), some critical features mark the postcolonial research approach. First, this approach emerges in response to the colonial mainstream methods that have produced inaccurate research leading to questionable decisions. Thus, this approach endeavours to problematise mainstream research methods (Chilisa, 2005, 2017; van der Westhuizen, 2013). Second, a postcolonial approach to research seeks to draw on local and Indigenous philosophies with a transformative/socially critical intent. From this perspective, research is understood as relational, and functions based on an ontology and epistemology of connectedness that views human beings as spiritually and materially part of the universe. Research, therefore, is part of life in a holistic sense and guides the processes. Reality and knowledge are created not socially but holistically, which has implications for data gathering and analysis (Chilisa, 2005; van der Westhuizen, 2013).

Philosophically, postcolonial research is located in a transformative research paradigm and concerns itself with ontology, epistemology and axiology related to the politics of knowledge production, the power relations within research relationships and the understanding of complex and varied experiences. Therefore, a paradigm driven by postcolonial theory is critical if psychology is to consider local communities' needs seriously.

Methodologically, a postcolonial theory approach to research lends itself to participatory designs that are more open to role distribution and inclusivity. Therefore, the researcher's role, assumptions and relationship with the participants are reflected critically (van der Westhuizen, 2013). Viruru and Persky (2019) add that critical reflection enables researchers to understand the political, social, and psychological processes involved in reproducing power imbalances over time. Within this approach, the research curriculum would focus on diverse communities, critically analysing the essentialisation of cultural identity and racial inferiority or superiority. Additionally, it would focus on language and multilingualism and

develop research methods to enable study within Indigenous cultures to give voice to the historically marginalised (van der Westhuizen, 2013).

Postcolonial theory provides an alternative to Western Eurocentric worldviews on the past, present, future, culture, education, and research. Tamburro (2013) posits that this alternative viewpoint opens the possibility of co-creating knowledge in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and ensuring that the knowledge is contextual, relevant, and responsive to these communities' needs. In other words, after centuries of marginalisation, postcolonialism brings Indigenous voices and worldviews into mainstream science and research.

Another research avenue that requires postcolonial consideration is the idea of research ethics. As previously noted, the development and exportation of morality and research ethics have been driven through the configuration of power relations that have privileged the West. This Western approach to ethics is based on different motivations, some emanating from the religious and humanist traditions that still influence postcolonial life. The approach to ethics has also occupied a universalist position that has subordinated other non-Western views of ethics and has taken a normative point of reference.

Tikly and Bond (2013) point out that even though this tradition claims universality, key protagonists within moral philosophy and ethics were influenced by biological and cultural difference ideas that framed non-Western cultures and peoples as devoid of the capacity to reason, thus, warranting their exclusion from a universal ethic. Additionally, this approach to ethics has privileged the notion of ethical rationalism, where emotions are separated from reason as a means of achieving ethical science and research (Tikly & Bond, 2013).

Ethically, postcolonial theory resists the moral, ethical, and intellectual universality that is the hallmark of Western hegemony (Gandhi, 2019). It holds that research ethics and moral behaviour within research should be based on the extent to which the research contributes to transformative change (van der Westhuizen, 2013). Thus, postcolonial research pursues an

agenda of decolonisation that has at its centre the liberation of social agency at both an individual and collective level to contribute to social change (van der Westhuizen, 2013). Applying postcolonial theory to research ethics enables the critique of contemporary research ethics and sheds light on the different alternatives to Western approaches to research ethics.

Tikly and Bond (2013) undertook such critical considerations and conceptualised different approaches to research ethics within a postcolonial theory framework. In the first place, they consider postcolonial research ethics to be emancipatory. The emancipatory approach intends to create space for historically marginalised voices and highlight the contribution of marginalised voices within research. They argue that the value of this approach is that it ensures that the interests of marginalised groups remain at the centre of the research agenda (Tikly & Bond, 2013).

Developing an approach to research that affirms Indigenous approaches to research means that the research process becomes an instance of critical pedagogy intimately connected with the broader project of emancipation. As such, they suggest that researchers in this context could engage in critical self-reflection to understand themselves in relation to the research process. This critical understanding will help to clarify the subjectivities of the researcher and the researched within a relationship of inequality.

In the second place, Tikly and Bond (2013) advocate a dialogical approach to research ethics. The dialogical approach can be understood as an approach to research and ethics based on the philosophical concern for the equitable treatment of others, moral examination of the self and particularised understanding and responses that permeate the research process. The foundational assumption of the dialogical approach is that the other is a source of knowledge and is imbued with the capacity to communicate their thoughts, experiences and understanding to each other.

Tikly and Bond (2013) suggest that the dialogic approach speaks to the importance of human relationships as the basis of the research process. Therefore, relationships between

the researcher and the researched are covenantal rather than contractual (Chilisa, 2012; Tikly & Bond, 2013). Tikly and Bond (2013) suggest that this approach would expose the workings of power and identify critical research issues at every step of the process. These issues could include but are not limited to who defines the research questions, whose interest the research serves and the theoretical and methodological assumptions guiding the research.

According to Parsons and Harding (2011), this state of affairs contributes to the proliferation of mistrust within higher education. They also question how this mistrust must be managed to ensure progress and what progress means in such a contested space. Through its affinity with the critical exploration of colonial history, postcolonial theory can expose the sources of the mistrust and highlight the hegemonic discourses proliferated by the power brokers that dominate higher education (Gyamera & Burke, 2018; Tamburro, 2013). Subedi and Daza (2008) point out that the postcolonial approach in higher education necessitates questioning how knowledge is produced and the complicity of higher education in reinforcing colonial notions of culture, power, and difference; such questioning can thus engender anxieties.

3.3.5 Postcolonial theory and participatory action research

When applied within a postcolonial theory framework, PAR can enhance the positive and, thus, offer promise for decolonisation. For instance, the collaborative and communitarian approach of PAR can be improved by employing a critical social theory that embraces an approach to social justice that recognises oppression locally and globally (Gandhi, 2019; Lunga, 2008; Parsons & Harding, 2011). Thus, postcolonial theory can provide theoretical support to PAR.

Furthermore, Parsons and Harding (2011) suggest that there are critical contact points between postcolonial theory and PAR. The aims of postcolonial theory and PAR are shared in that PAR ameliorates the oppression, powerlessness and worthlessness that emerged from colonialism. Part of this amelioration involves disrupting the current power structures and

fundamentally realigning power relations and access to resources (Gandhi, 2019; Parsons & Harding, 2011).

Additionally, the theoretical and methodological orientations of both place primacy on the excavation of what was lost to determine what needs to be regained and relearned. The basis of this belief is that education holds tremendous promise for the empowerment of marginalised people; however, it should not be an education that reproduces colonial hegemonies but one that critiques uncontested hegemonies in any form (Gandhi, 2019; Parsons & Harding, 2011; Tikly & Bond, 2013). Instead, Parsons and Harding (2011) suggest that such an education should be inclusive and relevant to the needs and the lived realities of marginalised people.

On the level of praxis, both these approaches seek to disrupt the paternalistic and patriarchal approach and embrace an ethic of efficacy. The ethic of efficacy places value on the role of communities, relationships, communication, and equality through the commitment to reciprocal, reflective and reflexive action to create more democratic and just societies (Parsons & Harding, 2011; Plush, 2013).

From this perspective, academic staff are enjoined to critically reflect on the continuous and often innocuous acts of oppression, inequity, stereotype, and exclusion within the classroom. Furthermore, academic staff are enjoined to reflect on the role of selection of text, recollection of history, viewing other cultures in a biased way and privilege of existing worldviews, including the myth of Western superiority (Gandhi, 2019; Subedi & Daza, 2008). Parsons and Harding (2011) point out that this approach can help illuminate any lingering biases and stereotypes.

Racism and ignorance can be named and challenged through this process. These approaches also promise to problematise uncontested and unchecked colonial hegemonies. Furthermore, these approaches promise space for people to create knowledge and contribute to their empowerment through critical reflection and action (Plush, 2013). Parsons and Harding

(2011) suggest that a general affinity among postcolonial research, PAR and action research exists. They suggest that due to its commitment to addressing the plague of colonialism, postcolonial theory coupled with PAR – with its commitment to a dialogic, critically reflective, and collaborative stance – offers researchers a gateway to access comprehensive human wisdom, which is indispensable for the health and well-being of humanity.

3.4 Controversies about postcolonial theory

Postcolonial theory has not been without its share of controversy. Some have lauded the theory; others have been critical. Scholars who have lauded the theory have pointed out that, in the first place, it creates a safe theoretical space for conversations with those affected by colonialism; the approach includes the conversations and experiences of those that benefitted from colonialism. Second, it creates a space for Indigenous people to articulate their experiences within the research setting. Including these perspectives within the curriculum is one of the most effective ways to sensitise students on social justice issues and the need for cultural change.

Third, postcolonial theory is employed to study the effects of two or more cultures, ideological formations and social classes that occupy different positions on the totem pole of the power and dominance clash. Postcolonial theory enables scholars to critique and theorise about the space of contact between cultures (van der Westhuizen, 2013). Fourth, postcolonial theory also provides researchers and academics with the vocabulary and concepts to explain the experiences of colonised peoples (Leone, 2019; Tamburro, 2013). These concepts include othering, remembering, hegemony, the many manifestations of power by colonisers and the cultural devastation caused by colonisation (Tamburro, 2013).

Tamburro suggests that using these concepts to challenge the denial and social amnesia about the effects of colonialism has been one of the critical contributions of post-colonialists who advocate remembering the past as part of the healing process. In many ways,

the drive for the decolonisation and contextualisation of higher education in the curriculum is an integral part of that remembering process.

Postcolonial theory focuses on critiquing and theorising about various cultural contact zones. These contact zones are different, and the concomitant critique and theorisation must be precisely located and analysed for its specific interplay. Dudgeon and Walker (2015) point out that postcolonial theory has come in for some criticism on various fronts. One point of criticism is that it can emphasise the difference within marginalised groups. They caution that this approach could weaken the unity of the marginalised and reaffirm the primacy of Western knowledge. Thus, this theory has been critiqued for possibly contributing to maintaining colonial power and hegemony.

Lunga (2008) points out that applying postcolonial theory over vast geographical localities could contribute to the homogenisation of the postcolonial experience and conceal differences in the contexts and trajectory of oppression. Tikly and Bond (2013) also caution against the essentialisation of postcolonial conditions in various countries. They point out that these countries are not homogenous; they are marked by a plurality of developmental pathways and incredibly unique cultures.

Gandhi (2019) suggests that postcolonial theory has received criticism for being intellectually decadent and indulgent while being entirely removed from the material imperatives and harsh realities of the colonised world. To make postcolonial theory more relevant and valuable for societal change, Lunga (2008) suggests that postcolonial theory should be based on empirically grounded theoretical reflections. Such reflections will enable the theory to move from dense and abstract scholarship to a theory explaining cultural and historical patterns.

Lunga (2008) also suggests that postcolonial theory needs to be self-reflective and question its assumptions and grounds to avoid becoming a master narrative. The prefix in the term 'postcolonial theory' has also been a source of contestation and polemic and has thus

been problematic (Ashcroft, 2017; Lunga, 2008). It has been noted that the prefix denotes a time following the establishment of independence. The term is further tied to the notions of linearity and progress and creates the impression of a simple linear progression of history that is not the case. The simplification of progression obscures the discontinuities of history and postcolonialities. Colonialism is not a thing of the past and no clear break from colonialism to a period of postcolonialism occurs (Gandhi, 2019; Lunga, 2008).

Tikly and Bond (2013) point out that the 'post' does not mean that the effects of colonialism have disappeared. On the contrary, they suggest that colonised countries still harbour similar inequalities between postcolonial elites and most of the people. They further add that there has been an emergence of what is called new imperialism. The new imperialism to which Tikly and Bond (2013) refer comprises the economic, political, military, and cultural hegemony of the USA. Therefore, they suggest that it would be more helpful to consider postcolonialism as the general process of disengagement from colonial Europe and insertion into the networks that make up globalisation.

On the other hand, Subedi and Daza (2008) remark that the 'post' in postcolonial theory is not a mark of time but rather a mark of the spatial challenge of colonial occupation. It is an ongoing reminder of the pervasive neo-colonial relations that continue to find expression in the new world (Falcous & Newman, 2016). Therefore, they are critical of its re-insertion into globalisation and perceive it as a form of neo-colonialism (Agarwal et al., 2015).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter explored the historical underpinnings of postcolonial theory to understand its literary roots and the fundamental propositions of the theory. The fundamental propositions provide a framework for understanding the relationship between the dominant and less dominant groups in various contexts. Liberatory and resistance practices emerge from the critical reading of Western literature to unpack the power relations of the dominant and

marginalised groups. Thus, it is concerned with the exploration, celebration and valuing of marginalised peoples.

The fundamental propositions of the theory also guide scholars on how to consider the relational contact points between the dominant and marginalised peoples. The critical propositions of postcolonial theory centre on Orientalism, othering, subalternity, hybridity and conscientisation. These concepts were explored within higher education and research to reveal the relationships between students and institutional power structures, between researchers and participants and the colonial underpinning of the relationships.

The analysis and examination of colonial influences seek to uncover the struggles of the marginalised groups and validate their voices to help them recover from the varied effects of colonial domination (Gandhi, 2019; Lunga, 2008; Tamburro, 2013). Part of this recovery and liberation means the literal recovery of delegitimised and forgotten pieces of knowledge and memories. Within the higher education context, recovery and liberation involve placing the knowledge and experiences of marginalised peoples at the centre to create a curriculum in line with South African realities – the crux of decolonisation. Thus, postcolonial theory is concerned with the liberatory and resistance politics that support decolonisation.

The next chapter will focus on the methodology that was applied in the study. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a qualitative methodology was chosen, and the study used PAR and PVA to explore student perspectives on decolonisation within the psychology and research curriculum and contribute to the decolonisation thereof. In the next chapter, these concepts are explored to clarify their meaning. The processes involved in applying these approaches are also presented.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters served to set the scene for the study. The setting of the scene included problematising Western bias in the psychology and research curriculum, the lack of student participation in the curriculum development process and definitions and perspectives on decolonisation. In this chapter, the methodology of the study receives more detailed attention.

The first part of the current chapter outlines the PAR approach and the PVA as the data collection method that guided the study. However, before articulating PAR and PVA, a brief description of the methodology – qualitative research – is provided to clarify the links between the three concepts. The second part of the chapter outlines the research process that unfolded during the study. The research question is outlined, and the context, selection and recruitment of co-researchers are described. The concept of co-researchers and how their roles differ from conventional research participants is also outlined.

The third part of the chapter outlines the data collection process, including a detailed outline of the steps and the activities involved in each step. A detailed exposition of the data analysis process is also presented. Furthermore, a reflection on the steps taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the processes is undertaken. The ethical considerations of the research approach are also covered. In addition, the measures taken to ensure the well-being of the students who participated in the study are explored.

4.2 Restatement of the purpose of the study

The #feesmustfall movement catapulted the conversation on transforming and decolonising higher education into the mainstream and making it socially relevant (Becker, 2017). One of the critical outcomes of the protests was that it provided a space for affected stakeholders to engage on what a decolonised higher education should look like and how it should be actioned to overcome the Western bias in higher education (Amosun et al., 2018;

Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018; Oelofsen, 2015). One such critical stakeholder is the student body. Engagements with students, occurring within a safe space praxis, can create opportunities for students to contribute to change within the higher education landscape (Maistry & Lortan, 2017; Távora & Moodley, 2017).

This study contributes to the conversation within psychology, starting with research as the heartbeat of the profession. The study creates a safe space for postgraduate psychology students to function as co-researchers and engage creatively with the decolonisation of the research curriculum within psychology.

4.3 Research design

This study used a qualitative methodology located within a critical-ideological paradigm. A PAR approach was followed, and the data was collected using PVA. This section explores the meaning of qualitative research, the critical-ideological perspective and PAR and its theoretical underpinning. PVA is explored in detail in the data collection section.

Merriam and Tisdell (2015) point out that qualitative research assumes that people construct their reality as they interact with their social world. From this perspective, people construct knowledge as they engage in a meaning-making process through their activities, experiences, and phenomena within their social world.

Research within the qualitative framework is iterative, meaning that the researcher repeatedly revisits bits of data, concepts and processes and incorporates what they learn in the remainder of the research process to generate richer data (Kekeya, 2016). Through this process, the researcher seeks to get as close as possible to those meaning-making processes to understand how people make sense of their activities, experiences, and phenomena within their social world (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

The critical-ideological paradigm perceives the structures of the social world as the outcome of the unequal power relations among the people who interact with and experience that particular context (Ponterotto, 2010). One of the stated aims of this perspective is to

understand and confront these power asymmetries and their social, political, and economic outcomes to contribute to meaningful change. Thus, the critical-ideological paradigm locates research within the realm of social justice (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). In this perspective, the role of research is to confront and ultimately address political, social and economic ills that have contributed to the subjugation and marginalisation of some and the granting of power to others.

In terms of the nature of reality, this perspective holds that socio-political and economic forces shape reality in a particular context. These forces are also considered from a historical perspective to understand how power asymmetries accumulate over time and have contributed to perpetuated patterns of privilege and subjugation across generations. Therefore, this paradigm seeks to unmask and disrupt the unequal power relations resulting from historical factors and to bring about social justice.

The process of exploring and critiquing these influences depends on dialogic interactions with those most affected by this oppression. The researcher, in this perspective, is proactive and interactive to emancipate the research participants (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Ponterotto, 2010). Emancipation in this context relates to the rediscovery of the agency of participants through their participation in the study. The paradigm also acknowledges that there are power disparities within the research relationship. Therefore, the researcher addresses these questions within the research relationship to facilitate emancipation. This approach has been found to have a natural affinity with participatory methods such as PAR.

Qualitatively, the research gets as close as possible to these power relations and reflects on their origin and impact to critique them, consider ways of empowering the marginalised and improve scientific understanding (Ponterotto, 2010). For this study, the principal researcher and co-researchers collaboratively employed PAR to get close to, understand and critique the dominance of Western thought in the research curriculum and contribute to the creation of a decolonised research curriculum in psychology. Also, the

inclusion of students as co-researchers gives voice to a typically marginalised community in the curriculum development debate.

Macdonald (2012) views PAR as the scientific and systematic collection and analysis of data to produce change through the development of practical knowledge and solutions. In other words, the researcher and co-researchers collaborate to gather information about a problem to kindle beneficial changes (Mubuuke & Leibowitz, 2013; Ponterotto, 2010). Ponterotto (2010) simplifies this idea by suggesting that PAR is about getting people affected by a problem together to determine what is going on and then doing something about it.

Researchers apply PAR in myriad ways using various methods and procedures to get close to the social phenomena being studied to contribute to the transformation of society. As such, PAR has been referred to as a custom job that evolves as the process of reflection and action unfolds and levels of critical consciousness increase (Ponterotto, 2010). PAR goes beyond just finding practical solutions to social problems; it is also concerned with critiquing and dismantling the socio-political power structures that give rise to those problems (Santos, 2016; Walker & Loots, 2018). For this reason, Ponterotto (2010) suggests that at its core, PAR contributes to the empowerment of co-researchers which can lead to their emancipation from oppressive conditions and enhance their quality of life.

PAR seeks to create space for a transparent, democratic, collaborative research process where researchers and co-researchers are in equal partnership to bring about social transformation (Datta et al., 2015; Fumpa-Makano & Mukanda, 2019; Hawkins, 2015; Trickett & Beehler, 2017; Walker & Loots, 2018). Thus, Klocker (2012) believes that PAR is more than a research methodology; it is more a political statement and an approach to knowledge and knowledge production that affirms the right of people to have a say in the decisions that affect them.

PAR fundamentally involves three activities that happen in concert. These are social investigation, training, and action. PAR is embedded with the critical paradigm that frames

knowledge as a source of power. From a critical perspective, research should produce counter-hegemonic knowledge by placing experiences at the centre. Through education and critical reflection, participants are empowered and can challenge elite knowledge production systems by creating their own knowledge systems (Yang, 2012).

PAR has been used effectively in various contexts, including universities, to bring about change in the content and delivery of education. Mubuke and Leibowitz (2013) point out that those who have participated in the PAR process within higher education have lauded it for its collaborativeness and potential to empower. For instance, Agarwal et al. (2015) employed a PAR approach using photovoice to collaborate with students with disabilities to create more inclusive university spaces at an American university. Their study aimed to gather images representing the barriers that hampered students accessing higher education spaces and develop a framework for creating accessible and inclusive campus communities that support students with disabilities. They report that their project prompted attitudinal and architectural changes on campus. Additionally, students who participated indicated that they found the project empowering.

Similarly, Fang (2018) – in Taiwan – also followed a PAR approach using interviewing to create space for collaboration between universities and communities to explore new ways of addressing poverty and social exclusion. Such new ways included using PAR to create spaces for genuine participation among higher education institutions and broader communities to co-create meaning, knowledge, and inclusive social action. The framework was used to fuel and sustain culture change over time.

On the local front, Walker, and Loots (2018) employed this approach at a rural university with undergraduate students. Their study focused on researching gender inequality on a university campus. The indication was that the process contributed positively to developing capabilities and agency through participation, knowledge development and public deliberation (Walker & Loots, 2018). Kessi (2018) used photovoice research as a narrative

approach combined with PAR to explore the daily experiences of Black, working-class, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students concerning calls for decolonisation. Kessi (2018) suggests that the project created space for students of diverse gendered identities who were made invisible through institutional structure and cultural assumptions to speak about the violence and the silencing of alternate ways of knowing and doing within institutional spaces. This process created new insights, empowered the students, and helped them create new networks for support and further engagement.

The studies highlight the flexibility of the application of the PAR approach in that some of them used Photovoice and others more traditional qualitative approaches. Therefore, linking PAR with PVA is not such a great conceptual leap as PAR and PVA share some fundamental principles that are also in step with some of the decolonial ideals. The studies highlighted the fundamental ideals that undergird the decolonial movement within the PAR process. These ideals include collaboration between stakeholders inside and outside the institution, collaborative and social learning, and the development of agency among the participants, contributing to social change. As applied in this study, PVA relies heavily on collaborative efforts between the principal researcher and the co-researcher to explore ways to decolonise the research curriculum within psychology. Through this process, the principal researcher and the co-researchers collaborated to explore ways to bring about change, thereby co-creating knowledge and affirming the students, or any other marginalised groups, as agentic beings capable of affecting their environments.

Apart from its potential to bring about new insights and actions, PAR can facilitate the creation of a sense of ownership of action and thus, such actions are more likely to be accepted and implemented (Baum et al., 2006; Mubuke & Leibowitz, 2013). Chiumbu (2017) points out that research methods within the decolonisation space require a mindful and deliberate undertaking to challenge the institution of research and the deep underlying structures and ways of organising, conducting, and sharing research. It compels researchers to reflect on their positionality as researchers and the politics of knowledge. Furthermore, it

creates space for marginalised communities to theorise about their own lives and compels researchers to acknowledge such theories as valid academic knowledge (Chiumbu, 2017; Seehawer, 2018).

PAR methods have been shown to support some decolonial ideas and strengthen decolonial scholarship (Barnes, 2018; Chiumbu, 2017; Kessi, 2018). However, Távora and Moodley (2017) point out that the ability of PAR to be disruptive within the decolonisation and curriculum transformation conversation depends on the ability of all the stakeholders and researchers to create safe spaces for critical reflection.

Some scholars have pointed to some of the disadvantages that PAR exhibits. Baum et al. (2006) suggest that one disadvantage of PAR is that it could be time-consuming and unpredictable. The power-sharing and joint decision-making with co-researchers, which is characteristic of PAR, could erode the rigour of research and compromise its quality because professional researchers cede control of critical parts of the process to co-researchers (Danley & Ellison, 1999). Danley and Ellison (1999) suggest that it is necessary to explain all the premises of research and the origins and goals of researchers for embarking on a project to ensure that proper research decisions are taken.

The fundamental goal of PAR is to create social transformation. However, this ideal can create false expectations and build hope based on some external change that may never materialise. What is most likely to happen are incremental changes or impacts that only have minimal impact on the lives of the co-researchers (Martin et al., 2019). Therefore, Martin et al. (2019) caution that researchers should guard against creating manufactured hope and suggest that the action that is characteristic of PAR should be determined by and for those in context (Martin et al., 2019). Santos (2016) also suggests that sharing research findings with as many stakeholders as possible helps heighten the impact of proposed actions.

In this study, the employment of this approach was aimed at exploring students' voices and actively involving them in developing ideas for the decolonisation of the research

curriculum within psychology. Traditionally, curricula development has tended to implement a top-down approach, with students being passive participants in the process. In this way, students are pushed and marginalised by more powerful and monolithic institutional structures. PAR makes it possible to see and acknowledge the contribution of students to the creation of knowledge, solutions, and education innovations (Fumpa-Makano & Mukanda, 2019; Martin et al., 2019; Walker & Loots, 2018). In this way, this approach attempts to shift the location of power from the monolithic institutional structures and create space for students to contribute to the decolonial project within psychology.

This study also challenges the notion that students should be passive consumers of information and advocates that students should be active contributors to developing a decolonised research curriculum (Anderson, 2017). This approach affirms the embedded knowledge and experiences that students bring to the learning process and creates a space for them to learn from each other. The participatory nature of PAR means that students have more control over the research agenda, are more active and, consequently, become more empowered (Baum et al., 2006; Mubuke & Leibowitz, 2013).

4.4 Research setting

The current project took place in the South African higher education sector, which has been in a continuous state of change for decades. The changes were primarily driven by the socio-political and economic structures that marked specific periods in the history of South Africa. These specific periods are colonialism, apartheid and the current post-1994 South Africa. For decades before 1994, socio-political and economic structures were marked by colonialism and apartheid, which also had a profound and lasting impact on the South African higher education landscape. One of the outcomes was that it created three types of higher learning institutions in South Africa that flourished during different periods (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020).

First, the English-speaking higher education institutes developed during British colonial rule. These institutions were well-resourced and extended British colonial influence in South Africa. Second, during the apartheid era, several Afrikaans higher education institutes were established to counter the dominance of English universities and to contribute to the sustainability of the apartheid state. The third type was the subordinate Black institutions that were poorly resourced and aimed at providing Black graduates for the Bantustans in South Africa (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020).

The term Bantustan emerged from the pre-democratic South African government to refer to territories within South Africa reserved for Black Africans as part of the apartheid policy in 1951. These Bantustans emerged because of the top-down imposition of the then-South African government. The policy for creating reserved spaces for Black South Africans was driven by the need to control the influx of Black people into urban areas. The rapid influx of people resulted from the increased demand for cheap labour. The control of the influx was also driven by the increasingly violent and militant challenge to the apartheid regime. Therefore, the government intended to restrict further the influx of Black people within urban areas (Evans, 2012).

Under this policy, the ethnicities of Black people in South Africa were allocated a Bantustan. The naming of these Bantustans was sometimes based on the ethnicities of those living in those spaces (Nyambi & Makombe, 2019). These Bantustans were not sovereign states, not fully independent and subject to top-down imposition. Evans (2012) states that promoting self-government, decentralising resources, and creating civil services created space for the Black elite to claim a stake in a system that enriches White capital.

The policy of apartheid may have concluded, but the legacy of the policy remains. The physical environments and the relative development of communities within the former Bantustans relative to the rest of South Africa remains one of the most evident and relentless

remnants of the apartheid policy of Bantustans (Ally & Lissoni, 2012; Evans, 2012; Nyambi & Makombe, 2019).

After 1994, the new South African government abolished the Bantustan system and undertook to transform higher education and reverse the legacy of colonialism and apartheid within the sector (Breetzke & Hedding, 2016; Deen & Leonard, 2015; Sikhwari et al., 2015; Singh, 2011). One of the measures that the government, through what is now referred to as the Department of Higher Education and Training, introduced was to merge subordinate Black institutions with either English or Afrikaans universities and require that students and staff were demographically representative across the different types of institutions. The result of this has been an increase in the number of Black academic staff and students at universities (Deen & Leonard, 2015; Gwacela et al., 2015). Although some have decried the slow pace with which this process is happening (Breetzke & Hedding, 2016; Kamsteeg, 2016),

Weilbach (2018) points out that increased diversity has meant an escalated influx of students, some of whom may have been educationally disadvantaged, from non-traditional spaces with varying socio-economic backgrounds. Gwacela et al. (2015) suggest that the daily socio-economic challenges faced by most people in the country also play out in the higher education landscape. The challenges that are linked to socioeconomics include food insecurity among students (Gwacela et al., 2015), insufficient residential facilities (Sikhwari et al., 2015), limited participation in extra-curricular activities (Weilbach, 2018), and compromised health and well-being of students (Morris-Paxton et al., 2017). These challenges that students face have been shown to undermine their academic performance and their ability to participate in all aspects of university life fully.

Sikhwari et al. (2015) point out that universities should be mindful of these realities and accept that just as their students' profile has changed, the context within which universities work has also changed. Sikhwari et al. (2015) hasten to add that they are not advocating for what they call 'nanny universities' but that universities should be mindful that their primary

responsibility is to ensure that students learn and graduate and anything that undermines the ability of students to do that should be of profound interest to universities.

Cornell and Kessi (2017), in their study on students' experiences of transformation in a historically White South African university, found that the students were critical of the transformation process and its outcomes. Their findings suggest that the transformation process focused on shifting the demographic statistics but failed to disrupt the institutional culture that was still racialised, privileged Whiteness and upheld Western epistemological bias within the curriculum. Furthermore, the students suggest that institutions should move past transformation and embrace decolonisation.

On the other hand, Zwane (2019) cautions that advocates of decolonisation should guard against what she calls 'fake decolonisation'. Fake decolonisation can be understood as a process where institutional power structures only pay lip service to decolonisation without contributing to meaningful change. Examples of this fake decolonisation include the continued dominance of English in universities even though it is not the first language of most South Africans and the apparent unwillingness of institutions to modify their curricula. Therefore, Zwane (2019) concludes that South African higher education conforms to antiquated logic, favours an exogenous language, and marginalises text from pre-eminent non-Western scholars. It is because of these perceived failures that calls for decolonisation continue to grow louder and more vociferous.

Decolonisation goes further than just increasing the number of demographically representative staff and students and includes modifying curricula to recentre non-Western epistemologies, dismantling oppressive institutional cultures and modifying institutional architectural spaces. The achievement of these objectives depends on the creation of safe spaces for critical reflection aimed at genuine change within higher education (Cornell & Kessi, 2017; Távara & Moodley, 2017; Zwane, 2019).

4.5 Participants/Co-researchers

Rogers (2016) states that participatory research places co-researchers, or grassroots participants, at the centre of the inquiry and knowledge production practices. The centring of participants and constructing them as co-researchers contribute to the challenging of traditional power relations within research and democratising research activities (Rogers, 2016). Shaw (2017) points out that this re-positioning of co-researchers is not a static shift of position but suggests that the shifting takes place more fluidly and is chiefly driven by the relational dynamics within various contexts.

Martin et al. (2019) clarify what the idea of students as co-researchers represents. They suggest that students as co-researchers are positioned as authorities of their own experiences. Through critical reflection on these experiences, students become conscientised about the systemic issues that underlie their experiences and thereby encourage change. Framing participants as co-researchers means that they, together with the principal researcher, will co-construct the research findings and implications.

Thus, the co-researchers and the principal researcher learn collectively because each party brings specific skills and knowledge into the research relationship. For instance, the principal researcher brings their embodied knowledge and research skills relevant to the research process. However, the principal researcher is also an outsider in that, being a part-time doctoral student, the principal researcher is removed from the daily experiences that the co-researchers may have as students in a historically White institution. Consequently, the principal researcher might possibly miss critical information by being an outsider (Martin et al., 2019).

On the other hand, co-researchers possess insider knowledge, and their embodied experiences contribute to the co-creating of knowledge. Postgraduate students were considered ideal because they were sufficiently familiar with the psychology and research curriculum content and decolonisation to contribute to the study (Mubuke & Leibowitz, 2013;

Távora & Moodley, 2017). These students are considered critical stakeholders in the higher education curriculum because they are most affected by the developments in higher education. It has been suggested that co-researchers who are personally invested in the process are more likely to persist and contribute (Danley & Ellison, 1999; Klocker, 2012). Postgraduate psychology students are also considered more accessible to recruit.

The selection and recruitment of students were conducted using the guidelines provided by Danley and Ellison (1999). In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions introduced to manage the pandemic, some of the guidelines that Danley and Ellison (1999) propose needed to be adapted. After obtaining all the necessary approvals from the relevant institutional bodies, the coordinators of the different postgraduate programmes at the university (honours and coursework masters) were contacted. The purpose of the contact was to request permission to introduce the study to their students.

The original aim was to request permission to speak to the students in person. However, the COVID-19 regulations meant that lectures took place virtually. As such, in-person contact was not a possibility. The alternative arrangement was that a letter of invitation would be developed and sent to students via the programme managers. The principal researcher compiled the document introducing the study and providing information to assist the students in deciding to participate. The invitation document included a brief description of the project, the reason for inviting participation, general requirements for membership, potential benefits, and the scheduling of the orientations.

The documents containing the contact information of the principal researcher were then sent to the students with the aid of the programme coordinators, who kindly distributed the invitation to their respective classes. The initial total number of students who contacted the principal researcher to indicate their interest was four. One of the students withdrew before the data collection process, and three remained. A second student withdrew from the study after the data collection process had commenced (after participating in the Decolonial

Encounters Workshop). A third student also withdrew before the collection of the video material. The reason for the student's withdrawal is addressed at a later stage.

For ease of reference, the co-researcher (an honours student) who remained will henceforth be referred to as Co-researcher 1. The co-researcher (a master's in counselling psychology student) who withdrew before collecting the video material is Co-researcher 2. The third participant (master's in clinical psychology student) will be referred to as Co-researcher 3. Although Co-researcher 3 withdrew early in the process, they contributed insights to the study while participating. In terms of the usage of data, the two researchers who withdrew from the study were requested to give their permission to have their contributions included in the study. Both co-researchers gave written consent for the inclusion of their contributions.

Two issues relating to the sample require attention. The one has to do with the size of the sample and its demographic composition. The sample of the study is small. It is also homogenous because it comprises Black African psychology students within a historically White university. One of the co-researchers raised these issues in the discussion that was held. The question about the demographic composition of the group was posed to the co-researchers and they reflected on the matter. The responses of the co-researchers to this question are explored later.

Furthermore, none of the students registered for the professional master's in the research psychology programme at the university volunteered to be in the study. The implication is that aspects that relate specifically to research in psychology are not as prominent in the data; the focus is on psychology in general. One assumption is that the possible reasons that precluded other postgraduate students from participating are also relevant to the research psychology students.

The other issue is the relatively low number of volunteers and two co-researchers withdrawing from the study – undesirable from a methodological standpoint. However,

underlying reasons contributed to the withdrawal and the relatively low interest in participating. In terms of the withdrawal from the study, the co-researchers provided the reasons that caused them to withdraw. The specific reasons are explored in the section of the study where the withdrawals took place. However, no concrete reasons that contributed to the relatively low degree of interest among postgraduate students were given. Without concrete reasons, one is left to speculate about the possible reasons that dissuaded the students from volunteering.

One of the reasons could have had to do with the methodological approach of the study. The methodology of the research is rather involved and takes time (Baum et al., 2006). Consequently, this requires a fair amount of participation commitment from the co-researchers. However, the fact that the students are also involved in their own rather intense postgraduate academic programmes could have contributed to their non-participation. Pressures from their academic programme were why one of the co-researchers decided to withdraw from the study.

Attempts were made to develop the data collection plan to ensure that the scheduling for the project was not too intrusive on the co-researchers. However, the fact is that it is intrusive to some degree and did cost the co-researchers their already limited time and energy. Thus, the issues of withdrawal and the apparent lack of interest are understandable when considered from this perspective. Other scholars have addressed decolonisation with South African students and did not report challenges with participation (Joosub, 2021; Ngunyulu et al., 2020; Nibafu et al., 2021). However, none of these scholars made use of PVA.

Another reason for the relatively low interest could be due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which might have made volunteering and participation problematic. The pandemic has brought a great deal of uncertainty about the future and many other things. One such uncertainty also relates to the academic programmes and their pressures on students. Uncertainties can heighten anxiety and fear; thus, participating in research, especially one that requires commitment, is the least of their worries.

Other contributing factors to the apparent low interest in participating in the study are the subject matter, the place where the study is taking place and the historical baggage of the place. The subject matter – decolonisation – is a complex and sometimes difficult conversation. Conversations on this topic have been documented as confronting and eliciting anxieties and anger across racial demographics (Alemán & Gaytán, 2017; Clark et al., 2013; Madden & McGregor, 2013; Terre Blanche et al., 2021; Zinga & Styres, 2019). It is natural to try and avoid these emotions and events that give rise to these emotions.

The fact that the study took place in a historically White institution means that these issues would be particularly pertinent because, as Long (2017) suggests, the racial aspects that come with conversations on decolonisation can create the impression that there is no place for White people in conversations about decolonising the curriculum. Along the same lines, Chiodo et al. (2014) found that conversations on decolonisation could create a perception that White people are evil and not to be befriended.

Admittedly, the number of students that volunteered for the study was below expectations, and more co-researchers would have been appreciated. However, despite the lower-than-expected number of co-researchers, making changes to the research design was not considered an option for several reasons. Firstly, the issue of changing the design brings in the question of which part of the design should be changed. The different aspects of the design have differing implications for the study. The study used a PAR approach and PVA to gather data. The fundamental purpose of PAR is to find practical solutions to social problems and contributes to social transformation. The intended change in this study is the decolonisation of the research program within psychology. Changing that aspect of the study would mean a different approach, and that different approach may not have social change as a fundamental aim. Therefore, it would not have fit the overall purpose of the study.

Secondly, the literature on PVA does not provide specific guidelines regarding sample size. That is to say that having four participants in a PVA is not necessarily inadequate and

does not mean that the data will lack richness. The fundamental issue is instead the depth of the critical reflection processes that take place with the PVA method. Furthermore, at the point of recruitment, it was impossible to know how the process would unfold and the eventual video and how many people would eventually be in part of the video-making process.

In future, serious thought should be given to the involvement of postgraduate students in such studies because of the added burden that these studies may carry. It is crucial because the methodology does require a long-term commitment from the student participants. One of the key benefits of this study was the opportunity for students to learn about decolonisation and gain some practical skills in video making. However, these are rather abstract benefits, and the value of these benefits depends on the willingness, time and capacity of students to leverage these benefits for more practical advantages.

It is also essential to bear in mind that the issue of people committing to projects and then withdrawing is neither new nor unprecedented. It is the right of participants to withdraw from research. Yang (2012), in her doctoral study using PVA, also had to contend with these matters. In her situation, the participants withdrew due to many practical considerations, such as the meeting places being too far from the participants' homes, participants not having travelling money and work commitments. These issues highlight the implications of the level of commitment required to undertake these types of projects.

The burden and risk in research are unevenly distributed between the participants and the researcher, with participants receiving the short end of the stick. PVA, in its nature, is more onerous because of the time and commitment that the method requires. These factors all interact to contribute to a perceived lack of interest from the participants and attrition during the project.

4.6 Data collection methods

This study followed a PAR approach which, unlike other approaches, seeks to find practical solutions to social problems and contributes to the transformation of society

(Mubuuke & Leibowitz, 2013; Walker & Loots, 2018). Ponterotto (2010) suggests that a PAR approach can be applied with various methods to get as close as possible to the phenomenon being studied. For this study, PVA was used to enable postgraduate psychology students to get close to the issue of decolonisation in higher education, critique Western bias and contribute to creating a decolonised psychology and research curriculum (Jewitt, 2012).

Like PAR, PVA is predicated upon the idea of collaboration between co-researchers and researchers. Central to the idea of collaboration is the disruption of the power relation between the researchers and the co-researchers. This disruption involves ceding critical components of the research process to co-researchers, co-constructing the research findings, and creating consensus on the distribution of the research findings. In the case of this study, it also involved deciding where to screen the video. This ceding of control creates space for co-researchers to amplify their voices, share their experiences and advocate change within their context (Sitter, 2012, 2015b; Sitter & Burke, 2015).

Over the years, the interest in and application of PVA has increased (Yang, 2012). Kindon (2016) suggests that PVA development has taken two distinct paths. The first pathway involves using PVA as a media project to facilitate the expression of agency and self-representation based on critical pedagogy and participatory development. The second pathway that Kindon (2016) suggests is the application of PVA as a research method that challenges social science epistemologically and generates rich qualitative data. The current study applied PVA to achieve both aims in that it has both stimulated agency among the students and contributed to the development of the method by applying it within decolonial research during a pandemic.

Milne (2016) points out that no universally accepted definition of PVA exists. According to Milne (2016), this has created a multiplicity of interpretations of PVA and has also rendered the method flexible. On the other hand, this paucity of a universally accepted definition of PVA has also contributed to making the process nebulous and confusing. Therefore, Milne (2016)

suggests that it would not be productive to consider PVA a unitary methodological approach. Shaw (2017) concurs and suggests that it would be helpful to consider it as a practice of bricolage that focuses on skills and values rather than methods and techniques. In line with the focus on skills and values, Johansson (1999) considers PVA as an unscripted video production process driven by co-researchers at the grassroots. The video production process is iterative and creates video narratives that communicate what the co-researchers seek to communicate in a manner they deem appropriate.

Boni and Farith Millán (2016) concur that PVA encompasses a variety of approaches and perspectives. In practical terms, PVA is a process in which co-researchers are given access to video recording equipment and training to capture aspects of their experiences and observations for reflection and action. The aim is to arrive at a deeper understanding of these aspects and seek solutions – even advocate social transformation (Jewitt, 2012; Sitter, 2012, 2015b; Yang, 2012).

The scope for the application of PVA has also been similarly diverse (Boni & Farith Millán, 2016; Montero Sánchez, 2021). Montero Sánchez (2021) points out that PVA has been applied to contexts as diverse as health, education, and social sciences. Within these diverse fields, PVA has been applied as a tool for research, raising awareness and consciousness, influencing policymakers, and working with marginalised groups to achieve social change (Boni & Farith Millán, 2016; Montero Sánchez, 2021).

PVA is undergirded by values of collaborativeness, community mobilisation and decentering the notion of the expert. By applying these core values, PVA seeks to pursue several aims. PVA seeks to narrow the power discrepancy between the researcher and co-researchers by giving the co-researchers the camera to make their experiences visible (Rogers, 2016; Sitter, 2017). According to Rogers (2016), this method stands in opposition to traditional filmmaking by explicitly and deliberately privileging a multiplicity of interpretive perspectives rather than the perspectives of a single filmmaker.

PVA creates space for co-researchers to represent themselves and speak on the issues closest to their hearts. This approach assumes that when people speak for themselves rather than the researcher, their capacity to influence the decisions and processes that affect them will be improved (Snyder et al., 2019). This approach creates space for more equitable and democratic decision-making, policymaking, and social practices (Rogers, 2016). Therefore, PVA studies seek to disrupt the gap between the concepts and models for researchers and co-researchers by ceding control of the camera and the processes involved in making experiences visible and voices heard (Whiting et al., 2018).

Kindon (2016) states that PVA and other visual methodologies have gained traction and widespread acceptance. One of the contributing factors is the relative ease with which digital technology and online connectivity have become accessible to non-professional users, thus creating space for participant-led studies (Kindon, 2016; Montero Sánchez, 2021; Whiting et al., 2018). Another contributing factor to the growth of PVA is that it creates critical and counter-hegemonic possibilities.

However, the proliferation of these methods has not come without concerns and questions from some quarters. In the first place, Kindon (2016) cautions that this proliferation of video and other visual methods presents novel logistical and ethical challenges. Typically, PVA is a collaborative process where the co-researchers deliberate and decide what to depict on their storyboards and in their filming and editing. The collaborative nature of PVA means that emphasis is placed on the collective use and sharing of recording equipment.

In addition, the decisions on video screenings are made collaboratively (Montero Sánchez, 2021). Shaw (2017) points out that the decision on the audience requires deep reflection because the risk is twofold: the intended audience, in the form of critical decision-makers, may misunderstand the intent of the video, and the video may receive an unfavourable reaction from the audience and could cause harm to the co-researchers.

Another bone of contention centres on the empowerment claims that accompany PVA, and PAR. Questions have been asked about the empowerment and other claims that PVA makes. One such claim is that it facilitates the development of agency among participants through the giving of voice. Walsh (2016) questions whether voice necessarily brings about agency that can change society and destinies. Kindon (2016) adds that concepts such as voice, participation and agency are rarely unpacked and explained, even though these ideas are contested. The perception that participation is evidence of agency and that an expression of agency means empowerment exists. Kindon (2016) contends that this is problematic because the telling of their stories by participants does not necessarily mean taking charge of their lives and making changes in their community.

Furthermore, power dynamics within co-researcher groups can affect the extent to which co-researchers participate. Critical reflection, which is characteristic of PAR and PVA, creates increased awareness of the dynamics of social issues and the power relations that influence those issues. Therefore, it is not that voice necessarily creates change, but that voice creates awareness, and, through critical reflection, community members gain a deeper understanding of their circumstances which can be a catalyst for change.

Sitter (2017) supports the employment of PVA methods; however, she concedes that more work is still needed in this field. Rogers (2016) also decries the paucity of critical literature on using the PVA process. Sitter (2017) points out that the application of the approach and the involvement of the co-researchers is diverse. This diverse application affords research with a measure of flexibility and space to manage issues, including power relations among co-researchers, as ethically and scientifically as possible (Milne, 2016; Rogers, 2016). Rogers (2016) also points out that the scope for the development of literature on PVA methods is still considerable. This study also creates an opportunity to contribute to the development of PVA as a methodology.

For this study, the postgraduate psychology students took on the roles of co-researchers. Practically, this implied that the students would be working with the principal researcher to co-create knowledge; decision-making would be shared, and significant control over critical aspects of the research process would be ceded to the co-researchers (Smit, 2013; Tanner, 2019). This degree of student involvement in the research process is crucial because students have unique perspectives and knowledge that can contribute to making educational innovations more successful (Carrington et al., 2010; Messiou, 2014).

However, this arrangement was not truly egalitarian because even though the co-researchers led the planning, collection, analysis and editing of the data, the researcher initiated the research and retained some control of the overall process (Messiou, 2014). This approach ensured that the proper research decisions were made, and the parameters of the academic programme were respected.

The principal researcher also initiated the research with a specific agenda in mind; the agenda problematised the basis of the current psychology and research curriculum founded on Western epistemological traditions and offered possibilities of a curriculum that honours Indigenous thoughts and ideas. Furthermore, it problematised the lack of participation of students in educational innovations and curriculum development and thus created space for them to make contributions to the decolonisation of the research programme.

The principal researcher and the study supervisor decided to attempt the data collection process virtually. The decision was prompted by the complications that emerged from the COVID-19 measures, which made face-to-face research problematic. It has been suggested that conducting qualitative research with virtual technology could compromise the rapport between researchers and participants (Carter et al., 2021). In the current research, the contact with the co-researchers meant more time and prolonged engagement which contributed to creating a good working relationship between the co-researcher and the principal researcher occurred.

Another consideration is the possible impact of virtual meetings, unlike the face-to-face interactions of traditional research, on issues of power and representation. The impact can be twofold. In the first instance, the use of virtual technology for research could create conditions of greater privacy and protect both the researcher and the other participants. In the second instance, virtual technology can create conditions for privacy intrusion, mainly when interviews occur in participants' homes (Roberts et al., 2021). Furthermore, it could create a situation where, depending on the location of the researcher during sessions, the process intrudes on the privacy of the researcher and the participants by revealing their domestic space. However, this can be mitigated using virtual background. The exposure of some of this information can sometimes make both the researcher and the participants vulnerable because both parties are more exposed than would be the case in traditional research.

The employment of virtual methodologies also presents the challenge of access to technology to participate in research and broader virtual conversations. In this study, this issue did not emerge as all the co-researchers had access to mobile technology because the university in question had ensured that students had mobile data to connect (Carter et al., 2021; Roberts et al., 2021).

4.7 Data collection procedures

Data collection took place over several stages according to the guidelines provided by Sitter (2015b). The stages followed were an initial briefing, a Decolonial Encounters Workshop, a Video Editing Workshop, artistic representations, storyboarding, and the collection and editing of video material. This section will outline these stages in detail to illustrate the processes. The detailed exploration will also touch on the number of co-researchers that remained at each stage and the supervisors' role as part of the research team. The principal researcher facilitated some stages, while external stakeholders facilitated others. Figure 1 provides an overview of the process that was followed.

As previously indicated, the COVID-19 regulations cause delays in the data collection process. However, after it became clear that the regulations would linger longer than initially anticipated, the supervisor advised that we continue. The concern was that time was running out for us to complete the project in accordance with the university requirements and waiting longer could have adverse financial implications for the principal researcher as a student. Due to the restrictions, it was necessary to make adjustments to the initial plan before continuing. Before the initial briefing, Co-researcher 4 withdrew from the process, which meant that there were three co-researchers at the beginning.

Figure 1

Representation of Data Collection Procedures



4.7.1 Stage 1: Initial briefing

The first contact session with the co-researchers took place on 25 August 2021.

At this point of the process, three co-researchers were in the study. Co-researcher 4 had already withdrawn prior to the commencement of the study, citing personal reasons. The initial briefing was held virtually through Zoom. All meetings were recorded to ensure that there was evidence for the briefing. The recording of the sessions continued throughout the PVA process. The initial meeting lasted approximately one and a half hours. The purpose of the gathering was to share information about the study, its purpose and the processes involved. The information presented to the co-researchers was intended to provide as much information as possible for them to complete the consent form. Furthermore, the orientation also created a climate of mutual respect and trust and an atmosphere of free expression (Hawkins, 2015).

On the morning of the day, Co-researcher 3 emailed and indicated that they would not join the initial briefing. Co-researcher 3 and the principal researcher agreed that an additional briefing would be conducted for the benefit of the co-researcher. The date for the briefing with Co-researcher 3 was scheduled for the following week before the Decolonial Encounters Workshop to enable Co-researcher 3 to complete their consent form and participate further in the process. The briefing was presented in PowerPoint and the co-researchers could ask questions at any point. The PowerPoint presentation was based primarily on the information sheet (Appendix 1) which the co-researchers had received via email before the briefing and aspects from the initial research proposal related to the methodology.

Co-researchers 1 and 2 attended the briefing and indicated that they had a great interest in the project and were looking forward to it. They asked some questions that related to the process aspect of the project. Co-researcher 2 asked whether structured or semi-structured interviews would be used and asked about transcription. There were also questions about whether the video recordings would occur face-to-face. It also appeared that the prospect of learning about video production virtually was rather daunting because of the significant practical components and the limited ability of the co-researchers to practice and be comfortable with the material.

The principal researcher explained that it would be difficult to change the method of engagement as ethical approval had been given on the basis that the meetings would be virtual, and any deviation from that might require additional ethical approval. An agreement was reached that the virtual option would be tried and then evaluated as to whether their understanding of the practical components was sufficient.

In the second briefing, the same presentation was given to Co-researcher 3. In this meeting, Co-researcher 3 asked about the composition of the team, more specifically, whether only Black African students had elected to participate in the study. The question was relevant, and the researcher and co-researcher agreed that the question would be put to the other co-researchers. The question was posed to the other co-researchers during the artistic representations stage of the process, and it was discussed. The perspectives of the co-researchers are presented in the findings section.

The study supervisor was kept up to date through email regarding the development of the data collection. She was informed of the withdrawal of the co-researchers. As part of the preparation, the principal researcher inquired whether the supervisor would have liked to be part of the briefing. The decision was that she would not be part of the session but would receive feedback afterwards. The motivation for this was to ensure that the process remains independent from academic staff and to provide the co-researchers with peace of mind regarding confidentiality.

4.7.1.1 Reflection and positionality after the initial briefing

The PVA approach to research aims to disrupt the power asymmetry between researchers and participants or, in this case, co-researchers. For the power asymmetries to be disrupted within the research team, the source of these asymmetries should be named and explored (Chilisa, 2012; Chiumbu, 2017; Dutta, 2018). Therefore, this section explores these asymmetries so that the research process can unfold with the awareness of these power asymmetries.

The current study presents an interesting contradiction from a positionality point of view – contradictory in the sense that there are aspects that contribute to the privileging of the principal researcher relative to the co-researchers and other aspects that marginalise the co-researchers. The aspects that marginalise can, at times, be beneficial in terms of providing common ground and being the basis of building collaborative relationships.

The research team, including the researcher and the three co-researchers, are Black African students. All the co-researchers are female, and the principal researcher is male. In addition, the researcher is a Black African male and is a registered research psychologist employed at a government institution. The co-researchers in this study are Black African females and full-time university students. The inherent power asymmetries within the research relationship and the fact that the principal researcher is male could potentially afford the principal researcher a measure of power and privilege.

Furthermore, the principal researcher is a doctoral student, and the co-researchers are master's and honours students, respectively. The fact that the researcher has a higher qualification/is a PhD student and is a practising psychologist may also contribute to the power asymmetry within the group. From a positionality standpoint, it creates conditions that could contribute to the power asymmetry within research. Therefore, these asymmetries needed to be disrupted and undermined throughout the research process by actively soliciting the perspectives of the co-researchers about the process and sending the co-researchers any written findings for consideration and further input.

On the other hand, both the principal researcher and the co-researchers being Black Africans at a previously White institution of higher learning, infused a measure of marginality within the group when viewed from a historical, institutional, and departmental perspective. Another aspect that could have assisted in creating, although, at different levels, the disparity of power is not as vast as it would have been if the researcher had been a member of the academic staff of the Department of Psychology. Another consideration is the possible impact

of virtual meetings on issues of power and representation, unlike the face-to-face interactions of traditional research. The impact can be twofold. In the first instance, using virtual technology for research could create conditions of greater privacy and protect both the researcher and the other participants. Conversely, the use of virtual technology can create conditions for privacy intrusion, particularly when interviews take place in participants' homes (Roberts et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it could communicate certain social class markers, which could contribute to the asymmetry. The exposure of some of this information can sometimes make both the researcher and the participants vulnerable because both parties are more exposed than they would be in traditional research. Therefore, sufficient consideration on the issue of representation during the virtual sessions is needed; the researcher must consider how participants represent themselves concerning location and background, as this can affect the research process.

4.7.2 Stage 2: Decolonial Encounters Workshop

After the initial briefing about the project, a date was arranged for the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. At this point of the process, all three co-researchers were still participating in the study. A guest facilitator was invited to assist with the workshop. This facilitator was chosen for a variety of reasons. In the first place, the facilitator is an accomplished decolonial scholar with extensive local and global experience within the decolonial space. Second, the facilitator is not a psychologist and thus does not have the intellectual baggage that comes with being within the profession. One of the intended outcomes of decolonisation is greater cross-disciplinary collaboration so bringing in a scholar from outside the profession contributes to creating space for students in different departments to dialogue on decolonisation and collaborate.

Third, the facilitator, principal researcher and co-researchers are demographically similar, meaning they are all Black postgraduate students at the same historically White

university. The shared demographic characteristics suggest the possibility of shared embodied experiences and commonalities in the group. The shared embodied experiences can contribute to creating rapport and safe spaces.

About a month before the appointed date of the workshop, the facilitator received a detailed brief outlining what should be covered in the workshop before the meeting. The workshop format was interactive and focused on presenting problems and questions to the researcher and co-researchers to facilitate critical reflection and conscientisation about decolonisation within psychology and research.

The purpose of the workshop was to ensure that the co-researchers had a working understanding of decolonisation. More specifically, decolonisation within psychology and to explore the colonial history of psychology and research, the implications of this history on teaching and learning and the challenges and possibilities for decolonisation within the psychology and research curriculum.

Ensuring that the co-researchers had at least a working understanding of decolonisation was important because it was possible that the co-researchers could have had different degrees of familiarity with decolonisation and, thus, gaps in understanding. At the beginning of the process, the indication was that some co-researchers had received lectures on decolonisation and others had not. Therefore, the Decolonial Encounters Workshop played a role in exploring and filling the gaps where they existed.

The workshop took approximately two hours and adduced rich and fascinating discussions. Some of the crucial ideas that emerged are presented as part of the findings. It was expected that some of these ideas would emerge in the artistic representations that the co-researchers would develop. The co-researchers indicated that they found the workshop interesting and illuminating. Co-researcher 3 indicated that they left the workshop with more than when they had arrived.

The supervisor was informed about the arrangement for the Decolonial Encounters workshop and the decolonial scholar facilitating the process. The supervisor again offered her encouragement and well wishes for the workshop.

4.7.3 Stage 3: Video Editing Workshop

The Video Editing Workshop was conducted virtually about a week after the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. At this point, all three co-researchers were still in the study, but Co-researcher 3 did not attend this workshop and no reasons were offered before the start of the workshop. The decision was made by the team to proceed without Co-researcher 3. The intention was to make sure that Co-researcher 3 caught up with the workshop later. During the workshop, the remaining two co-researchers appeared interested and enthusiastic about participating.

The facilitator for the Video Editing Workshop was a media personality with a thriving social media and YouTube presence and has had a great deal of experience developing content and editing video content online. Various video editing technologies were introduced and demonstrated to the group. The facilitator recommended Microsoft Movie Maker for video editing because it was easy to use and standard with Microsoft Windows. However, the Video Pad Video Editor software was used to compile the video.

The facilitator also offered some useful advice on recording techniques, the best time for gathering video material and the use of sound. The facilitator suggested that it was generally best to use HD or 4K for recording because editing software tends to downscale video quality; it was best to record using the best possible quality. Advice about the ideal cameras and equipment for recording and the recording of sound was provided. The facilitator suggested that it would be useful to use cell phone voice recording as a backup to ensure good sounds for the video.

The facilitator also showed the group the planning process for developing video material. The planning process that the facilitator used involved using storyboards that were

written and not drawn or with pictorial depictions as is traditionally done. The approach that the facilitator used to develop the storyboards demonstrated that there are myriad ways to develop a storyboard.

As the Video Editing Workshop unfolded, the co-researchers appeared to have less energy and spontaneity in comparison to the energy and engagement in the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. There could be several reasons for this apparent decline in enthusiasm. It could have been the nature of the subject matter – the recording and the editing – with which the co-researchers were not particularly familiar.

The workshop took place on a Friday afternoon which could have contributed to the lower energy levels of the co-researchers. Perhaps this is a matter that should be borne in mind and maybe a change in the time might be worth considering in future. However, this was made difficult by the students' busy schedules. The tightness of postgraduate calendars could also have made it difficult for the students to be part of the study. After this workshop, arrangements were made to develop the arts-based exploration. A meeting with the co-researchers was set up to discuss the next stage and clarify their role in this stage.

4.7.4 Stage 4: Arts-based explorations

The arts-based explorations meeting took place a week after the Video Editing Workshop. During this part of the process, the training workshops concluded, and the co-researchers began to take a more active role. However, before the meeting to discuss the arts-based explorations that could take place, Co-researcher 3 withdrew from the study. They indicated that it had become too strenuous to manage academic and other commitments while participating in the study. Co-researcher 3 was thanked for their participation and wished well for the rest of their studies. The supervisor and the other co-researchers were informed about this turn of events. The supervisor was again informed of this development, and the process unfolded as planned.

The withdrawal of Co-researcher 3 from the study meant that there were only two co-researchers (1 and 2) left in the study. Consequently, this raised some concerns and anxieties on the part of the principal researcher. The concern was mainly about the scientific acceptability of conducting research with two people and the implications for the examination process of a doctoral degree. After an email conversation with the study supervisor, some anxieties dissipated.

Another issue was that the absence of Co-researcher 3 might affect the richness of the interaction and the data. Therefore, this meant that the principal researcher had to ensure that the richness of the critical reflexivity remained deep, detailed, and nuanced through the use of questions and probing during the artistic exploration stage. Ironically, the withdrawal of Co-researcher 3 meant that some of the processes would be smoother in that fewer co-researchers meant that the process was easier to manage. The remaining co-researchers still appeared committed and enthusiastic about participating in the study.

The meeting regarding arts-based explorations detailed and clarified the arts-based contributions that the co-researchers were meant to bring to the next meeting. Additionally, the meeting also intended to clarify the planning for the subsequent sessions and meetings. Co-researcher 2 did not attend, but the meeting went ahead with Co-researcher 1 and the principal researcher. The reason for Co-researcher 2 not joining the meeting was unclear at the time. It later emerged that Co-researcher 2 had taken ill and thus could not participate. A separate session was then arranged with Co-researcher 2 to ensure they caught up.

The co-researchers were requested to develop an arts-based exploration of decolonisation and present it to the group for the next session. The meaning of what constituted 'art' was open to the interpretation of the co-researcher. Therefore, they were not limited to which medium or material to use and how to use it. The co-researcher who attended the meeting was requested to prepare their presentation for reflection and discussion in the

next session. They were informed that from the arts-based exploration, filming ideas would begin to emerge for later consideration.

This exploration was guided by a series of questions aimed at developing research goals, developing ideas for filming, and creating a space for all to contribute. During this process, magazine pictures, drawings, stickers, and various other artistic materials were used for the artistic expression of thoughts about and experiences of decolonisation. The co-researchers were provided with guiding questions to facilitate their arts-based exploration of decolonisation. The guiding questions were as follows.

- What does decolonisation mean to you?
- How does the colonial history of psychology affect the research and psychology curriculum?
- What do you think are some of the barriers to the decolonisation of the research and psychology curriculum?
- What strategies can be used to decolonise the research and psychology curriculum?

In addition, to facilitate the explorations, the recordings from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop were made available to the co-researchers. The purpose of making the recordings available to the co-researchers was to refresh their memories regarding the critical discussions that took place and the extent to which those discussions could be helpful at this stage.

As Co-researcher 2 could not attend the initial arts-based explorations meeting, an additional meeting was arranged to ensure that this co-researcher caught up. At the beginning of the meeting, Co-researcher 2 was also informed about the withdrawal of Co-researcher 3. No specific reaction emerged from Co-researcher 2. Co-researcher 1 also did not express any opinion about the withdrawal. The briefing with Co-researcher 2 went well and they indicated that they understood everything and did not wish to explore additional questions.

The meeting to discuss the artistic representations took place virtually after three weeks. The purpose of the meeting was to create space for the co-researchers to present the artistic

representations that they had prepared. The co-researchers prepared the representations using the questions mentioned earlier to stimulate their thinking process and guide the development of the presentations. The co-researchers presented their artistic works virtually and they were requested to take pictures and send them to the principal researcher.

The artistic representations centred on the co-researchers' perceptions of the meaning of decolonisation, the colonial history of decolonisation and barriers and strategies for implementing decolonisation within the psychology curriculum. The insights that emerged from the artistic representations of the co-researchers' perceptions were thematised. After the principal researcher and the co-researchers had settled on the themes, it was agreed that the principal researcher would type up the themes and distribute them to the rest of the group for comment and corrections. The themes generated from the arts-based explorations are explored in Chapter 4.

4.7.5 Stage 5: Storyboarding

The storyboarding process took place a few weeks after the artistic representations meeting. At this point, there were still two co-researchers involved in the study. After completing the artistic representations, the themes for the discussion were written out and the documents were sent to the co-researchers for review and correction. The co-researchers indicated that they were happy with the themes presented in the document. However, they did mention that some corrections were required. It was agreed that the corrections would be emailed to the principal researchers.

The storyboard session began with a brief refresher on storyboarding and the processes involved. The refresher was conducted in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. After the presentations were completed, the storyboarding for the video began. The following process was implemented for the creation of the storyboard:

4.7.5.1 Identification of the aim and intended audience of the video

The first part of the process was to identify the aim of the video and the intended audience. The co-researchers were requested to take a moment to consider both aspects. Identifying the aim and the audience before commencing with the video was crucial because it shaped the content and format of the video. The group decided on the three stakeholders that should be part of the intended audience. The identified stakeholders were the psychology department (including the academic staff, students and the Research and Ethics Committee), the HPCSA and members of local communities close to the location of the university. The different entities were chosen for various reasons.

Academic staff, students and the Research Committee within the psychology department were chosen as possible audiences. The academic staff was identified as a possible audience due to their extensive involvement in teaching and conducting research. Therefore, they can play a critical role in decolonising the psychology and research curriculum by utilising decolonial approaches to teaching and learning. As discussed in the literature review, the decolonial approaches to teaching and learning involve creating dialogic spaces in the classroom for students to share their embodied knowledge and experience, critical reflection of the coloniality within psychology and ideas for making psychology relevant to the needs of communities. From a research perspective, a decolonial approach involves adopting research approaches that support decoloniality and inclusive and participative methods.

Within the psychology department, other students were identified as a possible audience because the co-researchers identified the need to create awareness among those students about their right to be active and have a say in the research process whenever they are recruited to participate in research studies. Furthermore, the co-researchers identified the need for students to be more active in the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum.

The co-researchers considered the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee a possible audience because of its perceived proximity to institutional power structures. This committee could influence power brokers and advocate research on decolonisation in psychology through this proximity.

The HPCSA was considered a possible audience because they are a regulatory body within the profession and, as such, can shape the future of psychology. The findings outlined in the artistic representations suggest that the HPCSA and the power that it wields make it difficult for newer and more decolonial approaches to be included in the psychology curriculum. This issue was explored in some detail in the previous sections.

Local communities were also considered critical stakeholders and thus possible audiences because of the widespread lack of awareness about mental health and psychology, lack of access to services and the perceived lack of the relevance of psychology to the needs of the communities. Consequently, these communities cannot benefit from the profession or contribute to its development. As such, to the extent that decolonisation is related to making psychology relevant to the needs of the community, these communities stand to benefit the most from decolonised psychology. Therefore, the argument that the co-researchers made is that the more the communities interact with organised psychology, the more these issues will come to the forefront, and psychology will be challenged to reflect on the relevance and the utility of the profession for these communities.

4.7.5.2 *Identification of the format of the video*

After deciding on the possible audience for the video, the format of the video was discussed. The decision was made that the video would be a mixed-format documentary-type video comprising five scenes. The first scene of the video would be a voice-over narration that would introduce the study, explain the aim, and outline how the video would unfold. This first scene would then transition into the second scene – a face-to-face interview with one of the co-researchers. The possible interview questions were discussed, typed up and relayed back

to the co-researchers for review and correction. The decision that the co-researchers took to be interviewed created space for them to voice their perspectives and speak directly to the intended audience.

At the end of the interview, the third scene would begin. A voice-over narration would take over to discuss a summary of some of the key issues about decolonisation and those related to the first interview. The voice-over narration would transition into the second interview with the second co-researcher. At the end of the interview, the conclusion of the video would then be presented through a voice-over narration that would focus on the future of the decolonial project within psychology.

4.7.5.3 Brainstorming ideas for the video

The brainstorming part of the process enabled the research team to work out the details of each of the five scenes. In the first section of the video, the group decided that decolonial images and videos would be looped as the voice-over introduced the study, explained its aim, and outlined how the video would unfold. The selected images included images related to decolonisation, the university emblem, the logo, scenes on campus, the architecture and the building that houses the psychology department at the university.

The second scene of the video would be an interview with one of the co-researchers. The decision was made that the interview would take place indoors with a White background and a chair. The questions the co-researcher would be asked focused on five dimensions. The dimensions identified included the definition of decolonisation, the role the psychology department, the HPCSA and the local community play in hindering or facilitating the decolonisation of psychology within the university and the steps that these stakeholders could take to contribute to the decolonisation of the curriculum.

The third scene of the video was formatted as the opening scene had been with a voice-over narration. The scene focused on the key issues surrounding decolonisation. The images that would loop throughout the narrative were the HPCSA building and logo, scenes

on campus, front pages and covers of assessment material and community settings. The fourth scene of the video was an interview – indoors with a white background – with the other co-researcher.

The closing scene of the video was a voice-over narration that discussed the future of the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum. The closing scene would be a looping display of images and videos. The images included were scenes on campus, images depicting Ubuntu, the university logo, and the national flag. For the interview, the co-researchers elected to have their identities concealed because there were concerns regarding the possible consequences of their participation.

4.7.5.4 Completing the storyboard template

After the discussions had taken place, the storyboard templates were completed. The storyboard provided a pictorial representation of the discussion in the previous section. Figure 2 is a picture of the storyboard.

Figure 2

Picture of the Storyboard Used for Making the Video

Storyboard:

Post Graduate Psychology Students

Title: _____ Creator: _____

Scene - One	Scene - Two	Scene - Three	Scene - Four
Camera shot: Voice Over narrating the script	Camera shot: Camera and a smartphone recording from front.	Camera shot: Voice Over narrating the script	Camera shot: Camera and a smartphone recording from front.
Background: Images will be playing continuously in the background. Images will be decolonial arts works, UP logo and buildings, students on campus	Background: Chair on a White background located indoors.	Background: Images will be playing continuously in the background. Images will be HPCSA and UP logo and buildings, students on campus, Pictures of assessment.	Background: Chair on a White background located indoors.
Character: Voice Over Artist	Character: K*****	Character: Voice Over Artist	Character: A*****
Action: The images that are part of the introductory scene are playing on a loop until the voice over is finished.	Action: K***** will be seated on the chair and then will be interviewed.	Action: The images that are part of the introductory scene are playing on a loop until the voice over is finished.	Action: A***** will be seated on the chair and then will be interviewed.
Scene - 05	Scene -	Scene -	Scene -
Camera shot: Voice Over	Camera shot:	Camera shot:	Camera shot:
Background: Images will be playing continuously in the background. Images will be the South African, Ubuntu, UP logo and buildings, students on campus	Background:	Background:	Background:
Character: Voice Over Artist	Character:	Character:	Character:
Action: Action: The images that are part of the introductory scene are playing on a loop until the voice over is finished.	Action:	Action:	Action:

4.7.5.5 Identification of the questions and themes

As pointed out in the previous section, the questions in this section were based on the dimensions identified in the character previous section. The dimensions identified included the definition of decolonisation, the role the psychology department, the HPCSA and the local community play in hindering or facilitating the decolonisation of psychology within the university and the steps that these stakeholders can take to decolonise the curriculum. Based on the dimensions, the questions that the co-researchers discussed on camera were the following:

- What is your understanding of decolonisation and why is it important within psychology?

- What role does the psychology department (academic staff, students and the Research and Ethics Committee) play in facilitating the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum at the university?
- What role can the HPCSA play in facilitating the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum in South Africa?
- What role can local communities play in facilitating the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum in South Africa?
- What steps can be taken to facilitate decolonisation?

4.7.5.6 Development of the voice-over script

The principal researcher and the co-researchers discussed the broad outline of the script and the ideas that the script should address. After clarifying the broad outline and ideas, the decision was taken that the principal researcher would type up the script and send it to the co-researchers for review and correction. The script covered the introduction, the topic of the study and the themes that were outlined in the previous section. The script for the fifth scene would conclude the video and focus on the practical strategies for decolonised psychology.

4.7.5.7 Feedback and review

After the conclusion of the storyboarding process, the script, the questions, and the storyboards were sent by email to all the members of the research team for further review and corrections.

4.7.6 Collecting video material

As stated earlier, the decision was made to conduct interviews with the co-researchers on camera as part of the video. The principal researcher secured the recording equipment. The location, script and interview questions were discussed and decided.

However, another issue emerged. The initial ethical approval for the study was based on the fact that the students would participate in PVA, but no reference had been made in the

ethics application to the on-camera interview. The study supervisor was contacted for consultation and advice on the matter. It emerged that additional ethical approval for the co-researchers to participate in on-camera interviews would need to be obtained. The additional application for ethical clearance was made to the Faculty of Humanities Research and Ethics Committee and approval – reference number HUM039/0919 – was granted on 2 December 2021.

After the approval from the ethics committee, the process of arranging for the collection of footage started to unfold. The group decided that the location of the video should be in the psychology department. The decision was that attempts be made to secure a location within the psychology department. At this point, the supervisor was particularly helpful in assisting with the arrangements at the Psychology Department. The supervisor sought permission from the Head of Department and connected the principal researcher with the departmental support staff to arrange access. The department made a conference room available to the group to collect the video material. A date and a location for the recordings were set and communicated to the co-researchers through email. The co-researchers who remained in the study indicated their availability for the recordings. The principal researcher obtained the video recording equipment: a camera, three smartphones (one belonging to the co-researcher) and two gorilla tripods to support the smartphones and the camera.

On the morning of the day planned to collect the video material, Co-researcher 2 decided to withdraw from the study. The withdrawal was based on concerns that the video may compromise confidentiality and expose their identity. It was rather interesting that the group had decided on the format and the content of the video and based on that decision, the storyboard was created, and the ethics committee approached.

Possible factors contributed to the concern about confidentiality. One was that the co-researcher who withdrew was a master's student and had gone further in their psychology training. Having gone further in training could have created a deeper appreciation of

confidentiality in the therapeutic and research relationship. Furthermore, the master's classes are decidedly smaller than honours classes and, therefore, the possibility that the co-researcher would be identified by other students and academic staff involved in the master's classes is greater. In hindsight, one wonders whether Co-researcher 2's withdrawal was somehow connected to why so few postgraduate students volunteered for the study and why the students that participated were Black. That is, the students did not feel that this was a university and possibly the Department were not a safe space to delve into these issues and be authentic about their feelings.

The supervisor was apprised of the latest development and indicated her disappointment at the news. A discussion between the principal researcher and the study supervisor regarding the implication of the withdrawal and the viability of having only one co-researcher continue in the video ensued. In the end, the decision was that the collection of the video material would continue, provided that the co-researcher was willing. The remaining co-researcher was consulted, and they indicated their willingness to continue with the process. Later in the afternoon, the principal researcher set up the recording equipment, and when the co-researcher arrived, the collection of the video material commenced.

Before the interview, the nature of the questions was discussed with the co-researcher. The questions, together with the script for the video, had been given to the co-researcher much earlier. The purpose of providing the guiding questions to the co-researcher before the recording was to make corrections, adjustments and corrections to the questions and the script. After receiving the documents, the co-researcher indicated that they were happy with the questions and the script. One cannot overlook the possibility that the expression of happiness about the script and the questions was based on the desire to move the process forwards and not spend their already limited time working on the script and questions.

On the day of the recording, the co-researcher requested to go through the questions, and it was decided that there would be a practice round where the co-researcher would

practise answering the questions. After the co-researcher had indicated they were ready, the interview began promptly. Before collecting the video material, Co-researcher 1 also volunteered to do the voice-over for the video. After having completed the video recording, Co-researcher 1 recorded the voice-over. The principal researcher then took all the video material out of the recording devices and transferred it onto a stand-alone computer to compile the final video. The final video was edited using the Video Pad Video Editor software. Any footage still contained in the recording devices was then destroyed.

Regarding the withdrawal of co-researchers during the process, the supervisor did not dwell on the withdrawal even though the withdrawals were rather disappointing. The withdrawal was acknowledged, and then the focus shifted to the process and the next step. The approach assisted in maintaining momentum and not creating an opportunity to get bogged down with the disappointments that came with the withdrawal. The focus on maintaining the momentum of the process was beneficial in providing direction and minimising anxiety.

4.7.7 Collective editing of the raw video footage

The editing of the video took place through the Video Pad Video Editor software. The preparation for the collection of the video material was done using storyboarding, which meant that not much editing was required. The video was arranged according to the initial planning. The only change was that two scenes were removed because of the withdrawal of Co-researcher 2. The withdrawal meant that only one interview and narration took place before and after the interview. The final video was shared with Co-researcher 1 for input and approval.

4.7.8 Screening of the completed video

The video material was collected and collectively edited as prescribed by the PVA process. An electronic copy of the finalised video will accompany this document. The prescribed practice of PVA involves showing the video to identified stakeholders. The

stakeholders are usually people who contribute to the changes that the PAR and PVA processes seek to engender. In this case, the audience should be carefully considered and selected to ensure that they are relevant and can contribute to change within psychology.

In the current study, it was not possible to screen the video for the identified stakeholders due to COVID-19 restrictions. The COVID-19 restrictions also meant that the data collection period was delayed. This delay resulted in the allotted timelines for the completion of the academic programme being threatened and significant financial and administrative consequences for the researcher. Thus, it was decided to forego the screening of the video. The intended remedy for this situation is to conduct a follow-up study where some of the identified stakeholders view the video and then make their contributions. Their contributions would then be integrated with the findings from the students' voices and be the subject of a follow-up paper.

4.8 Data analysis

The data analysis was carried out through a process that Sitter (2015b) calls the critical framing approach. This approach to analysis explores the co-researchers' deliberations of social, historical, and cultural realities through the different stages of PVA (Sitter et al., 2019). It is an analytical process led by the co-researchers and involves identifying and exploring generative themes using arts-based explorations, storyboarding and collaborative editing.

Generative themes can be understood as themes identified as issues or topics that have the highest priority as agreed upon by the co-researchers. Therefore, generative themes emerge from these arts-based activities and are further clarified through the different stages of PVA (Sitter, 2015b). The exploration of these generative themes provides insights into the thoughts of the co-researchers about the decolonisation of psychology. The more serious the exploration of the generative themes by the co-researchers, the greater their critical awareness of the need for decolonisation will be and the greater the sense of their responsibility in contributing to the decolonisation process (Sitter, 2015b).

Critical framing is exemplified when these generative themes are explored through different stages, including arts-based explorations, storyboards, and collaborative editing. The final video was developed from the different generative themes (Sitter, 2015b; Sitter et al., 2020). This meant that the generative themes represented what co-researchers considered the most critical impacts of colonialism on psychology, the most critical stumbling blocks to decolonisation and the measures that could contribute the most to decolonisation.

In the case of this study, the focus is on postgraduate psychology students and their thoughts about the meaning of decolonisation, the colonial history of psychology, stumbling blocks to decolonisation and ways to decolonise the psychology curriculum. As mentioned before, the Decolonial Encounters Workshop elicited valuable insights that were also subject to analysis. The data from this workshop were analysed through thematic analysis, as outlined in Kiger and Varpio (2020). This section will outline the two approaches according to the stage during which they were applied. Table 1 outlines the different stages of the data collection process, and the data analysis approaches employed at the different stages in tabular form.

Table 1

Summary of the Data Analysis Approaches Undertaken in the Study

Data Collection Stage	Data Source	Data Analysis Approaches
Decolonial Encounters Workshop	Recordings of the workshop	Thematic analysis (Kiger & Varpio, 2020)
Artistic Representations	Artistic creations of the co-researchers Recordings of the presentations and the generative themes	Critical framing approach using generative themes (Sitter, 2012)
Decolonial Encounters Video	Co-compiled video	Thematic analysis of the video (Kiger & Varpio, 2020)

4.8.1 Analysis of the Decolonial Encounters Workshop data

The data that emerged from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop were analysed using thematic analysis (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method involving searching textual data to identify, analyse and report patterns that repeat within the text (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). From the perspective of Kiger and Varpio (2020), thematic analysis comprises five steps: familiarisation with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, and defining and naming the themes. The workshop in this context took place over Zoom, and the session was recorded with consent from the co-researchers.

The recording from Zoom was uploaded to the ATLAS.ti software program. The program created the possibility to embark on the thematic analysis of the Zoom recordings without the need for transcription. The principal researcher repeatedly viewed the recordings to become familiar with the data, which provided valuable data orientation (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). After the familiarisation process, initial codes from the recording were developed using the ATLAS.ti software. The principal researcher also used this software to write notes, memos, thoughts, and ideas about the process. The initial codes that emerged are outlined in Table 2 and form part of the theme about the accessibility of the psychology curriculum and higher education.

Table 2

Example of the Coding Process

Initial Codes	Quotation
Restricted access to technology	<i>For me, decolonising of the curriculum, coming from the background of natural sciences, because I did chemistry before I went into psychology, very much speaks to how accessible the curriculum is on a wider level, outside of being taught in specific languages. I think also just an understanding</i>

Initial Codes	Quotation
	<p><i>of the different backgrounds that enter faculties. Whether or not the individuals that you are teaching have access to technology, to what extent and at what times. And also, just an awareness of the way in which the content is currently structured.</i></p>
<p>System purging difference</p>	<p><i>The system purges these perspectives in order to keep itself running; it is self-propagating in that sense where the current systems and who runs the system, the gatekeepers who the system serves, what the knowledge is supposed to do versus what the knowledge actually does are completely different parameters. Realising what I think that we are doing, I think that we are comparing apples and oranges and hoping that because they are fruits, then they come from the same tree.</i></p>
<p>Psychological assessments that are not relevant</p>	<p><i>And I also thought about assessments. Yes, they have been trying to make assessments more standardised to fit the South African context. But in a lot of them that are still being administered today, they don't fit the South African context. Or you find that some of them, we were doing an assessment this week in class. It was a career assessment done in English and Afrikaans and it is a very old assessment. It makes me think about how it was created so long ago and till today it has not been adapted. And it made me think of individuals that came from other cultural backgrounds might be limited because of those assessments.</i></p>

As the process unfolded, several patterns emerged from the codes and the patterns became the basis for the themes presented in the document. The codes were then grouped according to the patterns that emerged to form themes. From the codes that were identified, five themes were developed and named. The names and the narrative description of the codes are contained in Chapter 5. By way of example, the codes outlined in the previous section made up the theme named 'Accessibility of Higher Education and psychology.'

4.8.2 Analysis of the artistic representations

After the presentation of the artistic representation, the principal researcher and the co-researchers collaborated to explore the generative themes from the artistic representations. As mentioned previously, generative themes are the issues that the co-researchers deemed most important. The themes were agreed upon and the principal researcher wrote out the themes. The document containing the themes was sent to the co-researchers via email for corrections, amendments, and additions. Each co-researcher pointed out the corrections that needed to be made and the corrections were discussed and implemented (Sitter, 2012, 2015b, 2017; Sitter & Burke, 2015).

Figure 3 is the representation that the co-researchers developed. As an example of a generative theme, one of the guiding questions focused on Co-researcher 1's understanding of decolonisation. In the picture, the words 'Biggest Shift' is depicted. Co-researcher 1 understood decolonisation as a shift from how psychology used to be to a different type of psychology. The following quote illustrates Co-researcher 1's understanding of decolonisation: *"If I were to define decolonisation myself, I would say that it is a shift from what was normal then to what is normal now."*

Figure 3

Example of Artistic Representation



4.8.3 Culmination of the storyboard development process

The storyboarding process took place a few weeks after the artistic representations. The storyboard session began with a brief refresher on storyboarding and the processes contained therein. The refresher was conducted in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. After the presentation was completed, the storyboarding for the video began. The following process was implemented for the storyboarding process.

4.8.3.1 Identification of the aim and intended audience of the video

The first part of the process was identifying the aim of the video and the intended audiences. The co-researchers were requested to take a moment and consider the aim and the intended audience for the proposed video. Identifying the aim and the audience before commencing with the video was crucial because it helped shape the content and the format of the video.

4.8.3.2 Identification of the format of the video

After deliberation between the principal researchers and the co-researchers, the group decided on a mixed-format documentary-style approach for the video. The decision was that the video would be divided into five parts. The first scene would be a voice-over narration that

would introduce the study, explain the aim of the study, and outline how the video would unfold. This first part would then lead into the second part, which would be a face-to-face interview with one of the co-researchers.

At the end of this interview, a voice-over narration would take over to discuss the summary of some of the key issues of decolonisation. The voice-over narration would lead to another interview with one of the co-researchers. At the end of the interview, a voice-over would conclude the video. The conclusion of the video would then be done through a voice-over narration that would focus on the future of the decolonial project within psychology. However, after the withdrawal of Co-researcher 2, the video format changed. The narration introduced the study and was followed by the interview with Co-researcher 1; the interview was followed by a narration that concluded the study.

4.8.3.3 Brainstorming ideas for the video

The brainstorming part of the process enabled the research team to work out the details of each of the five video production scenes. In the first section of the video, the group decided that decolonial images and videos would be looped as the voice-over introduced the study and the subject matter. The decision that the co-researchers took to be interviewed created space for them to voice their perspectives and speak directly to the intended audience. Images of decolonisation, the university emblem and logo, scenes on campus, the architecture and the humanities building at the university were selected.

The second scene of the video was the interview with one of the co-researchers. The decision was made that the interview would take place indoors with a white background and a chair. The questions the co-researcher would be asked would focus on five dimensions. The dimensions that were identified included the definition of decolonisation, the role the psychology department, the HPCSA and the local community play in hindering or facilitating the decolonisation of psychology within the university and the steps that these stakeholders can take to decolonise the curriculum.

The third scene of the video was formatted as the opening scene had been with voice-over narration. The scene focused on the key issues surrounding decolonisation. The images that would loop throughout the narrative would be the HPCSA building and logo, scenes on campus, front pages and covers of assessment material and community settings. The fourth scene of the video would be an interview with another co-researcher, also filmed indoors with a white background. The closing scene of the video would be a voice-over narration that would discuss the future of the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum. The closing scene would include a looping display of images and videos. The images included were scenes on campus, images depicting Ubuntu, the university logo, and the national flag.

For the interview, the co-researchers elected to have their identities concealed because there were concerns regarding the possible consequences of their participation. However, after the withdrawal of one of the co-researchers, the video format changed. Narration introduced the study and was followed by the interview with the remaining co-researcher; thereafter, narration concluded the video.

4.8.3.4 Completing the storyboard template

After discussions had taken place, the storyboard template was completed. The principal researcher and the two co-researchers decided on the number of guiding questions for the interview. The guiding questions covered the definition of decolonisation, the role the psychology department, the HPCSA and the local community play in hindering or facilitating the decolonisation of psychology within the university and the steps these stakeholders can take to decolonise the curriculum. The specific questions that would be asked in the video were the following:

- What is your understanding of decolonisation and why is it important within psychology?

- What role does the psychology department (academic staff, students, and the researcher committee) play in facilitating the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum at the university?
- What role can the HPCSA play in facilitating the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum in South Africa?
- What role can the local communities play in facilitating the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum in South Africa?
- What steps can be taken to facilitate decolonisation?

4.8.3.5 Development of the voice-over script

The script that would be used in the narration of the video was developed collaboratively between the principal researcher and Co-researcher 1. Co-researcher 1 also volunteered to do the voice-over for the video. The voice-over was recorded after the interviews had taken place.

4.8.3.6 Feedback and review

After the conclusion of the storyboarding process, the script, the questionnaire, and the storyboards were sent by email to the co-researchers for further comment and corrections. No changes were proffered by the co-researchers.

4.8.4 Development and analysis of the video

The video development process is described in section 4.7. The video analysis focused mainly on solidifying themes that emerged in the previous stages of the data collection process and exploring any additional information that emanated from the video and had not emerged in the earlier stages. In the case of this study, only one co-researcher participated in the video. Therefore, the only information from the preceding stages that was solidified was the information that emerged from this particular co-researcher. Furthermore, this co-researcher

also contributed additional information that served to clarify some of the themes. The specific information is highlighted in the next chapter.

In terms of the video development, the processes involved were outlined, and the video was developed according to the steps outlined earlier. The video was packaged according to the guidelines contained in the storyboard. However, it is important to note that there were amendments made after the withdrawal of two of the co-researchers.

After the raw footage was collected and collectively edited, the video was finalised. The principal researcher and the co-researcher viewed the video separately. The co-researcher indicated that they were happy with the video. For the analysis, the video was viewed repeatedly, and themes similar to those that emerged in previous stages of the study were isolated. The purpose of highlighting these themes was to ensure that these themes were further crystallised in the video and, through that process, to ensure that the voices of the co-researchers were clarified, and the themes were carried through the different stages of data collection; thus, contributing to the trustworthiness of the study. Much of the insights that Co-researcher 1 contributed to the preceding stages were also reflected in the video.

The time (minutes and seconds) of the information relating to when a specific theme emerged was identified. Quotes on the themes have also been provided. Ordinarily, the actions that take place within the video are outlined to clarify the theme further. In this case, since the video was made up of an interview with Co-researcher 1, the actions within the video itself remained the same (Sitter, 2012, 2017).

4.9 Trustworthiness of the study

This section explores the steps that were employed to contribute to the rigour and trustworthiness of the study. The first set of steps that will be explored will focus on the trustworthiness of the overall PAR process. The second set of steps will focus more on the trustworthiness and the rigour of the data collection method. It is important to note that there are overlaps between the steps for PAR and PVA that could be attributed to the similarity of

the philosophical underpinnings and objectives of PAR and PVA. The first set of steps, which contribute to the trustworthiness of the overall PAR process, include credibility, transferability, community engagement, critical reflection, and the rigorousness of the data collection process (Abayneh et al., 2020; Lennie, 2006; McTaggart, 1998).

The credibility of a study is one of the indicators of its rigour and trustworthiness. The following aspects contributed to the credibility of the study. First, prolonged engagement occurred between the principal researcher and the co-researchers. Prolonged engagements are determined in terms of the length of time for the data collection and that the data collection took place over different stages. The stages involved in this study began with the Decolonial Encounters Workshop to the arts-based explorations, storyboarding and collective editing. In total, this process took place over five months.

Another aspect that contributes to the rigour and trustworthiness of the PAR process relates to the matter of transferability. Abayneh et al. (2020) indicate that transferability can be enhanced through rich and detailed descriptions of context, data, and activities. The higher education landscape and that of psychology were described and explored in detail. The focus began from the historical context, including restructuring higher education after 1994. Furthermore, the colonial history of psychology and the influence that it has on the discipline today were explored. In addition, Abayneh et al. (2020) also mention the use of proper documentation to make it easy for others to analyse the data. To this end, a detailed description of the data collection and analysis processes was compiled.

Yet another contributing factor to the rigour and trustworthiness of participatory research is the extent of community engagement and participation. Lennie (2006) suggests that to increase rigour, a broad range of diverse community members must participate. In this study, the research team, the principal researcher, and the co-researchers were not diverse because the team comprised African postgraduate psychology students at the university in question. With the assistance of the academic staff, every effort was made to send invitations

to as many students as possible. The processes involved in the recruitment process are outlined earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, possible reasons for the relative homogeneity of the group were speculated upon.

Linked to the idea of diverse participation, Lennie (2006) suggests that the communication within the team must be of good quality. She suggests that multiple modes of communication should be used, and communication should be such that it creates conditions for trust and open communication. In the case of this study, the COVID-19 restrictions made face-to-face communication problematic, and the decision was made, in consultation with the study supervisor, to proceed using virtual technology.

In addition to virtual communication among team members, communication using email between the sessions was used; this contributed to facilitating communication within the project. In addition to the arts-based representations, storyboard, and collaborative editing emblematic of PVA, a workshop was also held to discuss decolonisation, creating space for co-researchers to speak openly about higher education, psychology, and life at the university.

Lennie (2006) further advocates the use of meta-evaluation and critical reflection to facilitate the rigour and trustworthiness of the PAR process. Meta-evaluation and critical reflection involve reflecting on research methods, processes, and outcomes. In the current study, the principal researcher conducted critical reflection and reflection on positionality throughout the study and at each stage of the PVA process. The reflection is articulated in the data collection and analysis part of the process.

The reflection also focused on the positionality of the principal researcher, the implications of the process and the relationship between the principal researcher and the co-researchers. The reflections are articulated according to the stages wherein they occurred. Lennie (2006) suggests that this type of reflection contributes to greater honesty and accountability.

Lennie (2006) also identifies that the trustworthiness of participatory studies depends on the rigour with which the data analysis process unfolds. One way to create conditions that support the rigorousness of the data analysis process is to use relevant theoretical models to frame the analysis. The model used for data analysis within the PVA was critical framing. The steps outlined in the data analysis process form part of this critical framing process. Through this process, the co-researchers defined decolonisation, explored the colonial history of psychology, explored the stumbling blocks to decolonisation and forwarded suggestions for decolonising psychology and research in psychology.

Another way that supports the rigorousness of the data analysis process is the use of data analysis software to ensure that a large amount of qualitative data are analysed efficiently. The data in this study was analysed through the ATLAS.ti software which enables the analysis of both textual and video data.

Developing rigorous criteria for selecting co-researchers is another contributor to the rigour of the process. In this study, the criteria for recruitment and inclusion were articulated upfront. The identified criteria were that students were postgraduate psychology students at the university in question. The focus of recruitment was on postgraduate coursework programmes within the Department of Psychology.

Another contributor to rigorous data analysis was the practice of stating the number of participants that give particular answers to certain questions. In the current study, there were only two co-researchers and, in the end, only one. Therefore, it was not possible to state the number of participants that gave particular answers, as suggested by Lennie (2006). However, the co-researchers were assigned specific identifying codes that made it possible to indicate which co-researcher made which comment. In line with the requirements of PVA, the generative themes were agreed on by both the co-researchers.

The second set of steps is related more specifically to the trustworthiness of the PVA process. The trustworthiness of a PVA study will be explored according to the criteria

suggested by Sitter (2015b), including triangulation, face validity, catalytic validity, and democratic validity. Additionally, participatory, and contextual validities could be employed to indicate the trustworthiness of the study (Sitter et al., 2020). Sitter et al. (2020) refer to the paucity of literature on the criteria for the validity of PVAs.

It is also essential to know that the literature on participatory visual methodologies tends to use the term 'validity' to discuss the rigorousness of the process. This term appears commonplace even though these visual approaches are fundamentally qualitative (Sitter, 2015b; Sitter et al., 2020). The term validity appears analogous to quantitative research. In the case of the study, it seemed prudent to use the terminology and the accompanying guidelines that are advanced in the literature on PVA.

The first criterion advanced by Sitter (2015b) relates to triangulation. One of the indicators of triangulation involves the use of multiple sources of data. In this study, multiple sources of data were employed. The data sources included artistic representations, storyboard, video footage and the collaborative edited final video. Sitter suggests that the extent to which the same themes emerge throughout the different activities indicates the trustworthiness of the data. Thus, the discussions in the Decolonial Encounters Workshop were also included as a data source.

The findings suggest that the themes that emerged were consistent across the artistic representations, storyboard, video footage and the collaborative edited final video. However, since three co-researchers had withdrawn from the study and only Co-researcher 1 took part in the on-camera interview, their voices would not be reflected on the video, and therefore, the themes contributed by these co-researchers may not have carried through to the video.

In addition to the above-mentioned data source, the co-researchers also reflected on their subjective experiences with the psychology and research curriculum. For instance, Co-researcher 2 reflected on feeling, at the beginning of their studentship, that their views were

not needed in the classroom and, therefore, they did not feel that they needed to attend class and they could just self-study.

Co-researcher 3 also mentioned that they had had some experience tutoring computer science in underprivileged contexts. Through that experience, they saw that some students had limited access to technology, and the academic staff was not always understanding of that situation. These examples are linked to the idea that the academic context is not always welcoming and accessible. These personal experiences contributed to the richness of the data and provided support for the contributions that the co-researchers made (Evans & Foster, 2009; Hawkins, 2015; Schwab-Cartas & Mitchell, 2014).

Second, Sitter suggests that the credibility and trustworthiness of PVA can also be established through face validity. She indicates that researchers can establish face validity by doing 'member checks' with co-researchers and ensuring that the themes that emerge during the artful representations phase are represented in the storyboard, film material and final edit. The data collection process of this study was collaborative – between the principal researcher and the co-researchers.

Collaboration occurred at all stages as the co-researchers were actively involved in all the stages. Thus, the generation of the themes and capturing and editing of the video material occurred in collaboration with the co-researchers. The themes generated through the discussion between the principal researcher and the co-researchers were written up and shared with the co-researchers. The document was sent to the co-researchers' emails. The feedback from the co-researchers indicated that they felt that the way the document was written was largely accurate. However, they did have some corrections, mainly to the quotations used in the document. These were subsequently corrected.

The final video was also shared with the Co-researcher 1, and they were satisfied with the final video, which contributed to the credibility and trustworthiness of the project.

Furthermore, member checking also created space for co-researchers to be more active in the data analysis process, which is critical in participatory methods (López-Zerón et al., 2021).

Third, Sitter (2015b) suggests that credibility and trustworthiness can also be achieved through catalytic validity. She states that catalytic validity involves how people evolve by being involved in research. The co-researchers were continuously engaged in critical reflection and action, which took place in a group context. The Decolonial Encounters Workshop and the artistic representations created space for the co-researchers to reflect on decolonisation critically. Through this process, the co-researchers engaged in critical reflection on coloniality within psychology and the possibility of a decolonised psychology and research curriculum. Critical reflection and actions contribute to learning and creating empowerment (Alemán & Gaytán, 2017; Costandius et al., 2018).

Fourth, credibility and trustworthiness can also be achieved through democratic validity. Democratic validity refers to the extent of the collaboration between the researcher and the co-researchers. The collaborative approach disrupts the power imbalances present in traditional research approaches. Therefore, the process must be as collaborative as possible. Sitter (2017) suggests that, depending on the research, various degrees of collaboration play out during various phases of the research. The key features that drive the extent of collaboration are the positionality of the researcher, decision-making powers, and the length of the engagements.

In terms of the positionality of the researcher, it was important that the principal researcher be critically aware of their positionality and how that could influence their relationship with the co-researchers. Positionality can be understood as the role that race, gender, class and other markers of identity play in human interaction, including research. Therefore, in this case, the focus is on how these markers of identity influence the research and knowledge of the production process.

Researchers reflect on their positionality to explore the possible influence of their subjectivity, as understood through identity markers, on the process (Lin et al., 2019; Yang, 2012). Reflection of this nature is vital because privilege regarding race and gender may be woven into the literature and the PVA process and might not be immediately obvious (Walsh, 2016). Thus, reflection on positionality ensures that the researcher is aware of the possible impact of these issues and takes steps to ensure that decision-making power is shared. The positionality of the principal researcher as a male African PhD student and the possible role that this could play in the research process were explored in earlier sections of Chapter 4. Reflection on positionality also revealed how some co-researchers treated the principal researcher – also explored earlier in this chapter (Lin et al., 2019).

The current study unfolded in various stages, and positionality was explored during the various stages of the research. In terms of decision-making during the project, joint decision-making occurred at the various steps of the process. For instance, decisions about the generative themes, the storyboard and the actual film were made in collaboration with the co-researchers. In terms of prolonged engagements, the data collection took place over three months. During the three months, regular meetings were held, and email communication was employed between the principal researcher and the co-researchers.

Fifth, participatory validity relates to the quality of the interaction between the co-researchers. To meet the threshold for participatory validity, the people whose lives are the subject of scientific enquiry should be actively involved in the research process. The research explored the contribution of students in terms of the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum. As such, postgraduate students formed part of the study. To ensure that the engagements were of good quality, the students underwent a Decolonial Encounters Workshop with an accomplished decolonial scholar. In addition, the principal researcher and the co-researchers collaborated to generate themes from the arts-based explorations, and, after the themes were written up, they were sent back to the co-researchers for verification. Furthermore, the storyboard for the video was also developed collaboratively.

Sixth, contextual validity requires that the research be openly connected to the local context. The study was in the South African higher education context focusing on psychology at a specific South African university. More specifically, the context is also related to the psychology and research curriculum. Therefore, the findings of this study relate to the experiences of postgraduate psychology students at this university (Sitter et al., 2020).

4.10 Protection of human subjects

Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Humanities Research and Ethics Committee on 8 April 2020, protocol number HUM039/0919. A letter providing permission for the post-graduate students to be co-researchers in the study is in Appendix 6. Additional ethical clearance was obtained on 2 December 2021 for the co-researchers to be interviewed on camera. Since the co-researchers resolved to do on-camera interviews, the decision was taken to ensure that their faces were censored from view. After the video compilation, the video was sent to Co-researcher 1 through Google Drive for approval and Co-researcher 1 indicated that they were happy with the video.

For the overall study, several mechanisms were employed throughout the process to protect the co-researchers who were part of this research. The employed measures followed the guidelines of Löffman et al. (2004). Löffman et al. (2004) state that the ethical considerations that typically mark PAR are informed consent, confidentiality, safety from harm, the role of the researcher, the location of the power and ownership of the research.

First, consent was managed by providing co-researchers with information regarding the nature and purpose of the study and the management of data. Furthermore, the co-researchers were appraised of their right to withdraw and the voluntariness of their participation. After that, the co-researchers were given time to reflect and decide and those who consented completed the relevant forms. The consent form for participation is in Appendix 2, the information sheet for the video is in Appendix 3, and the consent form for the video is in Appendix 4.

Second, the issue of confidentiality and anonymity was also identified as an ethical consideration. The anonymity of the co-researchers was protected by reporting the findings for the sample in its entirety. Furthermore, the artistic representations, the storyboard and video materials were anonymised and stored on a password-protected computer. The footage was removed from the recording devices to ensure that the raw footage was safe and confidential.

In the third place, the co-researchers were protected from harm by maintaining an equal collaborative relationship, keeping them informed and proceeding with the process on their terms. The fourth consideration involved the creation of a safe space and ensuring that equality among the co-researchers was established. The safe space was created by collaborating with the co-researchers and involving them in decision-making. This approach helped to create a good relationship and ensure that the process gained credibility.

The fifth aspect has to do with the power in PAR research and the inherent power imbalances between researchers and co-researchers. The researcher managed the imbalances by reflecting on the causes and anticipating the emerging challenges. The researcher involved the co-researchers from the outset to empower them and help mitigate the power imbalances. The sixth aspect relates to the ownership of the research. Tensions between the researcher and co-researchers regarding ownership of the research outcomes may occur. Participants are encouraged to take ownership by emphasising participation, acting towards a common goal, and taking responsibility for the process (Löfman et al., 2004). Any decision regarding the publishing and distribution of the video material was made collaboratively with the co-researchers.

The seventh consideration involves the well-being of students as co-researchers. It was anticipated that this process could elicit painful and traumatic experiences. To ensure that the well-being of the co-researchers was respected, a clinical psychologist was available to

ensure that there would be a professional service to which co-researchers could be referred should the need arise. A letter from the clinical psychologist is in Appendix 5.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter covered the methodological aspects of the study. The study employed a PAR approach and made use of PVA to collect data. PAR and PVA were deemed appropriate because they share some commonalities with the decolonial ideal. One of the critical commonalities is the focus on the critical reflection of the power relation between entities, including the researchers and participants, in the research process.

The purpose of these critical reflections is to name and understand how power operates to disrupt the prevailing power relations in society and the university. These links are related to one of its goals: the disruption of the power imbalances that are present in the research relationship and the broader world. The roots of these power imbalances are founded in colonial history and continue to influence universities through neoliberal ideologies.

The other critical commonality is the tendency of these approaches to place primacy on the collaborative and participative work aimed at social transformation. The steps taken to collect the data and develop the video were outlined to explain how the process unfolded. Some of the issues that created a challenge for the study included the relatively low interest in participating in the study and the withdrawal of some co-researchers in the course of the data collection. The possible reasons and implications thereof were explored. In addition, the process for creating the video suggested by the co-researchers required that additional ethical clearance be sought.

The next chapter will focus on the findings that emerged from the data collection process. The generative themes from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop, the artistic representations, and the verbatim quotations from the co-researchers will be presented. The pictures of the artistic representations are also included in the presentation of findings.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the data collection procedures. The processes that unfolded led to the emergence of generative themes. The generative themes that emerged from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop and the artistic representations were further augmented in the video development process. This chapter will explore the themes that emerged from the data collection and analysis process.

The exploration begins, in the first place, with the themes that emerged from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. Second, the themes generated from the artistic representations are explored. Third, the themes that emerged from the final video are also explored. However, before exploring the themes that emerged from the study, it is crucial to describe the co-researchers in this study to help contextualise the themes.

5.2 Co-Researchers/Participants

At the start of the project, four students indicated their interest in the study. All the students who agreed to participate were Black female students. Two of the students were in the honours class, and the other two were in a master's class (clinical and counselling psychology, respectively). As mentioned previously, the university has a master's research psychology programme. However, none of the students in the research psychology programme volunteered for the study and the findings of this study focus on the broad psychology curriculum and not exclusively on research in the psychology curriculum. That being said, the research aspect of psychology did emerge but did not occupy the central position.

Before the commencement of the project, one of the students from the honours group withdrew from the study, citing personal issues. The next student (in the clinical psychology programme) withdrew after the Decolonial Encounters Workshop due to their course workload. The last student to withdraw was the remaining master's student, and they were

concerned about being recorded on camera. In the end, only one honours student was left to participate. Thus, the artistic representations and the storyboarding phase were completed with the master's student (Co-researcher 2) and the honours student (Co-researcher 1) as co-researchers. Although the clinical psychology master's student (Co-researcher 3) withdrew early in the process, they participated in the Decolonial Encounters Workshop and contributed to the findings. The principal researcher and Co-researcher 1 compiled the final video. A table illustrating the number of co-researchers that participated in each of the stages is outlined hereunder:

Table 3: *An illustration of the number of co-researchers in each stage of the study*

Stage of the Data Collection	Number of Co-researchers
After Invitations	4
Initial Briefing	3
Decolonial Encounters Workshop	3
Video Editing Workshop	2
Artistic Representation	2
Video Editing	1

All the co-researchers that participated in the process were Black African female postgraduate psychology students at a historically white university in post-apartheid South Africa. These factors create a unique context that influences the physical and spatial environments, community life and relationship between the living and non-living. Consequently, it affects the identity, spirituality, and sense of the self of those finding themselves in the context mentioned above. In this regard, the principal researcher and the

co-researchers share a commonality which contributes to a sense of connectedness. The contextual influences on the identity, spirituality, and sense of the self of the principal researcher are explored in Chapter 1, and this section will focus on the co-researchers.

The first aspect relates to culture and indirectly connects with identity and spirituality. As mentioned, the co-researchers that volunteered to participate in the study were female and Black African postgraduate psychology students. The curriculum to which they have been exposed is founded on Western epistemology. The values were consequently not in step with their identity and culture. Consequently, the co-researchers reported a sense of non-belonging and non-acknowledgement, and that the system was trying to purge them because of being different. Being Black and female was the epitome of this difference that the systems attempted to erase.

The context from which they emerge is embedded within the African culture, and the community life in those contexts centres around African knowledge and belief systems. The implication is that after exposure to Western epistemology at university, a distance is created between themselves and their communities when they express the unfamiliar knowledge that they have acquired. The co-researchers then have to renegotiate their relationships within their families and communities to reintegrate themselves within their communities. In one way, this idea represents conflicting epistemological approaches and, in another, is indicative of the possible lack of awareness of psychology within many African communities.

To take it to a deeper level, African cultures, and the communities where the principal researcher and the co-researchers emerge hold dear, to differing degrees, a communitarian way of life and an embracing of the role of the non-living in daily life. The indication is that the idea of Ubuntu, explored in Chapter 2, plays a critical role in the lives of the co-researchers, some much so that they suggest that it should be one of the cornerstones of an eventual decolonised curriculum.

Secondly, the higher education context where the co-researchers found themselves is a Historically White University, which was male dominated in its earlier years. However, this history has not been wholly erased since vestiges of racialised patriarchy abound within the South African higher education landscape (Dlamini & Adams, 2014; Raymond & Canham, 2022). Furthermore, psychology itself has tended towards patriarchy and paternalism. The patriarchy can contribute to feelings of alienation for those who do not subscribe to it or are, by their very existence, an affront to the patriarchal leanings of psychology. Part of the decolonial project within psychology involves challenging and disrupting patriarchal leanings that emerge from coloniality and Western epistemology (Ali-Faisal, 2020). The physical environment can involve the environment in the university and outside the institutional space where the co-researchers originate. The two environments are typically marked with differing access to information, resources, and infrastructure, which can affect the ability of the students to thrive within a higher education environment. An example that the co-researchers made is that in some cases, students would receive assignments where the academic staff would appear oblivious to some students' difficulties in accessing the equipment to complete assignments. There was a sense that universities appeared oblivious to these realities, and this was seen as an attempt to purge those that are different. These aspects are explored further in the following sections that deal with findings at the different stages of the data collection process.

5.3 Findings according to the different stages

Generative themes emerged from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop and the artistic representations. Broadly speaking, the themes that had emerged in these phases also emerged in the storyboard and the final video. The generative themes are explored in respect of the phase within which they emerged.

5.3.1 Decolonial Encounters Workshop: Thematic analysis findings

The original intent of the workshop was not necessarily for the generation of data but rather to ensure that all the co-researchers were au fait with decolonisation and had a common understanding of the fundamental idea of decolonisation. However, the facilitator of the Decolonial Encounters Workshop adopted a more interactive and dialogical approach to the workshop, which is characteristic of the decolonial approach to teaching and learning.

Through this dialogue between the facilitator, the co-researchers and the principal researcher, some interesting insights emerged, were thematised, and are presented herewith. The thematisation of these insights was aimed at gaining familiarity with the students' views and exploring the extent to which these insights emerged in the subsequent phases of the study. Methodologically, exploring the generative themes from these discussions and exploring the extent to which these themes emerge again in the artistic representations and the video contribute to the trustworthiness of the process.

Furthermore, because there were no master's research psychology students in the sample, the voices of the co-researchers focused more on psychology as a whole. However, probing to explore implications for research was undertaken at various stages. The preliminary themes concerning decolonisation that emerged had to do with the accessibility of psychology and higher education, lack of the relevance of psychology, lack of diversity in psychology, strategies for decolonial psychology and the apparent pessimism regarding the decolonial future of the psychology and research curriculum.

5.3.1.1 Accessibility of higher education and psychology

From the discussions, it emerged that issues of accessibility dogged the psychology profession and higher education in general. The issues of accessibility included the perceived inaccessibility of the psychology curriculum driven by the use of the English language of instruction and limited access to technology. Other dimensions of inaccessibility have to do with the use of Afrikaans and English in psychological assessments and the use of institutional

power to regulate access to the curriculum. The aspects that emerged relating to accessibility are outlined in this section.

First, relating to the perceived inaccessibility of the curriculum, the arguments were that the psychology curriculum was not accessible to students from diverse backgrounds. Several factors were identified as barriers to the accessibility of the psychology and research curriculum. One such barrier involved the use of English as the medium of instruction. The current curriculum is delivered in English, which means that students learn to practice psychology and conduct research in English and no other language. The implication is that psychology becomes inaccessible in a broader context, and access can also be a challenge for students who are not proficient in English.

The discussion also indicates that the language of instruction is intimately related to issues of power that play out in the profession and the institution and with external power brokers. Institutions make decisions to privilege English at the expense of other languages, especially African languages. This exercise of power within the framework of language plays out through the use of English as the medium of instruction for higher education and indeed psychology. By privileging English over other languages, institutions are deciding whose language and whose issues matter. Thus, it was felt that greater linguistic diversity would make psychology more accessible to a broader range of South African society. As a possible solution, it was suggested that additional language modules could be included in the curriculum to enable students to function in linguistically complex spaces. For instance, Co-researcher 2 stated:

And some of the things that I thought of were, for example, language in the curriculum of psychology plays a very important factor if it is offered in English. I think that there is that inclusivity in us being able to give examples in our cultural language and also being able to give an interpretation of what I was saying in English. And also, it made me think of how we want psychology to be accessible

to the larger context, but you find that when we apply for these internship positions, they ask you about your language ability because you will be working in communities where there is a variation. So, I think of decolonisation to me in terms of content, I mean; why can't we have language as part of the modules that are in the content so that we make it more accessible because individuals will then be able to learn about the different languages instead of just one or two. Because some of us are more privileged because you know three or more languages so when you apply it is not really a factor. But for some people that are just bilingual, it might become something that affects psychology service.

The second point that emerged relating to language as a barrier to the accessibility of psychology relates to the current use of psychological assessments. Various psychological assessments currently in use have been developed in English, Afrikaans, or just in English. One of the implications is that many Indigenous African language speakers who take these assessments, sometimes for employment selection, may be disadvantaged. Many of these assessments are used for personnel selections which means that there is a possibility that people from these communities could be denied opportunities for economic advancement because of the language of assessment.

Furthermore, a concern that some of the assessments being used were old emerged, raising questions about the relevance of the assessments. Therefore, South African psychology needs to focus on developing psychological assessments that are fit for the South African context. Furthermore, universities should strongly consider teaching students the skills needed to develop psychological assessments. Co-researcher 2 illustrated this point by suggesting the following:

And I also thought about assessments; yes, they have been trying to make assessments more standardised to fit the South African context. But a lot of them that are still being administered today, they do not fit the South African context.

Or you find that some of them, we were doing an assessment this week in class. It was a career assessment done in English and Afrikaans and it is a very old assessment. It makes me think how it was created so long ago and till today it has not been adapted. And it made me think of individuals that came from other cultural backgrounds might be limited because of those assessments.

Third, it also emerged that access to technology could influence the overall accessibility of the curriculum and the broader university space. The indication is that some students may not have sufficient access to technology to participate fully in university life and succeed in their studies. The suggestion is that this is one of the considerations academic staff should consider when teaching. Furthermore, a suggestion was made that the academic staff must be aware of the circumstances of students and the possible factors that could undermine their performance. Co-researcher 2 stated the following:

*For me, decolonising of the curriculum, coming from the background of *****, because I did ***** before I went into psychology, very much speaks to how accessible the curriculum is on a wider level, outside of being taught in specific languages. I think also just an understanding of the different backgrounds that enter faculties. Whether or not the individuals that you are teaching have access to technology, to what extent and at what times. And also, just an awareness of the way in which the content is currently structured.*

Fourth, it emerged that current institutional structures and culture appear to be implicated as stumbling blocks in the decolonisation of psychology. It appears that institutional structures and culture contribute to the othering of Black students and Black experiences within the university and the postgraduate psychology courses. The othering of these students and their experiences was implicated in the perceived poor performance in and non-completion of studies by Black psychology students. Poor performance and non-completion contributed to the perception that the system purges Black students. Co-researcher 3 stated,

Let me share with you some statistics; at a master's level, they take 6 (students) per discipline. I think with research is a little bit more than that. But it's around there. And with counselling and clinical, every year, one student fails and one student drops out and the stats have shown that students that fail, students that drop out are others. They are students that have been othered by the profession.

Co-researcher 3 also added,

The system purges these perspectives in order to keep itself running. It is self-propagating in the sense that the current systems and who run the system, the gatekeepers whom the system serves and what the knowledge is supposed to do versus what the knowledge actually does are completely different parameters. Realising what I think that we are doing, I think that we are comparing apples and oranges and hoping that because they are fruits, then they come from the same tree.

This section explored some of the issues discussed by the co-researchers about the accessibility of psychology and the psychology curriculum. The issues that contribute to the perceived inaccessibility of the profession and the curriculum include the language of instruction and psychological assessment, technology, and the othering of Black experiences within the classroom. Therefore, to improve access, universities should investigate introducing more multilingual instruction, focusing on contextually relevant psychological assessments, and exploring issues surrounding the experiences of Black and underprivileged students who attend university.

5.3.1.2 Apparent lack of diversity within psychology

The co-researchers raised issues about the lack of diversity within psychology. The perceived lack of diversity contributes to the inaccessibility of the psychology and research curriculum. The co-researchers believed that there were certain stumbling blocks to increased diversity within the field. The most prominent stumbling block that emerged in the discussions

was the perceived lack of recognition of African perspectives at a regulatory level and related to various governing bodies that regulate psychology locally and internationally.

Locally, a potential sticking point was the HPCSA and the apparent insistence of the Council on the application of approved therapeutic modalities within psychology. This insistence by the Council means that the inclusion of paradigms that exist outside regulatory frameworks was problematic. Consequently, concerns about whether psychology could ever bring in African perspectives and create space for local voices were raised because, in board exams, evaluations are still not based on African perspectives and the experiences of local communities.

The same concern about the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) was raised. The perceived lack of recognition of these other approaches by the regulators means that these other perspectives do not occupy prominence within the curriculum due to the accreditation standards. To illustrate these points, Co-researcher 2 indicated the following:

Lastly, it is therapeutic modalities we were reading and we read that there were some other African modalities such as Ubuntu therapies that are being formed in Africa. But it made me think as well that there are just some of these modalities that have been approved by the HPCSA. So, it is not something that is in the curriculum.

On this point, Co-researcher 3 stated,

So, for instance, if you were to look at an example like schizophrenia and I know that psychology is doing a lot to include traditional healers into the multi-disciplinary teams, but it feels to me like putting the cart before the horse. It feels a little bit to me like saying like we will accommodate you, but there is nothing in the DSM that refers to you; there is nothing in the literature that you can cite and present as an academic that we will hold as the philosophical viewpoint on the same standard as a Rogers or a Bateson and even when we are speaking about

*systemic therapies that should be about families and communities, systems and ecosystems and community basis we still refer to Bateson, we still refer to Foster and *said it nicely earlier that yes these things are mentioned, we are encouraged to read these articles, but they are not taught. This is not what we are assessed and asked to produce on a professional academic level unless that becomes a focus of your study on a PhD level. So, for me, I think that if we were going to try to regain psychology and take the steering wheel of psychological processes and if academia were to come malleable enough for the African perspective to be taken to just seriously but to be held at a certain standard because I think that that is the other problem. When African psychology is taught, it is taught in a lecture that is in a one and half hour process. That is not the same standard at which you are supposed to know Freud, that is not the same standard at which you are supposed to know how to apply even neoliberalism, you know, Worldviews, as well, are not taught outside the Eurocentric space. Narrative is what we are currently doing now and even seeing narrative as a worldview, there is no space outside of a footnote for the African perspective or from the African authorship, if that makes sense. So, I think for me, if psychology were to become malleable enough, the first thing that would need to happen is that for there to be evidence-based criteria that are written down as evidence-based criteria. The values that I hold dear, the values that I think are part of this political sphere that we actually find ourselves in, are ones that question when you say things like evidence-based you know, who decided what was evidence-based? And in deciding what is evidence-based literature and deciding how we see evidence-based literature, how do we as African psychologists, or as Africans that are retaking, re-owning the psychological spaces. Are we able to meet those standards of evidence, or do we need to redefine evidence-based, to begin with, and is that redefinition going to be accepted?*

Co-researcher 2 added,

It goes back to asking, what is the role of capitalism and socialism in knowledge creation. Personally, I don't believe that psychology as a greater discipline; psychology as a whole will never really bring African perspectives, will never really bring in the local communities that we see understandings and complexities into that bracket, into that standard. So, it falls on us to create a different standard which will always be sub-standard because the board exams that we write are still not based on the communities that we live in.

The exclusionary tendencies that appear prevalent in psychology are based on certain assumptions about the other. One such perception is that the knowledge and experiences the other brings are less legitimate. Practically, this means that the other is being included but the knowledge and experience of the other are neither codified nor taught. Therefore, the other is included, but that inclusion is performative and amounts to the profession paying lip service.

Part of the issue is that the influence that the regulatory bodies have on the curriculum is vast and unrelenting. The regulatory bodies clamour for what they term evidence-based practice. However, Co-researcher 3 questioned who decides what evidence is and whether that evidence is sufficiently compelling. In this case, the clamouring for evidence becomes a tool for excluding the other. Co-researcher 2 reflected on their experiences as an undergraduate psychology student and felt that their perspectives and experience did not matter in the classroom and that they were thus unable to share their identity within the classroom context. Co-researcher 2 felt that they only began to feel that their perspective was necessary when they started their journey within postgraduate psychology. Co-researcher 2 stated,

I am also thinking of psychology how we started at undergraduate here. I would do a lot of self-study because I felt as though our perspectives were not needed in the class because we were studying a textbook and we have to respond

according to the textbook. So for me, it was letting me go to the library and studying and study the textbook because that is what I am going to be tested on. It is only now when you get to third year where your views are wanted and taken into consideration and when you get too honest it is an honest smaller class and most of this way, we are able to celebrate and show our identity even more.

To further highlight the need for diversity in psychology, one of the co-researchers related their experience tutoring in a school in an underprivileged community to suggest that the decolonisation process should be considered essential for primary education. One of the purposes of starting with basic education is to ensure that the reach of psychology is broadened to include underprivileged communities outside universities. Other purposes are to create greater awareness of psychology and mental health and to ensure that the voices of these communities are made visible and begin to be acknowledged as valid sources of knowledge. To illustrate these points, Co-researcher 1 indicated the following:

I can go back to that example if we try to say let us decolonise how teachers have been teaching or how the Education Department has been going on with their curriculum and bring in something new and something that's relevant to learners at this stage. As we are all trying to adjust to the new normal kind of thing, we also need to shift Department of Education also needs to shift from how they used to teach the kids how the curriculum was and so forth to what are applicable to them now.

The themes related to diversity in this context included the perceived lack of inclusion of African perspectives, the perceived stumbling blocks of the inclusion of African perspectives within the curriculum and the need for greater community involvement and awareness in psychology. The perceived stumbling block that emerged relates to the perceived lack of recognition of African perspectives at a regulatory level.

5.3.1.3 Relevance of the psychology and research curriculum

The findings suggest that making psychology and the psychology curriculum more relevant to the South African context was needed. In part, the relevance means that psychology needs to attend to and be concerned with matters of social justice. Not focusing on social justice means that the opportunities for psychology to contribute to social transformation are curtailed, and this contributes to the perceived irrelevance of psychology.

The perceived lack of relevance means that the potential for psychology to contribute to society can sometimes be overlooked. The findings suggest that current conversations about social justice and the transformation of society in South Africa and the rest of Africa are more focused on political and economic transformation. Consequently, little focus is on psychology, the decolonisation of psychology and research within the national consciousness and the ability of psychology to contribute. This suggests the need to localise psychology and create greater awareness of the potential role that it could play within communities and especially families. Conversely, it also suggested creating greater awareness of mental health and mental health issues within underprivileged communities. Co-researcher 1 illustrated this point by stating the following:

*I must say that I am with ***** on this one. I am a yes or no kind of person. If we look at Africa today, the biggest focus is on politics and the economy. If we were to say, if we were to shine the light on psychology, this is a thing too that needs your attention as well, that needs your resources as well, that needs your time as well, that is something else. Because if the majority of Africa is focused on politics and the economy and not taking psychology and African psychology seriously as they take other disciplines. That is a challenge. And if we were to move always from there and localise it, our local is not their local. So, if we were to localise psychology, in our South African way, we will then have to go back to families, right, wherein families. There are still families that do not know what psychology*

is; there are families that still do not believe the mental health is real. There is still a stigma around mental health. There is still stigma as to what psychology is. There is still a stigma when a child says that I am depressed. They say that you are doing it on purpose, and you just want attention and so forth. I think that the biggest question as to what might lead us to African psychology being a thing is first starting within ourselves to educate parents who still think that mental health is not real. So as to educate the rest of South Africa that mental health is important as physical health.

The localisation of psychology and the possible role that communities can play in localising the profession depends on the extent to which these communities are aware of mental health and psychology. It would be challenging to begin engaging communities and opening dialogic spaces when they may not be aware of psychology and various mental health issues.

For this reason, Co-researcher 1 suggested that it was essential to begin introducing psychology at the high school level. However, Co-researcher 2 suggested that there should be caution about introducing psychology in high school because the context would need to be considered. The context is of such a nature that learners in school have communities and parents who still have a limited understanding of psychology and mental health, and, in the case of the parents, it may be that they still subscribe to those traditional ways of life that have been delegitimised by Western academia. Therefore, learners can possibly be placed in spaces of tension between their newly acquired awareness and a context that does not necessarily support their new consciousness. Co-researcher 2 related their experiences as a high school learner and a psychology student struggling to reconcile these various aspects of their identity and reflected on the possible impact of that struggle on the lives of learners. Co-researcher 2 stated,

*I look at *****'s question and saying yes, we can have those psychologists, yes, we can have educational psychologist there but at the end of the day, those children are going back home and if we still have parents that do not have the understanding of mental health and they do not even acknowledge it, we are kind of not doing effective work. So, for me, the main people that I am looking at is who are the children are going back to. Because that is where you know your identity is formed from a very young age, and for me, I see it as a very ... it is leading to implications where you have someone now having a confused identity. I am learning about mental health, but it does not help when I'm going back to a context where it is not acknowledged. So, for me, it has been a privilege to, you know, where I have been able to educate my parents about it. It was not an easy thing but it is something that I have fought until today because that is how I managed to get to where I am. Because this is something that I thought you know, this is my identity and I want to formulate my own identity as they have but I think another important thing to consider is generational differences in that every time I speak to my parents. I like learning about how they grew up and all that there was no acknowledgement of mental health, especially within my parents' background. You are not allowed to be angry with my mum usually says you are not allowed to be angry as a parent you are not allowed to and with us, it is like it is impossible because I have these feelings and because I think going growing up in a multiracial school, I had White teachers. I was allowed to express my emotions whereas at home I'm not allowed to do so. It is really that conversation of adaptability and being able to accommodate individuals within the transformation and it is making me think of if we are going to include something like this is in the basic level. What happens if the individual has a confused identity? That's why we have individuals for instance that end up taking up their lives because they are at the stage where are this is who I am, this is who my parents want me to be, this is who university wants me to be or does not*

acknowledge me as a person and the pressure becomes too much to handle and at the end, they might end up taking their own lives.

These findings suggest the lack of a footprint for psychology and the social sciences at the high school level. The lack of presence in schools means limited community awareness of the social sciences and psychology. Furthermore, the minimum standards for application in psychology suggest that students are not expected to have a background or awareness of psychology before entering university.

Co-researcher 1 added,

Me, when I went into psychology, I did not know that there was a field called psychology. And when I went to my parents and say that I wanted to study psychology because I feel that it is who I am, they did not know what psychology was. If we look at the eight plus faculties at the university, we have a Faculty of Economics, which has an educational background of business studies and economics in high school and we have a Law faculty which has an educational background in history. And the faculty of engineering, which has the physical sciences and maths. But there is no educational background for the faculty of humanities. In my undergrad, the requirement for psychology was English and life science and those were the minimum requirements. You had to have those in order to get into psychology. But there are also students that I studied with who also did not have life sciences but still went into psychology. So, what I am trying to get at is that there is an educational background for all the other faculties except for the humanities.

The findings indicate that psychology is not necessarily considered relevant to the current needs of the South African context. A focus on social justice, economic development and the creation of a more responsive political order could make psychology more relevant.

5.3.1.4 Decolonised psychology and research curriculum

Regarding what a decolonised psychology and research in psychology programme will look like, the co-researchers put forward several exciting perspectives. The perspectives that the co-researchers suggested included the development of a more holistic and humanistic curriculum that takes the social dynamics of teaching and learning into account, meaningful inclusion of African content into the curriculum, retrieval and archiving of the African psychological literature and creating a footprint for psychology and the social sciences in high school.

In the first place, it emerged from the discussions that a decolonised curriculum should be humanistic and holistic from a content perspective and acknowledge the social dynamics of students and African communities. The consideration of the social dynamics of teaching and learning must necessarily include accounting for the personal circumstances of students and the role that those circumstances play in the classroom and the performance of learners. The personal circumstances relate to but are not limited to language, access to resources, students' experiences, race, and culture. This quote from Co-researcher 3 explores this:

The way that the content is currently structured, what purposes it used to serve and how that relates to the purpose that still needs to be served. Especially in a country like our own, that is so culturally diverse, and there are definitely political institutions and political powers at play when we look at how the content used to be structured and for who. So, I think for me, decolonisation is not even asking for equal standing of the content but a more humanistic approach to the content and overall holistic functionality of the curriculum. So, I think that decolonisation also speaks to, like, the social dynamics that come with teaching and learning content.

Second, another way to implement decolonisation involves the coalescence of psychological research and the literature developed in Africa on Africans and local

communities. Co-researcher 3 suggested that a systematic record of psychological research and literature that is based on the African perspective and localised experiences can be helpful in the decolonisation process. The use of meta-studies, systematic reviews and scoping reviews can be a valuable tool for collating existing research and literature to observe patterns and use these findings to develop relevant curricula. The sentiments expressed by Co-researcher 3 are expressed in the quote below

I think that there needs to be a coalescence of what is understood in our communities. Right now, for me, it is very piecemeal; it is very, well, in West Africa they did this study and in Southern Africa, there are these types of findings and in Africa, as whole percentages vary in certain places but it is kind of like this and there no, almost like one literature. And that is why I am quite passionate about meta-studies, systematics literature reviews and scoping reviews that bring together the literature that is available in order to say, here are the evidence-based practices which have been found in the communities to work, which are not necessarily Freudian, which are not necessarily Rogerian and this is why they work in these communities. I think that is the only way we coalesce these studies and from those different perspectives, we can start to build patterns that build curricula and, at the end of the day, can be accepted at a higher-order level.

Third, it was suggested that a conceivable way to contribute to decolonisation was to depart from the tendency of psychology to be universal and prescriptive across contexts. The countermeasure for this tendency for universalisation was to make the profession more adaptable and bring the psychological and the local together without erasing one or the other. New hybrid and localised identities and psychologies can emerge by bringing together these perspectives. The emergence of these hybrids and localised identities is based on the idea that each of the approaches is limited on its own and, thus, necessitates external influence. Co-researcher 2 stated, *“But in essence, it is limited, so for me, it is not leaving one culture in*

adopting another culture but having adaptability in a culture and not making it universal ... but let us make it context specific.”

The findings suggest that a decolonial future for the psychology curriculum involves a more holistic and humanistic curriculum that takes the unique histories, circumstances, and experiences of students to heart. Furthermore, a decolonial curriculum is a coalescence of perspectives to produce psychologies that are localised and contextual. Lastly, the discussion suggests that decolonised psychology must make an effort to engender greater awareness of mental health in underprivileged communities to broaden its scope of service.

5.3.1.5 A sense of pessimism about decolonisation

Even though a genuine desire for change existed, a measure of pessimism about decolonisation and the drivers thereof emerged from the co-researchers. The first driver of pessimism is the power that is being wielded by the various gatekeepers, such as the HPCSA, DSM and the American Psychological Association (APA). The concern was that these gatekeepers did not provide space for alternative perspectives within psychology to emerge within their respective spheres of influence.

The second driver of pessimism – linked to the first – was that the process of change that had been happening was slow. That progress, involving the inclusion of traditional healers and literature from an African perspective, had been made was acknowledged but the concern was the tardiness of the progress. The perception was that more needed to be done.

The third driver of pessimism was the perceived lack of implementation of the research findings and knowledge developed from an African perspective. The findings suggested that literature about African psychology existed; however, it was a struggle to implement these ideas practically. Co-researcher 3 pointed out that students were exposed to some reading material covering African psychology but that they struggled to see the practical applications of these ideas. Furthermore, research outputs related to the topic were not readily implemented to change psychology. Co-researcher 2 indicated the following:

*Schizophrenia is something that I speak a lot about when it comes to the DSM, in its being seen as a disorder in our culture; it could mean so many different things and not even be a disorder. And it makes me think as well of the inclusivity of traditional healers in that yes, we are reading about these articles, and we are saying yes, listen to them but the implementation of it is a different story and I honestly do not have a yes or no answer. In the beginning, I was more like optimistic I was like, yes, we can do this and it made me think of the slow progress that has already taken place because of speaking about counselling psychology. I think it started here around the 1970s in South Africa when it was in Stellenbosch University. They mentioned in the article that it was largely offered within the Afrikaans language and as the years went by, it was inclusive. There has been progress but it has been very slow and it has been very minimal. So, I have that fear of saying yes, it is possible. At the back of my mind, I am thinking how long it is going to last and as I am thinking about it, I am thinking about what ***** has already mentioned. There are these gatekeepers; there is the APA; there is the DSM you know who publishes it and how do we now enter in with those gatekeepers and get to have access into communicating? And also, I had written down as soon as I was speaking in the back of my mind I was thinking, we could actually write articles; we can conduct research in this which is what we doing now; we can try to educate people about this and the importance of it but then what is the use if we are not actually implementing it because conducting research and actually writing about things is not enough. We actually needed to be implemented, so my answer is yes, we can regain control but it is not very optimistic. Yes, I am looking at the progress that has taken place within my discipline; in particular, it has been very slow progress even if we were together, my order is what steps would we actually take in making the process movable*

faster in making it into safe and effective and to meet the needs of our local communities?

Co-researcher 3 spoke further about the sense of pessimism that they experienced; they stated,

The 'who' is the APA who writes this DSM which we are examined on, which our final exam which allows us to be psychologists is solely based on. So, whether or not we define evidence-based within our local context as a response to the need, it is irrelevant if you cannot pass the board exam, which is set by the standard by which the APA, which is the American Psychological Association, has predicated its findings on. Fair enough, the APA does studies on local communities but what they ascribe is local and what we ascribe is local and not the same thing. They are speaking about Native Americans, they are speaking about Mexicans and they are speaking about Asians and Asian Americans as well. So, when they say and they define and give these stats on what international studies have found, they are not speaking about a person from Alexandra ... So for me, it is like ... this double-blind communication within ourselves. We are on the one hand, we are internationally recognised at a certain standard in order to be accredited to do the work we do. But on the other side, which cannot be linked to the international professional we want to be, we are responding to the community.

The indication is that although the regulatory bodies appear to wield significant power, means are available to engage these significant stakeholders. Co-researcher 1 suggested that it may be worthwhile to consider instead engaging the grassroots, creating awareness of psychology and building critical mass before engaging the gatekeepers to disrupt their influence and change psychology. Co-researcher 1 stated,

Before we can go to the gatekeepers, before we can approach the HPCSA or the APA, you know, those gatekeepers, let us rather focus and commit ourselves and dedicate our energies so as to say South Africa, they something called psychology and this is what it does; there something called mental health and this is how it should be maintained. If we are to achieve that, then we would have enough strength to take on these gatekeepers. But as long as it is still like that, it is a matter of us asking ourselves if we are ready for change. Are we ready for psychology to be Africanised? Are we ready to take on? Are you ready to be given permission or access to Africanise psychology or if we are still lagging behind in trying to know what mental health is and trying to educate people? I am sure a lot of people do not even know there is something called mental health awareness month and if we are still not aware of such small basics, then what are we going to present it to the gatekeepers if we were to change the game? ... But we haven't worked on those minor basics are concepts and all terms then we need people to be aware of. I don't think we are strong enough to take on change, or I don't think we are ready to accept African psychology. Because if you can see most of the books that we study in psychology, most of them as we understand our Westernised and four or five pages are written off psychology and that's all there is to it, meaning there is a foundation of African psychology but who will do? We have to build it up. What do we have to build it up and with Africa focusing so much on politics and economy, who do we approach? Which door do we knock on as to say, hey, this is a thing and it needs your attention and it needs your resources and it needs you to deal with it as well? So, before we can go to the gatekeepers and do all of that, I think we need to localise it and we get as many people as possible to be aware of psychology to be aware of mental health versus physical health.

The fourth driver of pessimism was the perception that the system and psychology purge different perspectives or students who are different to prevent change. Thus, the system becomes self-propagating. Co-researcher 3 mentioned the following:

I think again this speaks to my pessimism; this speaks to why I don't believe that we are at a place wherein the next ten years we can meet these issues because, as you said, the system purges these perspectives to keep itself running. It is self-propagating in that sense where the current systems and who runs the systems, the gatekeepers, those who the system serves, what the knowledge is supposed to do versus what it actually does are completely different parameters.

Co-researcher 3 added,

*I think that what ***** has brought up is the other experience. We can narrow it down to the Black experience if we want in psychology. But it is the other and the Black experience is othered in psychology. And when you ask, for instance, how you deal with the oscillating student, it is not a thought experiment at all. It is something that is at a university level. That is something that university students inevitably find. So, when you say that if we bring it at basic education level, then that is where we are going to come across this problem. I am saying good, that is where we should come across it because we are now coming across it at a master's level.*

Therefore, it appears that pessimism emerges from the state of tension that Co-researcher 3 describes as 'double-blind communication', which arises when psychology, on the one hand, tries to adhere to international standards and best practices but, on the other hand, tries to meet the needs of local communities. The state of tension that prevails is one where the balance of forces is tipped to the power brokers outside the institution.

5.3.1.6 Principal researcher's reflection on the Decolonial Encounters Workshop

This section sheds light on the principal researcher's experience during this part of the process. First, during the Decolonial Encounters Workshop, the facilitator introduced the idea of the 'native of nowhere' to describe the experiences of Black students in historically White universities. The idea of the native of nowhere speaks to the experiences of Black students, and it is an idea with which the principal researcher identifies.

The principal researcher was a student at historically White universities and was faced with the idea that their language, culture, experiences and sometimes their being had no place in that university space. It seemed that all these aspects of themselves had to be checked at the door to become well-adjusted students within this context. The principal researcher is sure that many students from different backgrounds also have to adapt and embrace the new context, but it always seems that as Black, non-English speaking (or in some cases non-Afrikaans speaking) students, they had the furthest distance to travel to adjust optimally to the context.

On the other hand, this adjustment to and embracing of this new context and acquiring this knowledge means that they face the possibility of alienation within their home context. Again, this is familiar to many Black students, including the researcher. The alienation that is being mooted emanates from the fact that this newly acquired information and knowledge are also not highly regarded within their home context. Therefore, this can create a situation where the student does not fit in anywhere – neither in the new context nor in the familiar home context.

Second, a very interesting development occurred at the beginning of the discussion in that Co-researcher 1 began calling the principal researcher 'Mr Kenneth'. The student was an honours student. Using that name is likely a reflection of the perceived relative power and privilege that the researcher is thought to have because the principal researcher is a PhD student. Furthermore, the relative age between the principal researcher and the co-researcher

is also something that bears consideration. From this perspective, the co-researcher could have been attempting to convey a measure of respect to the researcher. However, this is reflective of the perceived gulf in class.

At the beginning of the process, the gulf situation was anticipated as possibly likely to influence the process. The Co-researcher 1 was reminded that it was acceptable to make use of first names. The aim was to disrupt, to the extent that it is possible, power imbalances. However, it is essential to note that these power and privilege issues will always be there, and that the researcher should be mindful of these factors and disrupt them only as far as possible.

The two ideas presented in this section about the native of nowhere and the display of the student using a title to address the researcher are interesting. On the one hand, as a Western-educated Black male, the principal researcher finds himself in the space of being a native of nowhere in terms of the basis of the academic world. In another, the relative qualifications that the researcher possesses, and their age affords them a measure of respect and power. Thus, in some ways, the two contexts can render the Black person impotent and, in some sense, those very ideas that are complicit in this impotence can be a source of power and possibly admiration. Another aspect could relate to patriarchy and the ingrained perception of male superiority and inherent authority.

Third, another consideration has to do with the fact that the researcher is quite read in decolonisation within psychology. The temptation is that the researcher, through this access to information, can dominate the discussion and influence the direction based on the knowledge that they have acquired. Therefore, using a questioning and problem-posing approach, the goal should be for the co-researchers to arrive at particular insights without having had them served up to them and, as such, having their voice minimised – a reality that would run contrary to the philosophical ideas of PAR and PVA.

This section of the findings explored the themes that emerged from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. The themes appear to suggest that dialogue on the decolonisation of

the psychology and research curriculum is needed. The need for decolonisation is evidenced by the apparent lack of the relevance of psychology and research to communities, the perceived non-performance of some Black students in postgraduate programmes and access.

The indication is that the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum is peppered with stumbling blocks. One significant stumbling block relates to regulatory bodies, such as the HPCSA and their influence on the curriculum. The perception is that the power these bodies wield ensures that universities are compelled to comply with the standards as prescribed by these bodies. The implication is that these normalised professional standards are not in line with the idea of decolonisation and the efforts to make psychology relevant. Furthermore, the co-researchers also explored the possibilities for a decolonised curriculum. The following section explores the findings that emerged from the artistic representations.

5.3.2 Artistic representations: Generative themes

The following findings are based on the artistic representations that the co-researchers developed. As mentioned previously, Co-researcher 3 withdrew from the study after the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. Therefore, the artistic representations and the themes explored in this section reflect the work of Co-researchers 1 and 2.

The generative themes addressed the most critical aspects relating to the meaning of decolonisation, the colonial history of psychology and the stumbling blocks and strategies for decolonisation from the perspectives of the co-researchers. The presentation of these findings will begin with a depiction of the art pieces that the co-researchers prepared in line with the guiding questions that they were given. The co-researchers were then requested to reflect on those questions using multiple mediums. No restrictions were imposed on the co-researchers concerning the mediums to be used. After the co-researchers had completed their representations, discussions about the representations were held, and additional questions were discussed. Several themes emerged from the discussions that took place after the artistic representations.

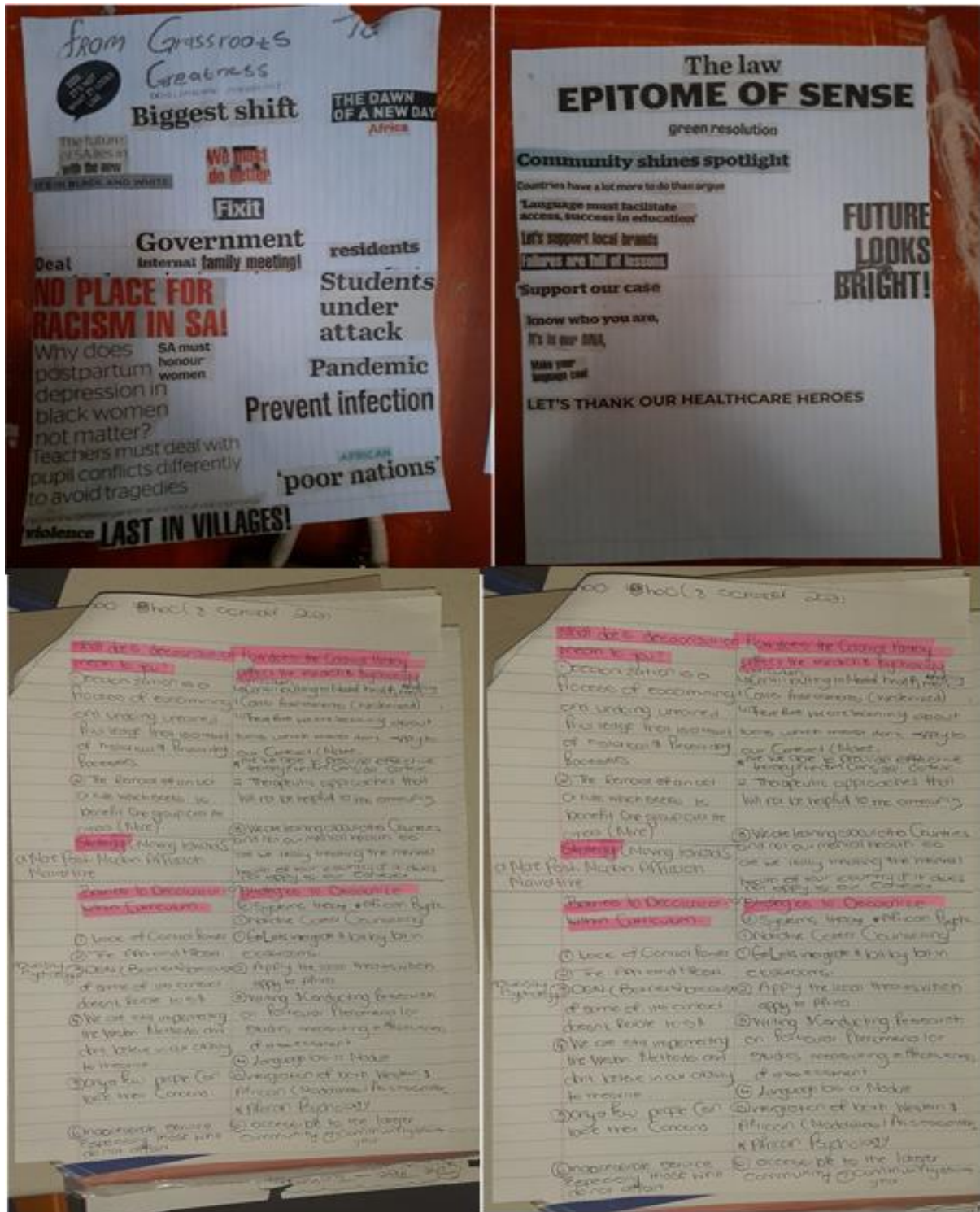
The generative themes are presented in this section. Some of the themes that emerged in this data collection phase also emerged during the Decolonial Encounters Workshop. Co-researcher 2 described their experience of doing the artistic representation, and their description appears to echo the idea of some of the themes identified in the Decolonial Encounters Workshop:

It was interesting because it made me think of the day when we had that external person and we had this discussion. Some of those themes were, you know, revived. And as we were thinking of what we were discussing and the themes and it is also something that is out there, you know. As I was researching it, something that is really out there. You know, people are trying to voice out or have these conversations about decolonisation. So, it was really interesting.

Figure 4 represents the work that the co-researchers prepared for the meeting on artistic representations. The prepared work was presented and the themes that emerged were based on the co-researchers' presentations and the discussion that ensued.

Figure 4

Combined Artistic Representation on Decolonisation in Psychology



The themes that emerged related to the co-researchers' perceptions of decolonisation, accessibility of the curriculum, the power relationships within psychology and strategies for

decolonisation. Each of the themes has several sub-themes that will also be discussed, and verbatim quotes that substantiate the themes will be presented.

5.3.2.1 Defining decolonisation

Myriad ideas have been used to define decolonisation. Some of these ideas have been explored in the literature presented in Chapter 2. The findings in the current study suggest that there were various perspectives on the meaning of decolonisation. One of the findings suggests that decolonisation in this context is understood as the transition of psychology and research from what it was to a newer form of psychology. The idea of transitioning is also depicted in the artwork where it shows wording that says, *“From grassroots to greatness,” “Biggest Shift” and “The dawn of a new day.”*

The idea of grassroots to greatness refers specifically to the engagement with local communities that have not had access to psychology and creating spaces for access and spaces for these communities to contribute to shaping psychology and research. This idea of decolonisation is exemplified in the quotation from Co-researcher 1: *“If I were to define decolonisation myself, I would say that it is a shift from what was normal then to what is normal now.”* Co-researcher 2 views decolonisation as challenging and removing the influence of colonialism, which resulted in benefits and privileges being unjustly distributed across society. This quotation from Co-researcher 2 is illustrative of this idea:

For me, it is the removal of an act or rule which seeks to, which sought to benefit one group over another in the past. So, for me, that is what decolonisation means. I think for me, most of the time, I always relate back to social justice as well in that I think if we are engaged in the act of decolonisation, so, in a way, we are achieving social justice.

The findings suggest that the co-researchers understand decolonisation as a transition to a new normal within psychology and research that is more just through the critique of

prevailing systems of privilege that have contributed to the marginalisation of large groups of people, ways of knowing and healing.

5.3.2.2 Exploring Coloniality within the Psychology Curriculum

The literature review suggested that coloniality can be understood as the pervasive patterns of power that emanate from colonialism and continue to define the culture, labour, sexuality, race, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production of colonised communities after colonial administration. Thus, coloniality is a socio-political and cultural outcome of colonialism (Lacerda, 2015; Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

The outcome of the discussion suggests that the psychology curriculum is rooted in coloniality in many ways. The co-researchers outlined various touchstones that exemplify how coloniality is entrenched in the psychology curriculum. The current section explores these touchstones in more detail. The exploration will include the universalisation of psychological theory, research and practice, the lack of accessibility to psychological services, assessment issues, the general lack of the relevance of psychology and the extent to which regulatory authority perpetuates coloniality.

In terms of the universalisation of psychology and research and the respective curricula, the findings suggest that Western perspectives have been applied uncritically worldwide. The co-researchers felt that insufficient consideration was given to the different cultural contexts and how mental health may work in those contexts. As Co-researcher 1 indicated:

It was too general. They took Western culture and made it a global thing, not being aware that globally, there are different cultures. There is Africa, there is Asia, China and so forth and then they generalise the whole thing. They took their definition of Western disorders and made them generally global.

In addition, concern about the fact that, although much discussion about Western bias within psychology had occurred, not much in the way of a solution had been offered was raised. Co-researcher 2 indicated the following:

We are still implementing after so many years. We are still having this conversation. We are still trying to come up with things but at the end of the day, you find yourself sitting in a master's class, an honours programme and first-year students. We are still implementing Westernised methods and Westernised assessments and only a few people can vocalise their concerns.

Although the term 'universalisation' was not explicitly used in this description, it is clear from the description that the co-researcher gave that they were referring to the universalisation of psychological theory and research, which is well-established within decolonial literature. The findings suggest that the universalisation of psychological theory and research can be seen in how the various regulatory bodies within psychology appear to embrace psychology founded on Western and colonial ideologies. The indication is that these regulatory bodies, such as the APA and HPCSA, only appear to pay lip service to the experiences of African people. At the same time, they remain resolutely colonial and contribute to privileging Western psychology perspectives.

Another outcome of the proclivity to the generalisation and universalisation of psychology is the apparent lack of sufficient researchers within the field of Africanising psychology and, consequently, the apparent paucity of psychological theories for the African context. Co-researcher 1 noted,

*And another thing is that there are not enough theories for African, African psychology and there are not many researchers who are dedicated to Africanising psychology. And as ***** mentioned, we are using the DSM and it is broadly Westernised. You get those two or three pages where they say African psychology and that is it, or even a single page where they say African*

psychology and that is the end of the chapter. So, there are not enough theories to Africanise psychology.

Co-researcher 2 also stated,

The American Psychological Association and the HPCSA, of which most of the time the APA is related to the DSM, the book that is used most of the time to say this is what you have and it is a checklist. And as much as it is, I won't lie and say it isn't effective but it is not contextualised; it is not local, yes. Even if it is constantly being updated, but which culture is being updated. Are we updating the modern culture or is it an integration?

Another outcome of coloniality that is at play within psychology relates to the relative inaccessibility of psychological services to specific groups of people in South Africa. The findings suggest that the groups on the margins of access are invariably Black, under-educated, under-resourced and live some distance from economic opportunities. Conversely, the minority of better educated and better resourced South Africans have a fair degree of access. These patterns of access were created under colonialism and apartheid, and they persist under the current political dispensation. Co-researcher 2 expressed this sentiment by saying,

Another barrier for me is the inaccessibility of the service; psychology as a service is not accessible. And I feel that is a barrier because already during the colonised times, psychology as a therapy service was available to only certain people, to that minority, and psychology in terms of offering career assessments was only offered to the minority. And still, now, there are still communities that are still marginalised and they don't have this service. And even if they do have this service, it is only there and accommodative to people that can afford to pay, so it is either the service is not there if it is there, it is still largely Westernised and even if it is still there, you do not have the means.

Another example that emerged had to do with the relative access to career assessments for career guidance. The minority who has relatively higher access to psychological services also has better access to career counselling and assessments. The relative access to these services also suggests that the economy was more open and accessible to the said minority, and thus their career possibilities were broader. Access to economic development opportunities and career possibilities is still unequally distributed according to colonial patterns, hence the continued lack of access.

Concerns regarding the unfair bias embedded in the assessment scores within career counselling were raised. The concern was that the assessment tools were written in English and Afrikaans and might disadvantage individuals who speak African languages. Therefore, further standardisation and contextualisation of the measures that were in use were needed. Furthermore, the need to go deeper than just the scores that an individual receives in an assessment and consider the context of the individual when interpreting the scores is apparent. Co-researcher 2 said this about these issues:

Career psychology, where the modules that we are using are still largely English and Afrikaans. And most of them as well are just scores and the critique that we usually have around career assessment is that they are deeply rooted in the historical past. That they are not standardised; they are not contextualised for other African speaking individuals and also they do not take into consideration context and we always say that you cannot just assess a person based on scores when we are using Westernised measures.

The language that the tests use appears indicative of the historical intent of these assessments – the development of the minority and the marginalisation of others. Thus, the needs of individuals who speak African languages were not considered. The findings suggest that psychologists should be mindful of these issues and interpret test scores within context.

The findings suggest that the efficacy of the therapeutic interventions based on the Western paradigm within an African context should be subject to critical appraisal. This suggestion is important to consider because the curriculum employed to train future psychologists is made up of these Westernised approaches, and the newly trained psychologists are then meant to use these approaches to provide a service to complex societies. Co-researcher 2 reflected on this idea as follows:

Are we able to provide effective therapy if it does not consider context? I thought of the therapeutic modalities that we are being taught, you know, psychodynamic and all of that. Most of them are useful but most of them are still the issue of them being Westernised and then treating certain disorders which in our African context might not actually be disorders. It can have various meanings and you know how depression is viewed in one context cannot be the same. In my class, there is this phrase that has lived with me, how depression is not a dysfunction or is not a disorder rather if it is from a dysfunctional context and it made me think of how in many times in the South African context, depression will arise because you are in a context where mental health is not understood. So now it is easy to diagnose somebody and say that you have depression but are we considering the context?

As with the assessments, a case is also being made to consider the context of a therapeutic framework. The indication is that insufficient consideration of contextual factors can undermine the efficacy of a therapeutic intervention. The efficacy can be compromised at the point of diagnosis where, as the co-researcher points out, people may be incorrectly diagnosed because their context was not considered. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the efficacy of therapeutic intervention can be affected if there is insufficient consideration of the context when offering tools to patients. The concern was based on the idea that when the therapeutic interventions have concluded, the individual must again go back to their context.

Therefore, it is also critical to consider the context when offering therapeutic interventions. In line with this point, Co-researcher 2 stated the following:

Where in the modern approach, the individual was put in isolation and that is how you treat the individual. And now the problem is going back to saying that you want to offer psychological services; you want to treat mental illnesses. But the person still goes back to that context at the end of the therapy. That is why we are saying when we are offering the service, we consider your context how can we make it so effective. The context is taken into consideration because if you are a client of mine and I am helping and I say okay, these are the steps that you are going to apply but I do not consider your context how effective is it going to be? So is understanding the values of the client and understanding the environment in order in offering these different therapeutic approaches.

The proclivity to universalise and generalise psychological concepts, the paucity of theories that speak to the African experience and the adoption of the current regulatory structures mean that psychology has positioned itself in a place where it lacks relevance for many South Africans. These ideas are articulated by Co-researcher 2 in the following manner:

Even though we are making them (the services) accessible, what kind of services are we offering if we are still offering services that are led by Westernised psychology? So, it is not really contextualised; it is not really a local and it arose the question in me, are we really treating mental health in South Africa if we are still applying methods there are still Westernised? Are we treating the contextual issues?

From a research standpoint, the focus was on the role of research participants and how the colonial history of psychology influences the relationship between researchers and participants. It emerged that, in this framework, participants have always assumed a passive role, with the researcher assuming all the control of the research process and the research

participants not involved in setting the research agenda. The co-researchers pointed to this study as a possible way of rethinking the relationship between the researcher and the participants. Co-researcher 1 confirmed, *“Research participants were not always involved.”*

This section explored the current implications of the colonial history of South Africa on psychology. It emerged that coloniality played itself out through the current use of Westernised assessment, research, and therapeutic approaches within psychology. The continuing employment of the Westernised approach contributes to undermining the relevance of psychology locally. As it stands, this means that psychology, in its current form, may not always attend to the contextual issues faced by those psychologists purported to assist. From this standpoint, the need is to rethink how psychology is taught and practised.

However, as it has emerged in this section, progress has been slow. The slow nature of the progress begs the question regarding the reasons behind the slow progress. The next theme that emerged outlines the challenges facing the decolonial project within psychology and could explain the slowness of the decolonisation process.

5.3.2.3 Challenges to a decolonised curriculum in psychology

The findings indicate that various factors currently appear to hamstring the decolonial project within psychology. The emerging factors cover institutional and regulatory, student-related, and community-related factors. The central idea that appears to permeate these factors is the question of power and agency, which play out in unique ways when seen in terms of the different factors.

In the first place, the findings suggest that the various regulatory bodies, such as HPCSA and APA through the DSM, have relatively more power than other stakeholders and influence psychological practice and the curriculum. Therefore, this relatively significant influence enables the powerful to take psychological theories founded in Western philosophy and export them to different contexts worldwide. Furthermore, through this influence and relative power, the status quo has primarily remained despite the widespread

acknowledgement of contrary issues within psychology. As Co-researcher 1 noted: *“They took their definitions of Western disorders and made them generally global and another thing, there are not enough theories for Africans and for African psychology.”*

Co-researcher 2 also added,

We have power as a barrier because you have the APA making the decision for someone in a township in Tembisa and because that someone does not have enough strength or resources or enough academic resources to take on those people that make those decisions for us, it becomes a problem. So, if we look at power versus the community, we will note that the community does not have enough power to take on the gatekeepers as we have mentioned before; like what you say is right, it is not applicable to me.

Co-researcher 2 also indicated: *“After so many years, we are still implementing (Western methods). We are still trying to come up with things.”*

The second factor that emerged relates to how institutional dynamics in universities affect the decolonial project. Part of the decolonial process involves making the profession and the curriculum responsive to the needs of communities and students. Engaging communities appears to be the most reasonable way to ensure that their needs are understood, and that the curriculum is adapted accordingly. The artistic representations that the co-researchers developed illustrate the different challenges that local communities face. Psychology does not always interact with these communities and misses relevant opportunities. The findings suggest that the institutions, through their power in curriculum development, exclude communities. The institutional power regulates who has access to institutional discursive spaces and whose voice matters. Co-researcher 1 pointed out,

Those people who make decisions for us, it becomes a problem. So, if we look at power versus the community, we will note that the community does not have enough power to take on the gatekeepers, as we have mentioned before, so as

to say what you think is right is not applicable to me. Another factor is exclusion; these decisions are taken by those people in power because they think it's best for the community or the world at large. So, these decisions are made and they exclude the people who they are making the decisions for. So if they think this is what is right or what is fitting, they make that decision and it is final without going to consult the people they are making the decisions for.

The comment that Co-researcher 1 made also appears to refer to the apparent infantilisation of communities and students. The institution and the regulatory structures deem to speak and make decisions for those who are less powerful because they think they know what is best for them. That is also evidenced by the tendency towards the universalisation of Western knowledge.

Third, in the Decolonial Encounters Workshop, one of the co-researchers asked about the demographics of the current research team – the entire research team was made up of Black psychology students. Specifically, the question was whether the research team was made up of only Black psychology students and if there were no students of other demographics participating. The question posed to the other co-researchers was why the group was not more diverse. The indication was that the limited diversity in participation represented a constraint in the decolonial project. The findings suggest that although other demographical groups were interested, this interest did not translate to greater participation in the current study. Co-researcher 2 suggested that some students may feel threatened by conversations on decolonisation because, in some ways, it could represent a loss of privilege to previously privileged groups. Co-researcher 1 stated the following:

I am going to speak specifically about my group, my master's group. It is totally vouching for it, for a decolonised psychology. But I think we might not, you know, be diverse right now because as much as we want to make it accessible to everyone, it then becomes a disadvantage to others. I am, I am thinking now of

when we say giving back the land without compensation. You know that entire conversation and I am thinking how other people do not take part in that conversation ..., so as much as we might want social justice to be achieved, there is always a group of people that might lose certain privileges that they have so that is how I am seeing it that could be the possible reason, but I think with my group as far as I have been with that group this year, I think that it is us that have trying to strive for that decolonisation.

Another possible reason that emerged from the findings is that some students may lack the initiative or agency to contribute to the process. The indication was that some students realise that change is needed but are unable to initiate change or take advantage of the opportunities that occur. In line with this idea, Co-researcher 1 indicated the following:

I personally think we know what we want, we know what is of concern to us and therefore we decided to participate, right. And a lot of South African youth they would rather have something done for them instead of initiating change. So, now that we are trying to decolonise psychology, we are here it is only the three of us and then when this becomes a success, the rest of the youth will just clap hands and say, oh they made a change, they made a difference and so forth knowing very well that they had a chance to be part of the change or to initiate the difference that we are going to make, but they did not, because they are waiting for somebody to do it for them. For lack of a better, I would say that they are allergic to initiating change because one thing that we do not realise about change is that we initiate it and it just does not happen out of the blue. You be the change that you want to see.

The findings suggest that several factors drive this apathy. The first factor, which has a historical context, is related to the training and education that Black students received in primary and secondary school. The findings suggest that the education that Black people

received did not encourage initiative and agency among young people. Instead, it was an education that encouraged passivity among students; students waited for someone else to come and initiate change. The sentiment was expressed by Co-researcher 1 when they stated the following:

I think that that is how the Black community was kind of raised. Taking it back from primary school to high school, when we were given classwork, for example, you wrote the classwork and if you got it wrong, the teacher would make corrections for you. You would not make corrections for yourself. I think that it has a historical background of us being used to have something done for us. And now, when we get to varsity level where you have to do everything yourself, we are still kind of fixated on, you know, what we are used to. You know that is us not doing anything and waiting for the next person to do it ... and another thing that I thought of is that we think that we are not capable of doing it. If we compare the Black community with the White community, we think that it is for White people. You know that mentality that says, that is for White people. I think that is the one that really gets us bad because we think that owning a car at age 21 is only for White people. You only own a car when you are Black, when you are 35 or when you are even 40 years, you know. I also think that mentality contributed to us not wanting to initiate change and waiting for others to do it first. I also think the other thing is fear of being the first to initiate change because you this that if I am the first to do it, then if I fail what are they going to say, what are they going to think kind of thing? So that fear kind of holds us back, so as to say, let me wait for the next person to do it before I can do it as well.

The other co-researcher also agreed with these sentiments. Second, it also emerged that insufficient collective and collaborative action towards decolonisation and addressing the challenges that face communities exist. Some were content to watch others do the work and reap the rewards. Co-researcher 1 added the following:

*I am just agreeing with everything she is saying because it's the truth and think also regardless of race, people we have the mentality of, oh yes, we do want to decolonise it but let them do it. So, there is that we want it to take place, but no one really wants to do the work. Because in order for change to happen, we actually have to do the work. And also, what ***** is saying is that in the Black culture, a lot of the time you find that a lot of people are sitting and waiting. I think that in high school one of our business studies teachers told us that the government cannot give everyone jobs because we are having this unemployment and she was saying, she was teaching us about entrepreneurship and saying the government cannot employ everyone so we can start a business and employ everyone that way we are working together. And I think that this is the aspect that is missing, you know. People are not working together, even in this aspect, even in psychology. There are a whole lot of psychology postgraduate students, you know, they would have the same mentality to say let's decolonise, but when it's time for us to work and do it, I think there is that negative mentality. There is also that thing of, let's let them do it and we shall reap the rewards.*

The third constraining factor has to do with the perceived powerlessness of students. Students occupy the lower strata of institutional power structures, which contributes to their sense of powerlessness. The sense of powerlessness is exhibited as an apparent lack of interest or initiative towards the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum. Although some within the student population want the decolonisation of the curriculum, they lack the power to influence conversations about decolonising the curriculum. Co-researcher 2 expressed this idea by stating, *“As a student, speaking from a student perspective, you would want that decolonisation to take place, but how much control and power do you have to take part in the decision-making within that spectrum to decolonise psychology.”*

However, despite these unequal power relations among stakeholders, a suggestion was made that students can still influence the process within the classroom through their interactions. These sentiments are outlined in the following quote by Co-researcher 2:

I think for me, it kind of using the, we are decolonising, we are contextualising psychology in South Africa to my advantage because I think that is what I do the most. When I am in class, I am not scared to say something in isiZulu and to actually translate it because we did say that this is what we are doing, so why are we speaking in English. So, for me, those are just some of the steps that we are doing and also, for me, there is that sense of powerlessness, but there is that bit of motivation that there is something taking place; someone came with that idea, you know. It is not always that this change came with that professor, that board, you know. It could have been a student, you know. And for me, I always say the more people write about something, or you are conducting about something it is, the more we are probing for that change to take place. And that is the thing about decolonising psychology; it is not something that is happening rapidly, but it is happening.

The third challenge to a decolonised curriculum focused on student-related issues – some of which may have contributed to the limited participation of postgraduate students in this project. These issues included a lack of agency or initiative on the side of the students, a lack of good collaborative and collective action and a sense of powerlessness. However, the findings suggest that despite the challenges, much can still be done to contribute to the decolonial project. Although change is slow, it is happening.

This section explored the challenges that appear to slow down the decolonial project within psychology. The challenges that emerged included the influence of the regulatory authorities of psychology on the decolonial project, the influence of the institutional structures on decolonisation and the participation of students in the decolonial project.

The next theme that emerged suggests the possible strategies that can be used to facilitate the decolonial process. The strategies cover possible research approaches, an inclusive curriculum development process, the preservation of local culture and knowledge and novel pedagogical approaches.

5.3.2.4 Strategies for the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum

The findings from the current study suggest that various strategies can be considered for the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum. These strategies include research approaches, the inclusiveness of the curriculum development process, the preservation of local culture and knowledge and novel pedagogical approaches.

First, in terms of the overall research approach within psychology, the findings suggest a need for more research and scholarship into decolonisation within psychology. The existing increase in the amount of research and scholarship is not enough. The suggestion is that it should be inclusive. Inclusiveness is essential because some stakeholders (such as students and communities) have been side-lined and have become passive – their voices not adequately represented. Inclusive and collaborative approaches mean the greater inclusion of more stakeholders in research and the broader decolonial project.

The increased research on decolonisation implies that more resources will be required to ensure that this ideal is achieved. One aspect includes encouraging and incentivising scholars to focus on decolonisation. This point is important because the findings suggest that there are not enough scholars working on the decolonisation of psychology. The following quote from Co-researcher 2 illustrates these ideas: *“So, we move from the Western way of individualised to the community level which is integrated.”* Co-researcher 2 added, *“Us conducting research on this topic like what you are doing now, having this conversation, writing research articles, you are trying to educate people about this and highlight this and speak about the importance of decolonisation.”*

Co-researcher 1 added:

*There are not enough theories for African psychology and there are not enough researchers that are dedicated to Africanise psychology. So as ***** has mentioned that we use the DSM and it is broadly Western and you get those two or three pages that say African psychology.*

Methodologically, the indication is that more attention could focus on narrative and storytelling methods when conducting research. The indication is that the value of this approach will extend further than research and include narrative therapeutic approaches. The following quotation from Co-researcher 2 illustrates this idea: *“In narrative psychology; we are trying to consider context; we are trying to see, you know, in a contextual sphere. We are considering your life themes, you know, your values and societal norms. So that is a decolonisation aspect of it as well.”*

As mentioned before, the findings suggest more focus on collaborative approaches to research. Collaboration can contribute to a greater understanding of the needs of the various stakeholders to ensure that psychology and the research aspect thereof become more relevant and less exploitative. The following quote from Co-researcher 1 illustrates this:

When they are coming to us to help us decolonise psychology, or they are coming to help a community with so forth and so forth, they need to do an in-depth intervention in terms of finding out what we really need to initiate that change. What we really need to survive as a community. We need to continue initiating this change to decolonise psychology. So, if they come in and they involve us in the decision-making, I think then that is when we will get to have a way forward in terms of how to do it and the resource needed to do it.

In terms of the assessments, especially for career counselling and development, it is important to approach them in a manner that looks beyond the individual's score on an assessment. The suggestion is that it may be useful to consider the context of the individual during the interpretation of the score. Therefore, the scores that the individual receives must

be seen within a context to be able to have a deeper understanding of the individual. In a word, this approach relies on integrating the quantitative scores and the qualitative contextual information that could contribute to performance. This point is highlighted in the following quotation from Co-researcher 1:

*What happens is that we are still looking at the objective scores, but we still take into account the qualitative, subjective experiences of the client. So, when I am writing the results in that report, I can integrate those together, and I can say ***** performed poorly in English because she did not go to an English-speaking school. It is not that there is a comprehension problem. It's that we consider that context as well.*

From a research and development frame, the findings also suggest a need for continuous development and experimentation within the decolonial project. It emerged that developing new ideas and approaches is important and implementing them will create progress. Co-researcher 1 gave the example of their first-year psychology textbook and how it evolved through continuous research and development. Co-researcher 2 also pointed to a textbook that was used in their first year. The title of the book was *Themes and Variations*. As new editions were developed, a gradual increase in the amount of content that was contextual and relevant to South Africa occurred. The example was used to communicate that conducting research and development from a decolonial perspective on an ongoing basis can create progress over time. Co-researcher 2 expressed the idea in the following way:

Themes and Variations that was our first-year psychology textbook. And when we had the textbook, it was not contextualised in South Africa. And when you usually go to the second year, you usually sell it to the first year, or you borrow it. And I remember when we wanted to do that, they had created the same book, but it was contextualised. So, it was not localised, so it said, 'In South African context' and when I thought of that, I don't think that book was not made overnight.

But I think that it was an entire process that had to take place. Usually, what they would do, they would write; they would say that it was conducted on a group of students. This was the study that had taken place to show the reliability and the validity. Maybe if the worry is that is it going to work, will it be effective, let's apply it to see the effectiveness of some of these things.

The second aspect relating to decolonial strategies has to do with the recovery of the knowledge of Indigenous people. The findings suggest a need to focus on recovering and preserving African culture and knowledge. The recovery and preservation of this information will make the information accessible to future generations. The recovery and preservation of culture and knowledge must be made in collaboration with community knowledge keepers. However, this will not simply be a matter of recovering the information and applying it uncritically in the current context. The relevance and applicability of that information in the current context must be given critical consideration. Co-researcher 1 stated the following:

There is this woman who is the last in her generation who knows about how her generation was; so, she's like the last person in that generation alive. So, if we are to do this, we go to such people and tell them to give us all the knowledge they have about how their culture was then and how their culture is now.

To illustrate the need for accommodating perspectives, Co-researcher 2 indicated the following:

*For me, it is about as well modifying culture and I like what ***** has said about the woman who is the last one there in the family. For me, it's about learning past cultural roots and modifying them to the now, bringing back to the idea that what was normal then is not what's normal now. So, for me, culture is about let us preserve it but let us not make it colonise again certain people or individuals.*

The important consideration that emerges is the need to ensure that academics do not, through the recovery and implementation of the African perspective, contribute to the

erasure of other perspectives. The quotation above speaks to recovering and accommodating all the different perspectives to create new realities representing different perspectives.

Third, linked to the idea of accommodating various perspectives that were briefly touched on, the finding suggests that it would be productive to accommodate different perspectives within the curriculum. For instance, Co-researcher 2 related an experience from their classroom that highlights the need for creating accommodating spaces during lectures. These accommodative spaces can then become spaces of learning and growth. Co-researcher 2 stated,

And in ours, they are two different levels and when I did my genogram, I wrote uncle and great-uncle and my lecturer asked me about that because she was, great-uncle does it mean grandfather and so forth. And for me having that conversation was decolonisation taking place. We are educating each other and the genogram for me and using certain terminologies or still an indication of there's still no decolonisation that is taking place, specifically, in our context because it is not accommodated to other cultural groups if we going to say that it is just an uncle and aunt. And we are not accommodating ... Because I don't think it's fair to mark someone down when they say great-uncle, whereas it's my context. So, I think that decolonisation is taking place when we are starting to accommodate and we are saying teach me about your culture and we are adapting that genogram and the symbols that are associated with it.

The fourth aspect relates to teaching and learning practices in the classroom that can contribute to the decolonisation of psychology. The findings suggest that more focus on the inclusion of narrative psychology, the interaction within the classroom, language, the integration of knowledge systems and modalities and Ubuntu as a basis for psychological research and practice is needed.

The inclusion of narrative psychology, it emerged, was also seen as contributing to decolonising psychology. The contribution that narrative psychology makes is related to the emphasis that it places on the context of the individual. Therefore, greater emphasis on narrative psychology could potentially bring psychology closer to a decolonised future. Co-researcher 2 described narrative psychology in the following manner:

That relates to narrative psychology to say that it may meaningfully contribute to decolonising psychology because, in narrative psychology, we are trying to consider context; we are trying to see, you know, in a contextual sphere. We are considering your life themes, you know, your values and societal norms. So that is a decolonisation aspect of it as well.

Co-researcher 2's description of narrative psychology suggests that narrative psychology does embody some of the ideas about decolonisation. These aspects include considering context and social norms and the influence that these have on the individual.

In terms of the interaction within classrooms, the indication is that it is important to create spaces for interaction and discussion between students about the importance of decolonisation and the different approaches and modalities to integrate these various approaches. As Co-researcher 2 indicated, *"My strategy was let us integrate it bit by bit into the classroom as well. That is what I thought, in terms of assignments, in terms of discussions. Let's have these conversations in the classroom."*

The indication is that the extent to which these interactions occur depends on the academic staff within psychology, especially the department, the programme manager, and the lecturer. The following quote from Co-researcher 2 contributes to this idea: *"I am in a group where I have had lecturers where context was allowed but I think that is largely determined by the departments and the programme managers."*

There is a suggestion that the different Western and African approaches need to be integrated into the classroom. The indication is that decolonisation is not necessarily about

choosing the one and cancelling the other but rather an integration that seeks to produce contextually relevant psychology. Through this integration of perspectives, better therapeutic outcomes and more relevant research output might be achieved. As Co-researcher 1 stated, *“Integration of both Western and African. So, it's not having to choose: do we go with Western or do we go just the local? Perhaps by us integrating the two, we can have more and we can yield more effective results.”*

The last item that relates to teaching and learning activities spoke to the issue of language. The findings suggest a need to integrate language into psychology programmes. It emerged that the value of language is based on its capacity to broaden the reach of psychology to include people who speak African languages. Co-researcher 2 outlined the importance of language and stated the following:

Having language as a module, especially at masters' levels, I would actually say from honours level. Because most of the time, in masters, we do community work. And what you find is that we are a group of equally racial people. But most of the communities that we go to are marginalised communities and you find that most of them are Black people, so there is that language barrier if I am not in the community project, for example, because we have to translate certain things. So, I think for me it's important that these languages are being taught. Because just knowing English and Afrikaans, or just three languages, is a limitation if we say we want to make the service accessible.

The fifth strategy that emerged related to creating space for stakeholders outside traditional psychology and academia to contribute to shaping the profession. Engaging with these stakeholders could contribute to the diversity of voices within the profession, open space for collaboration, contribute to a deeper understanding of the needs of the public and create greater awareness of mental health and psychology. The importance of grassroots engagement also emerged. In addition, the indication is that some of the ideas that make up

community psychology can be very instructive for the decolonisation of the profession. Co-researcher 1 indicated the following:

I noted the grassroots, meaning that if we are to decolonise psychology, we start at the grassroots level. We educate our parents about psychology, our children about psychology. We give them the psychological background as they are growing up and also, we introduce education psychology in schools; we introduce community psychology in schools. Because what I love about community psychology because it is inclusive of everyone. The individual does not function alone; they function in a community that is well-nested together. So, what happens to the individual happens to the community.

Sixth, the findings suggested that the ideal of Ubuntu needed to be developed and integrated into psychological research and practice. The co-researchers understood Ubuntu as a uniquely African and South African concept based on collectiveness and collaboration. Therefore, a curriculum inspired by the idea of Ubuntu would be decolonial in that it would be more contextual and would create space for multiple stakeholders to develop a decolonised psychology and research curriculum. Co-researcher 2 stressed the importance of Ubuntu in the following manner:

Us growing Ubuntu as a South African culture; Ubuntu was born in South Africa, so if we nourish it, for lack of a better word, we grow it as a culture. That is what would make us stand out. If we are to present something to the gatekeepers, we would then say we have this concept called Ubuntu and this is what it is about. And it is unique to us; not everyone has it in the world. Even those Western gatekeepers do not have it. We use something unique to us. I think that would keep us at an advantage for actually initiating that change of decolonising psychology.

In practical terms, the application of Ubuntu involves a focus on collective and community-based approaches, collaboration and working together. From a research perspective, it involves participative and collaborative approaches to research. Therapeutically, it appears to necessitate community-based intervention and an approach that brings contextual understanding to the symptoms that people experience.

The findings suggest that these collective approaches can be a source of strength and a rallying point for the mobilisation of decolonisation. The strength embedded within these collectives and community approaches can be instrumental in addressing the power imbalance between the establishment and the community. This point is illustrated by Co-researcher 1 in the following quote:

So, in terms of research and its participants, I think what you are doing is Ubuntu because you are involving research participants in the study. They are active participants in your study, going to allow us to participate, it allows us to be, it allows us to bring our viewpoint, our, it just allows us to be who we are in the whole process. If we take a certain disorder and look at it on an individual level will always come up with the Western definition of it. But if we integrate Ubuntu into it and take it to the community level and say people who have suffered like this also have these kinds of symptoms which are similar to each other let's look at them and let's work on them together and let's not work on this individual today and work on this individual next week. I think with Ubuntu and psychology, it is inclusive of everyone like literally, everyone instead of making decisions based on how one person reacts to an experiment or a disorder or in terms of the symptoms that they have that are related to a certain disorder. So, it would include the community at large so as to say we cannot do this alone, we are not going to do this alone, if we are to decolonise psychology, we do it together, we do it as a country, we do it as a community and that is how I will be able to decolonise psychology but if you are going to look at it on the individual level and say Kenneth

will do it by himself or stuff like that, it is just going to be an idea. It was just an idea without actions without being made practical. When you get the community involved, if someone brings new ideas, someone brings in new strategies and new solutions and therefore it becomes an integrated whole.

Co-researcher 2 made the following point about the importance of collective action and collective effort:

Us working together in order to achieve a specific action, I think how much power that has when it is a collective and not in isolation. And it also made me think as well about isolation versus context. When we are talking about Ubuntu, you are saying 'Umuntu ngabantu,' you are a person because of abanye abantu. It brings back that thing back that thing of being a person not in isolation but within the broader spectrum. And it also made me think of, you know, ukuthi. Accessibility of the service as well, made me think of Ubuntu, ukuthi, in order for us to give that service, we have to make it accessible. Or in order for, abantu ba phole, from mental health it is based on trust you know. So it is that relationship of working together to try and enact change.

Co-researcher 2 also indicated the following:

*My brain thought of in South Africa, when people are striking; if it is just one person that is so striking to the Union Buildings, that is not going to be effective. Whereas in the act of Ubuntu and you coming as a collective, that attention is being given to say this is the group of people who are coming here. I think that ***** mentioned it in her collage, ukuthi. We come to the board and say this is we coming as a unity that has more power than to come as individuals, you know and it is making me think as well if this was a study now that had a whole lot of students and it says something as well, but if you are just trying to do things*

individually or not to take part so that collective strength that is supposed to be there is not really there.

In summarising, the strategies that emerged in this section covered the different possibilities that could contribute to the decolonial project within research. The strategies include the accommodation and integration of different perspectives, recovering lost Indigenous knowledge, the different ways of teaching and the employment of Ubuntu as the guiding principle in psychology and research. This section explored the findings that emerged from the artistic representations. It explored the understanding of the co-researchers regarding decolonisation within the psychology and research curriculum.

In addition, coloniality within psychology necessitated attempts to decolonise the profession. With the need for decolonisation having been highlighted, the findings explored the different sticking points to decolonial projects. The section on the artistic representations ended with an exploration of the different strategies and tactics that could be considered to facilitate the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum.

The next part of the process involved exploring these aspects through the medium of film. The process of developing the film and the challenges that emerged were explored in the methodology chapter. The next part of the findings explores the themes that emerged from the video. The expectation was that these themes would represent a solidification of the generative themes that emerged from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop and the artistic representations.

5.3.3 Video production

The video footage was collaboratively edited by the principal researcher and Co-researcher 1. The generative themes that emerged from the artistic representations were clarified and elaborated on in the video. However, the specific themes were representative of the views of Co-researcher 1; the other themes that were contributed by the other co-researchers were absent in the video. Therefore, the only generative themes clarified were

those contributed by Co-researcher 1. However, additional dimensions emerged in the video that had not been in the preceding stages of the study. The ideas are presented hereunder. The possible reasons for the additional information were that Co-researcher 1 had had the opportunity to reflect further on the questions under discussion. Furthermore, the content of the ideas might have been triggered by the withdrawal of Co-researcher 2, prompting some new reflections.

The findings in this section suggest that, for Co-researcher 1, decolonisation represents a new normal within psychology and the psychology curriculum. The idea of a shift from an old normal to a new normal is also reflected in the artistic representations. In this case, Co-researcher 1 further outlined the research implications of the shift and what this new normal in psychological research represents.

The suggestion is that the new normal in the case of research speaks to the empowerment of research participants. More specifically, it suggests that participants in the studies are more active in the research process and in directing the process and are not just passive sources of data for the benefit of the researcher. For Co-researcher 1, this also implies that the participants are acknowledged by name in any published material. The understanding is that the more acknowledgement the participants receive and the more active they are in the research, the lower the likelihood that they would withdraw from the study. The following quote from Co-researcher 1, which is found in the Decolonial Encounters video at 06:45, illustrates this:

We are saying to researchers that we want you to include participants in your study as active members of your study instead of just passive participants. So, we are saying that in your study, right, include research participants, right, and the importance of this is experience. We want research participants to have experience of the topic that is being researched. So, if we are saying, if a researcher, for example, is researching a certain topic, to have research

participants included in the study actively and not passively. So, what we are trying to achieve is that as you conduct your study, right, the contributions of the research participants should be included in your study. They should not be generalised so as to say; they should be included as they are. The names of your research participants should be included in the study as well. And thus, making them active participants in the study. The importance of this is experience, for the research participants. So if someone, so, if a research participant knows that they are active members of the study, they have the willingness, they have the energy, they have the attitude, the willingness to be part of the study. And therefore, this reduces the chances of research participants dropping out of the study because they know that their opinions and their contribution, in general, is of value to the study. And they will be included in the final findings of the study. And therefore, less chance of research participants dropping out of the study.

Co-researcher 1 possibly attributed the withdrawal of the other co-researchers to the idea of not being involved in the study. However, perhaps this is a more generic point and not explicitly related to the study. None of the co-researchers who withdrew from the study mentioned lack of involvement as a reason for withdrawing. The reasons that the other co-researchers advanced for their withdrawal were more practical and outside the confines of the research process. Only Co-researcher 2 mentioned discomfort regarding the development and distribution of the video.

Co-researcher 1 suggested that another benefit that could be derived from creating space for more active involvement of participants in the study is that it provides opportunities for participants to reflect on what the topic means to them personally. Co-researcher 1 stated the following at 08:27: *"I think that it gives them a chance to explore what that topic means to them at a personal level compared to just answering questions from a questionnaire."*

Regarding the barriers to decolonisation, Co-researcher 1 pointed to a perceived lack of awareness of the decolonisation of the curriculum. They suggested that the lack of awareness contributed to the inability of students and research participants to be actively involved in the decolonial project. The indication was that some needed to contend with personal struggles to get to a place where they could be active. Another contributor to the reluctance of students to be actively involved is the scale of the work that still needs to be done. This perceived reluctance means that the decolonial movement lacks broad-based support among students and communities. Therefore, Co-researcher 1 suggested that this makes it difficult to challenge the gatekeepers as a collective. To illustrate this idea, Co-researcher 1 stated the following at 09:05:

Firstly, I strongly believe that a lot of people are not aware of this topic. Number two, we are comfortable being passive participants because it feels like a mammoth task to be active in the study. Number three, the whole South African attitude of ... if someone I know has not done it, then who am I? I believe that before we even get to the gatekeepers, the struggles are quite personal. Because if, for example, this topic at hand is only known by us, then it is not enough for us to go to the gatekeepers. So, if we let people be aware, that this is what we are trying to do and in order for it to be a success we need you to be part of it. Then it is a starting point. From there we move on to people being comfortable with things that have never been done before. Nelson Mandela once said it always seems impossible until it is done. So, if we break that mentality of saying I don't want to do it because no one has done it before, if we were to break that, I believe that we would have more people being actively aware and involved.

The findings in the previous stages and the video suggest that various academic stakeholders have roles to play in the decolonisation process. Co-researcher 1 explored the role that students, lecturers and researchers could play in decolonisation. In terms of the students, Co-researcher 1 indicated the need for greater awareness of decolonisation and the

colonial history of higher education. The increased awareness would increase the likelihood of more students becoming involved in the process. Co-researcher 1 indicated the following at 11:55 in the video:

For students they just need awareness, awareness of what we are trying to do. So, when someone has knowledge, like knowledge is power. So, if someone has knowledge, then it shines the light on which direction to take. So, for the students, they just need to be aware of what is happening in order for them to know what they are getting involved into.

Concerning the lecturers, Co-researcher 1 suggested the following at 12:33: *“Moving to the lecturers. I believe that it is their duty to act as facilitators in this whole project. Because they are already facilitators to their students; just need to continue doing so when it comes to research.”* The indication is that lecturers, in their roles as classroom facilitators, can contribute to decolonisation awareness through the nature of their facilitation and how they conduct research. More specifically, Co-researcher 1 suggested that researchers could contribute to the empowerment of the research participants through the research approaches they adopt. Through the nature of the research, researchers could approach gatekeepers and power brokers with research findings and evidence that supports decolonisation. Through the empowerment of participants and the presentation of the research to the gatekeepers, a change could begin to occur. This idea is illustrated in the quote at 13:49:

So, moving to the researchers, the researchers are the one with more power because they are equipped about how to conduct research. So, I believe that researchers need to act as mentors to the ones that are on the ground. And now, if we are to move to the gatekeepers, the gatekeepers are the enablers. So, after we have educated the students, the research participants and the researchers are the ones who have the authority to take it to the gatekeepers. And when they get to the gatekeepers, that is when change will start to emerge. Because now

they will have fully or a complete set of what they are trying to achieve to present to those gatekeepers.

Co-researcher 1 also reflected on the role that powerful gatekeepers can play in facilitating decolonisation. The gatekeepers that were identified were regulatory bodies such as the HPCSA and the APA. Institutional management is also considered a gatekeeper because of its power in developing the higher education curriculum. Co-researcher 1 saw the role of the gatekeepers as being that of enablers through the provision of greater resources and ensuring that the researcher and curriculum agenda foreground African psychology. They suggested at 14:32,

I think their contribution is definitely more than those of students, participants and researchers because they hold more power. So, what they can contribute is to give researchers more resources because they have the power to say what can be taught and what cannot be taught. In terms of what can and cannot be taught, they give authority to say to the researchers, go into the field of African psychology, start teaching African psychology.

They hastened to add, as had been observed in the previous stages, that the focus on African psychology and research on African psychology does not mean the erasure of Western epistemology in psychology and research. It just means that Western epistemology should not take up the lion's share of the curriculum.

The video also explored the possible roles that communities could play in the decolonial project. In this case, the idea of creating awareness about psychology and mental health emerged again. Within this framework, Co-researcher 1 suggested that the community could play the role of learners; they could be made aware of and receive training in psychology, mental health and decolonisation. At 16:29, Co-researcher 1 suggested,

I think they can be learners in decolonisation because it is a new subject, something that is new that means that it needs to be taught to the communities.

When we go to the communities, we go there as facilitators, as educators so as to say that we have this subject; this what we want to do about it and we want to teach you about it before we can escalate it further.

More specifically, the awareness related to starting the teaching of psychology at school and running awareness campaigns about mental health and the importance of maintaining good mental health in communities. Co-researcher 1 also reflected on the possible practical steps that could be taken to further the decolonial project – workshops and community meetings. Co-researcher 1 stated the following at 19:07:

Well, we start with the community and the research participants. We educate them and we start there. Firstly, we educate them, as I have mentioned, we educate them about psychology and mental health. The practical steps through which we can educate is to have those workshops, to have those community meetings, to make educational psychology a subject at schools and have it as a module at university level.

In terms of institutions of higher learning, Co-researcher 1 suggested that they contribute to the education of communities to facilitate decolonisation. The fundamental motivation for this education is to ensure that all stakeholders are empowered. The ultimate objective is to approach the other gatekeepers to make a case for decolonising the curriculum and psychology. Co-researcher 1 indicated the following at 20:05:

Moving now to the institutional context, it is for those in institutional powers to act as mentors to the communities that we are trying to educate as this will be literally a new area of interest. We even educate the facilitators so as to say this is how we should teach the subject. Or how we should go about giving knowledge to the communities. So, when the community is fully equipped with knowledge and resources and also the researchers are equipped with knowledge and resources, then we have enough strength or power and knowledge as well to take to the

gatekeepers. So, when we get what we are trying to achieve is when we get to the gatekeepers. We know what we are talking about and we have fixed all the initial steps and those initial problems that they might see as loopholes in the research. So, we are going to the gatekeepers and we are saying that we are trying to decolonise psychology and the curriculum and we have done one, two and three to make sure that this is a success.

After the video, Co-researcher 1 was asked whether they had any closing comments after being part of the process and being the remaining participant in the study. The following quote indicates the concluding thoughts of Co-researcher 1:

Decolonisation is of the essence because for the longest time we have been doing things in a Western way. And we are Africans. We have adopted the Western way into our African lives. And it has shown in many ways that that is not always a solution for us because how the Western ways of viewing things are not how we view them. For me is a chance for us to learn about African psychology and making it a thing, you know giving birth to African psychology and not just having five pages in a 960-page book and the rest of it is Western and having to apply it in South African universities with South African learners. So, decolonisation of the curriculum is more than just including participants. It is also about us being aware that we are Africans and not just being aware that we are Africans but doing something about that awareness. So, if we are to decolonise this, then it gives us a chance to be Africans in everything that we do. And if not, just being Africans on certain things because we don't see the Western culture doing things in the African way. And also, in appeal to the gatekeepers to say, we are tired of being studied and diagnosed in a Western way. We want to do things in our way and that is the African way. And if we get to a point where we achieve what we are trying to do, then I believe it will give everyone a chance to be fully African, for them to know what it truly is to be African and what being

African means. So, if we are to say we are trying to achieve this and at the end of this when it is successful, it is a matter of when it says then we are getting closer to our true selves because we can't use something so Western to try and find ourselves or to become ourselves. We need our African roots so as to say if our African ancestors did things this way, then let them continue being done, not just informally so but formally as well.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of the study from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop discussions, artistic representations, and the video production process. The presented findings explored the meaning of decolonisation from the perspectives of the co-researchers. The co-researchers also reflected on the influence of the legacy of colonialism and apartheid on psychology and the curriculum.

Exploring these contemporary permutations of colonialism and apartheid made it clear that decolonisation is required. The process of decolonisation would critically reflect on and unmask the pervasive influences, some of which continue under terms such as neoliberalism and Whiteness. However, the process of unmasking and removing these vestiges is marked with stumbling blocks that have sometimes contributed to a sense of pessimism among some stakeholders. Despite the difficulties of attempting to decolonise universities steeped in neoliberalism, strategies, and tactics to begin the process within the psychology and research curriculum emerged.

The themes that emerged in the workshops and the generative themes from the artistic representations and the storyboarding process were further solidified in the video. In the video, the understanding of decolonisation as a shift from what was normal in the past towards a new normal was reaffirmed. However, greater focus was on the research aspects – reimagining the role of research participants and having researchers create space for research participants to participate actively and contribute to setting the research agenda. The barriers to

decolonisation were understood as the lack of awareness of psychology, the curriculum and decolonisation. In this light, solutions – greater awareness training about these aspects for all stakeholders –emerged.

The next chapter discusses these findings and connects them to the broader decolonial movement to make sense of them and create a basis for their possible implementation.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the interpretation of the findings and outlines the recommendations that emerged from the study. However, before embarking on this process, it is important to reflect on the previous chapters individually to facilitate the integration of this chapter into the overall study.

The first chapter of the study highlighted the need to begin conversations about the decolonisation of higher education and, more specifically, the psychology and research curriculum. The need for change has been driven by the appreciation of the colonial history of psychology and the vestiges of coloniality that still mark contemporary psychology and research curricula (Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018; Morreira et al., 2020). It further highlighted the modest progress that has been made in the decolonisation of the said curriculum.

Another highlighted issue was the persistent side-lining of students and the broader community in matters of curriculum reform. Consequently, the focus of the study was on students as one of the marginalised groups in the context of curriculum reform and decolonisation (Joosub, 2021; Tamburro, 2013). The fundamental question was, 'How can psychology students collaborate to make practical contributions to the development of a decolonised research curriculum in psychology?'

The specific objectives of the study were to explore postgraduate psychology students' perspectives on the colonial history of psychology and how it affects the research curriculum, to explore postgraduate psychology students' perspectives on the barriers to decolonisation and the transformation of the research curriculum within psychology and, based on the postgraduate psychology students' perspectives, to develop strategies for decolonising the research curriculum in psychology.

The second chapter explored the literature on decolonisation and the decolonisation of the curriculum. The literature clarified critical terms and highlighted the colonial history of

psychology and the difficulties that hampered the progress of decolonisation. It clarified that decolonisation did not equate with the erasure of Western thought within the curriculum but rather advocated that the different perspectives should exist dialogically and dialectically (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020; Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Different local and international models of the decolonial teaching of psychology were also explored to highlight the different approaches that could serve as inspiration.

Chapter 3 introduced the theoretical point of departure used in this study. The approach that was used was postcolonial theory. The historical perspective on the theory, its definition and key propositions were explored. Furthermore, the points of connection between postcolonial theory and higher education and research and PAR were expounded to highlight the relevance and utility of the theory for the study. Lastly, some of the key controversies of postcolonial theory received attention.

The fourth chapter focused on the methodological aspects of the study. The study was qualitative, and it employed PAR and PVA as methods of collecting data. The participants were all Black female postgraduate psychology students, and the aim was to create a safe space for these students to be co-researchers in the study and engage creatively in the decolonisation of the research curriculum within psychology. The stages involved in the utilisation of the PVA process were outlined in detail.

Chapter 5 focused on presenting the findings that emanated from the PAR and PVA processes. The findings explored the meaning of decolonisation, the legacy of colonialism and apartheid on the psychology and research curriculum, the stumbling blocks to decolonisation within psychology and the strategies and tactics to begin the process within psychology and research.

This chapter provides a discussion and interpretation of the findings and explores the limitations of the study. Some of the limitations emanated from the difficulties that emerged during the stages of the PVA process. Recommendations regarding the decolonisation of the

curriculum and future research are proffered to guide future research on the decolonisation of psychology.

6.2 Discussion of findings

The first two chapters highlighted the role that students had played in getting the decolonisation of the curriculum to the forefront of social consciousness through the #feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall protestations. It was further pointed out that students are unduly side-lined in curriculum development debates. Additionally, the colonial history of psychology and the persisting coloniality within psychology were highlighted.

Studies that are currently available locally and internationally have tended to focus on the experiences of students who have been in classes that have adopted a decolonial approach to teaching and learning without necessarily consulting students in the development of such courses (Alemán & Gaytán, 2017; Castell et al., 2018; Joosub, 2021; Razack, 2009; Wane et al., 2004; Zinga & Styres, 2019).

Furthermore, the studies used traditional qualitative methodologies, which in some ways continue to reinforce the traditional power imbalance between researchers and participants and risk that only superficial information regarding the phenomenon being studied will be elicited (Amosun et al., 2018; Barnes, 2018; Tamburro, 2013). In these studies, the design of the content of the course and the modes of delivery were conducted by the academic staff. The implication is that the decision-making process regarding what is taught and how it is taught remains uncontested.

This study moves the voices of students – as the original instigators of the contemporary decolonisation debate in South Africa – to the centre through the empirical exploration of students' perspectives on decolonisation. Furthermore, it creates space for students to contribute to the construction of a decolonised psychology curriculum. Additionally, the study makes use of PAR and PVA, which have, as their central objectives, the disruption

of the power imbalances between researchers and participants (Klocker, 2012; Mubuke & Leibowitz, 2013; Seehaver, 2018).

The other point that emerged from the research findings is that decolonisation should not rest solely with the academic community. Not just academics who are pro-decolonisation should be at the forefront. The findings suggest that students and local communities should be considered potential allies in the decolonial project. Thus, it may be politic for the academic community to join forces with local communities to demand decolonisation and to confront the institutional power brokers and regulatory bodies. This point is important because it is challenging to advocate decolonisation in institutional contexts steeped in neoliberalism and a higher education order that has become corporatised (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

Furthermore, academic staff are financially dependent on these institutions, which could complicate things when they need to critique and delegitimise the status quo (Gandhi, 2019). It is for this reason that connections among like-minded students, academic staff and local communities are critical for the furtherance of the decolonial agenda (Cornell & Kessi, 2017; Silva & Students for Diversity Now, 2018; Watkins et al., 2018).

6.2.1 Defining decolonisation

The meaning of decolonisation is surrounded by contestation and uncertainty (Costandius et al., 2018; Long, 2016). Thus, the co-researchers were requested to reflect on what decolonisation meant from their point of view. The findings suggest that the co-researchers understand decolonisation as a transition to a new normal within psychology and research. This new normal represents a break from what was normal in the past to this new normal.

The idea of conceptualising decolonisation as a shift from one form of psychology and curriculum to a different form of psychology and curriculum is an interesting and unique contribution. It represents a change and a conceptual movement to a new way of practising

and thinking about psychology. The new normal within psychology and research is committed to social justice and considered relevant to the current South African situation.

Key contributing aspects to ushering in this new normal are the critiques of prevailing systems of privilege that have contributed to the marginalisation of the ways of knowing and healing large groups of people. The new normal within psychology is representative of psychology that is localised in that it is relevant to the needs of local communities. The process of localisation has been mooted. The thrust of the process involves the revaluing and reappraisal of the ontologies and epistemologies of local communities as central to the future of psychology and research (Chilisa, 2012; Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

From a research perspective, decolonisation represents a shift concerning the relationship between researchers and participants as the participants are more active in shaping the research process. The philosophical underpinnings of participative research methods appear to be in line with the idea of participants being more than just data sources to contribute to the research agenda and outcomes (Barnes, 2018; Chilisa, 2012).

The meaning that the co-researchers associate with decolonisation supports the idea of decolonisation as a process of disrupting and dismantling colonial edifices to facilitate the political, psychological, and spiritual emancipation of previously marginalised people (Chilisa, 2012; Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019; Magoqwana, 2018; Mheta et al., 2018; van der Westhuizen, 2013). From this perspective, local communities previously excluded from psychology and research play a crucial role in the decolonisation process.

6.2.2 Colonial history of psychology

After reflecting on the meaning of decolonisation, the co-researchers reflected on how the colonial history of psychology and research affects the current university curriculum. In Chapter 2, the influence of colonialism on the modern world was explored and understood through the lens of postcolonial theory. In Chapter 3, the colonial influences on psychology were also explored through the perspectives of various decolonial scholars.

In this study, the co-researchers also reflected on the history of psychology and its colonial influences. Through the exploration of this history, specific aspects of contemporary South African psychology that exemplify these colonial influences emerged. The findings suggest that these issues – the language of instruction, accessibility of services, universalisation of psychology and the Western epistemological approach to psychological practice and research – have contributed to making higher education, including psychology, inaccessible to many African students.

6.2.2.1 Language of instruction

One aspect that emerged from the findings as contributing to the perceived inaccessibility of the psychology and research curriculum is the language of instruction. It appears that language contributes to making the psychology and research curriculum and psychological services inaccessible in various ways. Relating to culture, language and school quality, students are from various backgrounds, which means that their degree of proficiency in the English language (as stated in Chapter 1, the mode of instruction at the majority of universities in South Africa at the time of this study) differs. The inequality of proficiency in the language is biased towards first-language speakers and those who have received a better education. Therefore, in this sense, language becomes an additional barrier to the success of poor African students.

In line with these findings, Mutepe et al. (2021) found that undergraduate students at a rural South African university struggled with grammar, pronunciation, expression, comprehension, and interference with their first language when using English for teaching and learning. These struggles contributed to their poor academic performance.

When students graduate, they should be able to provide services within a linguistically complex society. Therefore, the incessant reliance on English as the medium of instruction contributes to the marginalisation of African students and their communities (Mutepe et al., 2021). Therefore, as a possible solution, the findings of this study have suggested that making

the curriculum multilingual needs to be explored. In this case, multilingualism relates to the inclusion of African languages as possible mediums of instruction and making courses in African languages compulsory. Thus, the idea of language has become central to the decolonial project for several reasons (Baloyi, 2021; Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Mayaba et al., 2018).

Within psychology, language plays a critical role because the entire profession is based on talking to achieve optimum functioning – otherwise referred to as the talking cure. However, this talking cure within the South African context occurs mainly in English (Long, 2017). The incessant reliance on English also fails to recognise that the Western canon has reduced psychology to what is measurable, observable, or explainable in English. Therefore, the use of English to describe Indigenous content creates possibilities for the misrepresentation of Indigenous concepts. Additionally, the incessant reliance on English suggests that African languages do not have the scientific viability to capture the experiences and realities of African people (Baloyi, 2021).

Zwane (2019) has suggested that the apparent unwillingness of higher education institutions to adopt multilingualism indicates that they are not serious about decolonisation. The centrality of language within decolonisation is based on the idea that language is the means through which knowledge is created and shared. Over and above the information transmitted through language, cultural belief systems, ideologies and ways of thinking are communicated through language. The question then becomes whose symbols, values, belief systems and ideologies are contained in that language. From that perspective, language becomes a tool of power.

Mayaba et al. (2018) suggest that a critical look at language can play a significant role in unmasking the power relations, ideologies and struggles embedded in the curriculum. Therefore, courageous and sustained broad-based efforts to challenge the dominance of English as a scientific medium of communication are imperative (Baloyi, 2021).

6.2.2.2 Accessibility of services

Another issue on the accessibility of psychology that emerged from the study relates to the perceived lack of accessibility of the service to the broader population. The findings suggest that those in our country living on the margins of society, who are invariably mostly Black, under-educated, under-resourced and have comparatively less access to the economy, have also been denied access to psychological services. The services that these groups have been denied are varied and include therapeutic services, opportunities to contribute to the academic research agenda and access to life-enhancing services such as career counselling. Psychology has the potential to impact the lives and material condition of South Africans; however, the fact that the services are out of reach for most people has rendered psychology irrelevant, and thus, psychology has only played a modest role in the transformation of society (Long, 2017).

An interesting aspect that emerged from the findings was connected to psychology and language related to psychological assessments. Psychological testing and psychological test development practice was imported from and modelled on the Western canon. This has called into question the validity and reliability of these psychological tests for use in the South African context (Laher & Cockcroft, 2017).

As outlined in Chapter 5, the language of psychological assessment is typically English or, in some cases, English and Afrikaans. The findings indicated that the pre-eminence of these languages in psychological assessments could be attributable to the fact that tests were developed for the benefit of the minority and the marginalisation of others. Thus, the language issues within psychological assessment have contributed to denying opportunities to those who are not proficient in English – invariably the Black and poor (Laher & Cockcroft, 2017).

Studies conducted in South African schools have consistently suggested that test-takers who are not first-language English speakers tend to perform worse in aptitude tests, thus suggesting that language could be a source of bias (Laher & Mokone, 2008; Spaull,

2016). Similar challenges regarding language and culture were also found in personality assessments (Silva & Laher, 2012). However, Spaul (2016) adds that the nature of education at the school level could also contribute to the differences in performance and should not be ignored.

6.2.2.3 Universalisation of the psychology and research curriculum

Yet another way in which the psychology and research curriculum is affected by coloniality is through the universalisation of Westernised theory and practice. In the findings, the expression that the co-researchers used was that psychology and psychological theory were “*too general*,” and there was insufficient consideration of the different cultures and how mental health played out in those contexts. Universalisation also fails to acknowledge that knowledge is idiographic in that it is embedded within the context where it developed and, therefore, cannot be fully understood outside that context (Reiter, 2019; Tamburro, 2013).

Linked to this, lamentations about the fact that nothing concrete has emerged to ameliorate the situation despite the apparent widespread awareness of the situation were noted. The regulatory bodies within psychology, such as HPCSA, were implicated in the proliferation of universal psychology through their insistence on standardised practice. Baloyi (2021) points out that although the HPCSA issued a call for the transformation of the profession over 20 years ago, progress has been negligible, and the profession is still dominated by Western epistemology. It appears that the calls for the transformation of psychology could have been lip service because the HPCSA has the power to set and implement policies aimed at guiding the profession.

Chilisa (2012) has been critical of the tendency to universalise within research and has suggested that one of the outcomes of the universalisation process is the blurring of the fundamental differences that may exist between Western and Indigenous communities. This blurring implies that the specific needs and contributions that Indigenous communities might

have could also be blurred. Additionally, this means that this approach may benefit a privileged few, but such benefits come at the cost of broader social injustice (Adams et al., 2017).

The tendency towards universalisation appears to have acquired a normative status within the curriculum and the classroom. Viruru and Persky (2019) suggest that this has contributed to making the classroom experience predictable, orderly, linear, progressive, cumulative, and normalised. The normalisation of this approach means that very little educational innovation has occurred, and higher education has become a sausage machine producing homogenous students, including those who are Black and trained in Western thought. Any students who deviate from this homogeneity are considered deficient; in other words, the difference is equated with deficiency.

6.2.2.4 Therapeutic and research processes

The findings suggest that the outcomes of the influence of colonialism and apartheid on psychological practice can be seen in the therapeutic and research processes. From a therapeutic perspective, the findings suggest that the development and application of the therapeutic modalities applied in psychology do not always account for the role of context. The implication is that the insufficient consideration of context could contribute to incorrect diagnoses and ineffective intervention strategies.

In terms of research, the findings suggest that the colonial history of psychology has contributed to shaping the relationship between the researcher and participants. In this context, the approach to research places participants in a passive role with the researcher reserving control of the process. In addition, this approach means that participants have no say in which research topics receive preference. The co-researchers' criticism is in line with Chilisa's (2012). Academic institutions, funding agencies – primarily from the West – and researchers' personal interests play significant roles in determining research priorities and the needs of potential participants are not necessarily considered (Chilisa, 2012, 2017).

6.2.3 Stumbling blocks to decolonisation

The findings discussed have pointed to the need for decolonisation to expose and disrupt the colonial influence on the psychology and research curriculum and, by extension, the discipline. Change and the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum have been slow and little concrete progress has emerged. The current study explored the possible stumbling blocks, as relayed by the co-researchers, that have hampered the potential progress in decolonising the profession. The findings suggest that the stumbling blocks towards the decolonisation of psychology include the regulatory bodies, the perceived lack of curriculum responsiveness and the perceived lack of student agency.

6.2.3.1 The role of the regulatory bodies

The findings in this study suggest that the regulatory bodies within psychology have contributed to the slow progress of decolonisation. Masaka (2019) has also been critical of the universal standards of knowledge promoted by these regulatory bodies and has suggested that the adherence to these standards means that Western canon will remain front and centre, with localised and Indigenous knowledge being seen as inferior. Therefore, this inclination serves to maintain the status quo and is thus a challenge to the decolonial project.

As illustrated in the findings, the current practice appears to be that universities and other training institutions adhere largely uncritically to the standards advanced by the HPCSA and others, making decolonisation challenging (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Carolissen et al. (2017) suggest that these prescripts produce conformity and uniformity, are not responsive to the context and do not sufficiently develop critical and analytical skills in students. It is worth noting that some psychology departments have begun creating modules introducing modules on decolonisation, Indigenous knowledge, and African psychology in South Africa. Some of these initiatives were explored in Chapter 2. However, these modules have been introduced through institutional initiatives with little apparent interest from the HPCSA (Baloyi, 2021).

6.2.3.2 Perceived lack of responsiveness

The perceived lack of responsiveness of the psychology and research curriculum emerged as another possible sticking point for decolonisation. The apparent lack of responsiveness means that the curriculum does not consider the needs of a particular context. The key contributor to the lack of responsiveness is the limited space for students and local communities to contribute to the development of the curriculum.

The power relations within institutions heavily influence the responsiveness of the higher education curriculum. The nature of these power relations also affects the trajectory of the decolonisation process. Power dynamics within institutions influence how the conversation about curriculum development unfolds. Positions of influence within institutions are still occupied mainly by staff who places primacy on Western worldviews. They, therefore, reproduce Western ideas within the curriculum and have no sense of the needs and cultures of local Indigenous people (Castell et al., 2018). Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) suggest that this lack of responsiveness of the psychology curriculum to local needs is problematic.

Space must be created within academia for students and local communities to contribute to the development of the curriculum. However, the development of a new curriculum makes epistemic disobedience necessary. Without this disobedience, change within the curriculum is not likely (Joosub, 2021).

Bishop et al. (2021) conducted a pilot project that included a research component that created space for Aboriginal parents and communities to develop the curriculum and teaching at an Australian school. Bishop et al. (2021) suggest that this approach enriched the learning experience of all the relevant stakeholders. The inclusion of these communities creates a plurality of voices that can contribute to the university curriculum and improve representation and epistemological diversity. In addition, possibilities for developing home-grown solutions to local challenges are created (Chilisa, 2017; Meda, 2019).

6.2.3.3 Perceived lack of agency among students

In addition to having a higher education context that does not create space for engagements with communities, the co-researchers suggested that some students may not be particularly keen to play an active part in the decolonial project. The apparent lack of enthusiasm is evidenced by the modest interest that participation in this study elicited. The perceived lack of interest and agency in participation is problematic because it limits the diversity of voices that could contribute to the disruption of the status quo within curriculum development (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017).

The findings suggest that the apparent lack of diversity in the group could be due to the possibility that some White students perceive decolonisation as threatening. This idea accords with Madden and McGregor's (2013) findings that some of their students wanted to avoid the feelings of discomfort that come with decolonial conversations. Clark et al. (2013) also found that some White students struggled to connect with the multiple themes of disenfranchisement that marginalised people have experienced and continue to experience.

The findings further suggest that the modest participation among Black students could be attributable to their background and upbringing. The co-researchers suggested that the education that some of the Black students received did not encourage the taking of initiative but rather fostered passivity among students. Alemán and Gaytán (2017) found that Black students in the USA were reticent to participate because they were concerned that conversations about decolonisation would elicit harmful and painful memories.

Another possible contributor to the perceived apathy could be the sense of powerlessness that students experience when it comes to transforming the curriculum. Students occupy less powerful positions within institutional structures, and this could create the perception that they are unable to influence the trajectory of institutions. This perception could also be based on the idea that students are often neglected in matters of curriculum

development and educational innovations (Amosun et al., 2018; Tamburro, 2013; Watkins et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the power relations that are at play within institutions and an awareness of the implications of these power relations could also have a contributing effect to non-participation. In other words, when students become aware, through critical reflexivity, of the power relations within institutions and their position within those power relations, a sense of paralysis overcomes them (Idahosa & Bradbury, 2020). According to Idahosa and Bradbury (2020), this sense of paralysis emanates from the awareness of the limits of their agency and capacity to contribute to change.

In this study, this phenomenon emerges as a sense of pessimism about the ability of the university to change and the ability of students to contribute to that change. Despite this, critical reflexivity, when applied within the classroom context, can affirm the embodied knowledge of students, and contribute to reinforcing a sense of agency among students (Idahosa & Bradbury, 2020; Joosub, 2021).

6.2.4 Possible strategies for decolonisation

The findings of the study also explored the possible strategies that could be used to contribute to a decolonised psychology and research curriculum. The strategies that emerged focused on the decolonisation of research, the preservation and rediscovery of ancient knowledge and the integration of classroom teaching and learning strategies.

6.2.4.1 Decolonising research

One of the strategies is related to the decolonisation of research within psychology and includes the overall approach, methodological approaches, and the need for continuous research on decolonisation. Regarding the overall approach, the findings suggest that more decolonial research that is collaborative and inclusive of the various stakeholders within psychology and the broader academy is needed. The findings suggest that local communities

must be included in setting the research agenda and the parameters for participation in research.

In line with this approach, Mheta et al. (2018) suggest that it would be helpful to share the research findings with community participants in the manner and language most accessible to these communities. Jackson (2013) suggests that researchers should strive for more collaborative approaches and participatory methods as they are more direct in unmasking power relations and attempting to mitigate their impact. In line with this idea, Kessi (2017) advocates research processes that actively promote the participation of marginalised communities. The purpose of this approach would be to bridge the gap between the academy and the lived experiences of marginalised people.

Methodologically, research from a decolonial perspective requires different tools and data sources than traditional research to enable constructive interactions between researchers and participants. The methodological approaches that have been linked to the decolonial approach to research include arts-based methods such as photovoice (Kessi, 2018), storytelling (Chilisa, 2012; van der Westhuizen et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2013), folklore and myths (Chilisa, 2017), narrative analysis (van der Westhuizen et al., 2017) and PVA itself.

Similarly, the findings of this study suggest a deeper focus on participatory, narrative and storytelling methods when conducting research. Such a research approach is essential because knowledge is neither apolitical nor ahistorical; therefore, the relevance and applicability of Western knowledge should be subject to critical appraisal (Ally & August, 2018). This critical appraisal is vital because, as postcolonial theory avers, to speak is to speak from a place in history and a place on the map (Gandhi, 2019).

Collaboration and the participatory nature of research create a context where the knowledge created has greater relevance and the potential to make a difference. For instance, Plush (2013) suggests that a method such as PVA can create opportunities for people to create their knowledge and play a role in communicating that knowledge to key decision-

makers. In that way, these approaches become part of people-centred advocacy. Being part of this advocacy contributes to building agency among participants. In this study, the advocacy group is constituted of postgraduate psychology students. This point is important to consider because the findings suggest a measure of passivity among some within the student population (Plush, 2013). The co-researchers also suggested that employing research methods such as systematic reviews, scoping reviews and meta-studies could be helpful in gathering and collating information about Indigenous knowledge.

Another aspect related to decolonising research had to do with psychological assessment. Psychological assessments are used in different contexts for different purposes. The focus of the findings was on the psychological assessments employed in career counselling and development. The question of psychometrics is important because of the historical application of psychometrics in South Africa.

In the past, psychometrics were deployed in South Africa to regulate access to education and enable social engineering (Diab et al., 2020). Therefore, the colonising effects of psychometry must be disrupted. The findings suggest that those administering and interpreting assessments should not only confine themselves to the score that test-takers obtain but should also consider the context of the test-takers when interpreting the test scores. The indication is that understanding the context will give the researcher a deeper understanding of the test-taker and put psychologists in a better position to offer guidance. Laher and Cockcroft (2017) also recommend supplementing psychometric testing with some qualitative data to address the issues concerning potential bias.

The literature on decolonisation suggests that it is a long-term process that seeks to recognise and disrupt coloniality within, among others, the psychology and research curriculum and to reclaim and revalue Indigenous ontology, epistemology, culture and heritage and place it at the centre of future theory and praxis within academia and broader society (Chilisa, 2012; Magoqwana, 2018; Mheta et al., 2018; van der Westhuizen, 2013). The

findings suggest that a process of this nature requires consistent and continuous development and experimentation within different approaches. The experimental aspect denotes the consistent implementation of the research findings. The indication is that this approach can contribute to making tangible progress. The idea of implementation and progress is essential because there has been criticism from some scholars that conversations about decolonisation have not brought meaningful change (Cornell & Kessi, 2017; Long, 2017; Morreira et al., 2020; Zwane, 2019).

6.2.4.2 Recovery and preservation of Indigenous knowledge

Another overall strategy for decolonisation that emerged from the findings is recovering and preserving Indigenous culture and knowledge. The recovery of the information requires close collaboration with the communities that hold that information. However, the co-researchers in this study cautioned that this recovery of information should also be subject to critical appraisal for relevance and utility.

The idea of recovering Indigenous information is a critical part of decolonisation as it seeks to recentre and revalue Indigenous knowledge (Chilisa, 2012, 2017). In addition, the recovery of this information is considered an essential part of the process of healing from colonial trauma and involves acknowledging the colonial damage to Indigenous people and holding institutions accountable (Ngunyulu et al., 2020; Villanueva, 2013). However, this recovery and collating of information must occur systematically and be coordinated to integrate this information into the curriculum so that students can be examined on this knowledge.

Ngunyulu et al. (2020) suggest that the fact that African epistemological approaches are not systematised and codified contributes to the perception that these epistemologies are unscientific. On this point, the current study finds that broadening the understanding of what science is necessary because if African epistemologies continue to be defined in Western terms, they will always be disadvantaged.

The public vilification of Indigenous epistemologies contributed to these epistemologies being hidden and practised in secret (Ngunyulu et al., 2020). Furthermore, efforts have been made to protect the secrecy of indigenous knowledge using legal mechanisms (Tong, 2010). Therefore, the practice of indigenous knowledge in secret has been a tool through which it has been protected from misappropriation and abuse (Mutwa, 2019). The question is, has large swathes of indigenous knowledge been genuinely lost or has it been deliberately hidden from the public to protect it from misappropriation and abuse? The answer to this question has significant implications for the rediscovery, collation, and systematising of this knowledge.

The unavailability of some of this information contributes to the incompleteness of the puzzle of Indigenous knowledge. The incompleteness of the puzzle contributes to inaccuracies around Indigenous epistemologies and an incomplete understanding of Indigenous epistemologies. The inaccuracies that abound and the incomplete understanding of Indigenous epistemologies have contributed to their public discreditation. Tong (2010) suggests that rather than focusing solely on legal mechanisms of secrecy to protect indigenous epistemologies, secrecy should be part of a comprehensive approach to protecting indigenous epistemologies.

As part of this approach, Hountondji (2009) suggests that rather than relying on secrecy, it may be more prudent to rely on the active, lucid, and responsible appropriation of indigenous knowledge by indigenous societies themselves. This approach implies the development of more independent and self-reliant research that focuses on employing indigenous knowledge collected over centuries to address issues that indigenous communities themselves identify as problems. Hence, the findings of this study suggest that the process of the recovery, collation and systematisation of knowledge must be undertaken carefully to ensure that the knowledge accurately reflects the epistemologies. On the other hand, the danger that Indigenous epistemologies could be co-opted and gutted of their true essence in

an attempt to make them mainstream and appealing to neoliberal sensibilities is real (Banda & Mokwena, 2019; Barnes, 2018; Ngunyulu et al., 2020).

6.2.4.3 *Creating integrated learning spaces*

Another strategy involves creating spaces for integrating and accommodating different perspectives in the psychology and research curriculum. The idea of accommodating different perspectives in the curriculum is one of the hallmarks of decolonised education. It is linked to the idea that no single epistemological approach can account for every eventuality and that for us to understand the world, it is essential to accommodate other perspectives and integrate these perspectives.

Postcolonial theory also posits the idea of hybridity where Western, Indigenous, and other relevant perspectives are integrated to bring about unique, relevant, and contextual understanding (Gandhi, 2019; Kapoor, 2002). The idea of hybridity has been mooted as a possible outcome. Miller and Miller (2020) suggest that this approach to decolonisation can be useful in exposing the limitations of Western epistemology and the role that it has played in rationalising oppression. The inclusiveness achieved through integration in the community means moving away from a place where local communities are more than just objects of pity and charity but become active participants in shaping psychology.

Furthermore, these findings indicate that community mobilisation – involving the broader community as allies in the struggle for decolonisation – could also be a useful strategy. Seehawer (2018) advocates greater collaboration between the academy, local communities and Indigenous peoples and going beyond the written text to include the oral history and knowledge of the Indigenous peoples. An example of such a collaboration is in the work of Ngunyulu et al. (2020); students, academic staff and traditional practitioners came together to consider the decolonial future of the nursing profession in South Africa. Academic staff and students should begin to appreciate the epistemological value of all stakeholders and engage community elders, healers, and herbalists in collaborations regarding knowledge production

(Seehawer, 2018). In terms of broadening participation, studying student voice through inter-university collaboration might also be worth considering.

The idea of collaboration is in line with the ideals of decolonisation (Ngunyulu et al., 2020). In addition, collaboration could contribute to the consolidation of resources for decolonisation. One of the suggestions that emerged from this study is the need for additional resources; collaboration could be one way to fill this need. Currently, it appears that in doing their own thing, universities and departments are being influenced by the neoliberal idea of cross-institutional competition rather than collaboration.

6.2.4.4 Approaches to teaching and learning

Teaching and learning practices within the classroom are another strategic approach to decolonisation. The first aspect relevant to teaching and learning involves emphasising the narrative approaches to psychology and research within the curriculum. The findings suggest that this approach could be useful because it emphasises context when exploring behaviour and thus has commonalities with some aspects of decolonisation. Van der Westhuizen et al. (2017) also appear to favour a narrative approach to research as a potential tool for decolonisation and the empowerment of local communities.

However, it is important to note that power relations contribute to the shaping of the narratives. The power relationships create a scenario where some of the ideas of the progenitors become more dominant in certain stories. These ideas then become dominant and shape the context. Some voices and stories may then become marginalised because of power imbalances or because the stories do not necessarily accord with the dominant narratives. Therefore, the potential value that narrative approaches have is undeniable, but they should be applied within a measure of criticality (Crossley, 2000; László, 2011; Richert, 2006).

The second aspect of teaching and learning relates to encouraging dialogue and discussion between students in the classroom. The findings suggest a need to create spaces

for students and academic staff to interact and create opportunities for integrating diverging perspectives into the classroom. This necessitates the selection of students from diverse backgrounds for postgraduate courses.

After these diverse students have entered the classroom, safe classroom spaces must be created to facilitate meaningful discussions about decolonisation. The integration of the different perspectives does not mean the erasure of one at the expense of another. It is based on the idea that none of the epistemological approaches, on their own, can adequately account for the nature of reality. Nibafu et al. (2021) suggest that collaborative learning approaches can contribute to deeper learning and create conditions for enhanced understanding of the subject matter. In addition, collaborative learning creates circumstances for students to learn from each other.

The traditional approach suggests that the lecturer is the foremost authority in the classroom and is the source of all knowledge. Therefore, it serves to preserve the power relations between lecturers and students. Conversely, a decolonial praxis within the classroom context has been offered as an alternative to the traditional approach. A decolonial praxis within the classroom involves creating safe spaces for students to be critical and question, from their positionality, how they are implicated in or affected by the proliferation of assumptions, biases, and power relations. Interactions of this nature within the classroom enrich the learning experience by creating opportunities for students to learn valuable and relevant skills from non-traditional sources (Bishop et al., 2021; Joosub, 2021; Zinga & Styres, 2019). Furthermore, this approach allows learning from the embodied knowledge students bring to the experiences.

The approaches are not dissimilar to the Barrio approaches Villanueva (2013) championed within the Chicano context. The students involved in the pedagogical approach have some similarities with the co-researchers in this study. In many ways, these students find themselves in spaces where they have to negotiate the multiple identities that they occupy. In

one sense, they were post-graduate students in a historically White institution, where they were not fully embraced. In another sense, they were increasingly alienated from the context where they emerged by being post-graduate students in a historically White institution. Thus, they become natives of nowhere (Kumalo, 2018). Therefore, integrating the embodied knowledge of these types of students can be very instructive and help the academy gain a deeper insight into the realities that many face within academia. As the Barrio pedagogy demonstrated in Villanueva (2013), it can help bring communities and academia together and challenge the epistemological and ontological perspectives of all stakeholders involved.

The third aspect of teaching and learning relates to language and the possibility of making language training part of the curriculum. The findings suggest that it may be helpful to consider including African languages in the curriculum to broaden the reach of psychology to include people who speak African languages. Language is critical because it is how knowledge is transmitted and, therefore, it can play a significant role in the unmasking of the power relations, ideologies and struggles embedded in the curriculum (Mayaba et al., 2018).

Costandius et al. (2018) explain that the experience of Black students is different. Black students find university life alienating, disempowering and violent. Consequently, Black students tend to struggle to complete their degrees. These struggles have been attributed to a wide range of causes, including, among others, language. In psychology, language is vital because the profession is based on the use of communication as a tool for change.

In South Africa, conversation within the theory, practice and training of psychology occurs in English despite the multilingual nature of South African society (Kiguwa & Segalo, 2018; Long, 2017). Ngunyulu et al. (2020) note that students felt compelled to use English rather than their native language. The sense of compulsion that they experience at university speaks to the privilege that English enjoys at institutions of higher learning. The privileging of English in psychology and higher education means that most people who could otherwise have gained assistance from psychology are excluded. Hence, the co-researchers suggested

that it may be worthwhile for psychology students to learn additional languages that could enable them to render assistance in a multilingual context (Mheta et al., 2018).

The fourth aspect that relates to teaching and learning involves the development of a psychology and research curriculum based on the values of Ubuntu. The findings suggest that the co-researchers understood Ubuntu as a uniquely African and South African concept based on collaboration that could contribute to making psychology more relevant. Furthermore, the idea of Ubuntu can also be the basis for advocating change among the various gatekeepers.

The suggestion of Ubuntu as the basis for curriculum development has been mooted and applied by various scholars. For instance, Hlatshwayo and Shawa (2020) have advocated an Ubuntu-Currere approach to curriculum development. This approach moves away from the individualistic, top-down, and universal education systems and places primacy on the context within which the curriculum is enacted. When applied within the South African context, this framework calls for the increased and meaningful participation of all affected stakeholders. Participation ensures greater awareness of the context and the material conditions of the places where the curriculum is enacted.

The values of Ubuntu, to the extent that they regulate human interaction through universal respect for being-through-the-other, can also provide a valuable framework for ethics in research (Naude, 2019). The idea of being-through-the other implies that the researcher recognises their personhood as inextricably linked to their context, people, nature, and ancestors and those of others. The researcher recognises that their personhood is intricately connected to that of the participants. From that perspective, the relationship between the researcher and participants is sacred as it creates guidelines for how the researcher should behave in that relationship (Chilisa, 2012).

In the fifth place, the findings suggest that the institution should create spaces for all stakeholders to contribute to shaping the profession as a strategy for decolonisation. The idea of creating spaces for those outside the institution to contribute is also considered critical for

a decolonised curriculum. Kessi (2017) supports this approach and advocates the practice of decolonisation that encourages the participation of marginalised communities. The aim of encouraging participation would be to narrow the chasm between the academy and the lived experiences of local communities. The narrowing of this chasm could contribute to managing the epistemic violence that much of the colonised world experiences. This approach is in line with the Ubuntu-Currere approach in that it calls for close collaboration with multiple stakeholders (Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020).

The co-researchers pointed out that this can also create a deeper understanding of the needs of the community and contribute to a more relevant curriculum. The idea of close interactions and collaborations with local communities is one of the features of the approach that Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) adopt. Kiguwa and Segalo (2018) indicate that they take students on walkabouts within local communities to encourage critical and dialogical engagements with those communities as part of theorising about the world. Internationally, Watkins et al. (2018), through the practice of Psychologies of Liberation, engage students experientially with local communities' practices as part of working in solidarity with those local communities. The approaches that these scholars outline are also discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

The integration of local knowledge in the curriculum could also contribute to the identity formation and connectedness of students. The Western epistemology that is a feature within higher education contributes to a form of dissonance among students and contributes to creating what is referred to as the native of nowhere. Decolonisation should deal with this sense of dissonance and ascribe to the importance of Indigenous knowledge and the students' embodied experiences (Kumalo, 2018, 2021; Nibafu et al., 2021).

The findings suggest that these approaches are indeed interesting and provide value, but the co-researchers questioned the extent to which students are taught and assessed on these approaches and other Indigenous knowledge systems or whether Indigenous systems

receive lip service. Ensuring that these aspects are part of board exams and the standardised programmes that universities teach is necessary. The implication is that there needs to be more time devoted to topics on African psychology, formalised assessment criteria and the development of scientific and academic standards for teaching and researching African perspectives (Cloete & Auriacombe, 2019).

6.2.4.5 Awareness of psychology

The findings suggest that the decolonial project could be furthered by creating awareness among local communities about psychology and the importance of mental health. This awareness would encourage local communities to take mental health seriously and for psychology to gain a greater understanding of the needs of these local communities and the extent to which psychology can be responsive to their mental health needs. Through this process, the need for the decolonisation of psychology would become apparent, thus impel community mobilisation to support the decolonisation project.

The aim would be for local communities and academia to work together collaboratively to highlight the need for decolonisation in the HPCSA. The indication was that when these stakeholders work collaboratively, they would have a much stronger voice and would be in a better position to pressurise the regulatory body to change regulatory and accreditation structures and prioritise the decolonisation of psychology. The fundamental aim would be to ensure that the training that students receive is relevant to the context.

Diab et al. (2020) mention a process adopted in Palestine that involved shaping psychology training to fit the context. One such practice that has been adopted involves setting up community projects and providing knowledge about psychology and mental health to communities in Palestine. Part of the programme involved teaching the communities about managing basic mental health issues and family-related issues.

The process aligns with the suggestion from this study about creating awareness of mental health and psychology in local communities. Diab et al. (2020) point out that reaching

out to these communities can be liberatory. However, the underlying theme in this study is creating a psychology training approach that is relevant to the needs of local communities and, therefore, not liberation for its own sake but liberation informed by material conditions on the ground. The approach that Diab et al. (2020) took was not to enable people to adapt to a dysfunctional context but rather to ensure that psychology was practised in such a way that helped communities manage and negotiate their life circumstances so that they could derive meaning from extreme conditions.

The approach being mooted can also enable the profession to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of local communities. Lack of knowledge makes it difficult for academic staff and clinicians to work towards appropriate healthcare. Therefore, to ameliorate this situation, space for communities and knowledge producers to develop relevant knowledge collaboratively is necessary.

Creating relevant knowledge is one part of the equation. This process should be accompanied by a collation and systematisation of relevant knowledge, the teaching of that knowledge and the examination of students on that knowledge (Ngunyulu et al., 2020). It is important to consider this because the slow pace of decolonisation means that communities and users of psychological services are denied access to services that acknowledge unique experiences.

This section explored the findings of this study from the Decolonial Encounters Workshop, artistic representations and the content of the video and connected the findings to the literature and theory. The meaning of decolonisation was explored, including coloniality within psychology and research, barriers to decolonisation and decolonisation strategies. The following section presents recommendations based on these aspects to contribute to the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum.

6.3 Recommendations

In the previous section, the findings that emerged from the study were discussed to make sense thereof within the context of previous studies. Various strategies that formed the basis for the decolonial approach to the psychology and research curriculum emerged. This section explores the strategies that make up this decolonial approach to teaching and learning within psychology and research.

A decolonial approach involves a curriculum development process that is eclectic and comprises collaborative efforts between stakeholders both inside and outside the institution (Castell et al., 2018; Meda, 2019; Ramparsad, 2001; Watkins et al., 2018). It also means the proliferation of dialogic engagement within the university, the expansion of knowledge production and looking at canon in new ways (Lockett, 2016).

This approach would ensure that students are taught to engage with Indigenous people from their perspective. It should produce psychology that acknowledges the impact of historical injustices on every aspect of the lives of colonised people and the role that these injustices play in psychological ill-being. The role of decolonisation in the healing process should also be considered (van der Westhuizen et al., 2017; Watkins et al., 2018).

From this perspective, research approaches would be based on decolonial ideas, the recovery and preservation of knowledge, the integration of different perspectives, community engagements and the employment of Ubuntu. However, it is essential to remember that working towards decolonisation can be challenging when this work must occur within institutional contexts that insist on the uncritical adoption of Western standards that inculcate ways of thinking and being that facilitate the proliferation of capitalist neoliberal agendas among students (Maldonado-Torres, 2016).

In the first place, it is recommended that more decolonial research and research on decolonising psychology and research be conducted. As such, decolonisation could be developed into a focus area within psychology departments and opportunities made available

for postgraduate students to choose decolonisation as the topic of their studies. The academic staff who are part of this focus area could then initiate interaction with local communities to create space for these communities to develop research priorities (Jackson, 2013; Kessi, 2017; Mheta et al., 2018). Part of this focus would be to rediscover, critically evaluate and archive lost Indigenous knowledge relating to psychology and mental health and to integrate this knowledge into psychological theory and practice.

Furthermore, the research curriculum could be developed to emphasise participatory and collaborative methodologies that are supportive of decolonial approaches. These approaches include arts-based methods, storytelling, folklore, and myths. The focus on these methods is prompted by the idea that new methods and data sources are needed for decolonial research. In terms of the curriculum, greater emphasis on developing psychological assessments that are contextual in that they would be created by South African psychologists for the South African population in totality and administered in South Africa is needed.

Second, much like the decolonial approaches to which reference has been made, institutions could become more intentional about seeking perspectives from local communities about their needs, their mental health concerns, and their embedded knowledge in dealing with these matters. Reaching out to these communities would contribute to narrowing the chasm between them and university structures. The narrowing of the chasm could also include reaching out and inviting students to provide input on the curriculum and working to implement their suggestions (Chilisa, 2012; Hlatshwayo & Shawa, 2020; Kessi, 2017).

Third, academic staff could adopt more dialogic approaches to teaching and learning. The primary practice would not be a top-down lecture, but rather critical engagement facilitated through questioning and suggesting reading material with a decolonial focus. This approach also necessitates the creation of safe spaces for this dialogue to take place. Therefore, academic staff should interact with students about safe spaces and create these spaces within the classroom context. Ripamonti et al. (2018) suggest that a dialogic learning process where

students engage in multiple conversations among themselves and with others contributes to critical reflexivity. This communal dialogue generally challenges, rather than reinforces, hegemonic power relations within the curriculum debate and higher education.

Diab et al. (2020) found that the dialogic approach, which is one of the characteristics of the decolonial approach, contributes to the humanisation of participants. This humanisation process contributes to the liberation of the oppressed without replicating the oppression. The non-replication of oppression is based on the idea that the recognition of humanity and the infinite connectedness among people would make oppression difficult.

Currently, the need for closer dialogue between students and academic staff is apparent. The improved dialogue could help academic staff gain a better understanding of the circumstances that students face in universities. Furthermore, studies, such as the one conducted by Costandius et al. (2018), point to the idea that there may be certain misconceptions between students and academic staff that fundamentally impact their relationship. Therefore, closer dialogue could contribute to ameliorating these misconceptions.

Fourth, it is recommended that students take an additional African language as part of the course requirement to improve their language proficiency in that language. The language should be spoken in the communities near the university. This approach could assist in ensuring that students are effective in different contexts.

Making wholesale changes to the curriculum in one fell swoop might not be practical; a single research project rarely creates a firestorm of change. However, what may be practical and realistic is a change that takes place incrementally and involves multiple role players contributing to the overall decolonial project (Sitter, 2017).

The recommendations to facilitate decolonisation within the psychology curriculum presented in this section were distilled into a threefold approach. The threefold approach is summarised in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Summary of the Approaches to Decolonisation from Student Perspectives



The threefold approach focuses on research and development, pedagogical approaches, and community engagements. The research and development approach addresses the different approaches to research and development that could contribute to decolonisation. These include making decolonisation a focus area for research within the psychology department, employing more participatory and collaborative research methods, developing contextually relevant psychological assessments, and committing to recovering Indigenous knowledge and history.

Pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning practices could be adopted within the classroom. The pedagogical approaches that emerged as supporting decolonisation include a focus on multilingualism within the curriculum, dialogical approaches to teaching and learning, creating a safe space for dialogue and interactions in class and a greater awareness of students' lived experiences and how these experiences affect classroom dynamics.

The last approach of the threefold approach relates to increased community engagements. Greater engagement between academia and communities could facilitate a

greater understanding of the needs of communities, greater awareness of psychology within communities, open spaces for communities to be part of the dialogue in the classroom and create space for communities to contribute to the research agenda.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The current study has some limitations. Some of these limitations have been – explored primarily in Chapter 4. The limitations relate to the overall focus of the study, sample size, the homogeneity of the sample and the use of video conferencing instead of face-to-face interactions.

In the first place, as part of this study, the current research curriculum within psychology was not evaluated. The focus of the study was on student voices regarding the curriculum and not necessarily the objective evaluation of the state of the curriculum. The students' voices were based on their first-hand experiences of being exposed to the current psychology curriculum. The findings suggest that the co-researchers were critical of the current state of the curriculum. The criticism of the co-researchers was in line with that contained in the literature.

Secondly, it has been mentioned previously that the sample was both small and homogenous. The possible reasons for this situation were speculated earlier in the document. The sample was small in that it contained three participants initially. Two co-researchers withdrew and only one remained. The sample was homogenous in that the principal researcher and the co-researchers were African postgraduate students at a historically White institution.

These sample characteristics meant that the range of voices was not as wide as it would have been had the sample been larger and more diverse. Furthermore, the fact that only one co-researcher participated in the final video also meant that some of the insights reflected by the other co-researchers did not necessarily carry through to the video.

Thirdly, the restrictions instituted due to the COVID-19 pandemic meant that face-to-face interactions with the co-researchers were not possible. The decision was made at the beginning of the pandemic to delay the data collection and monitor the pandemic and the restrictions, hoping that the restrictions would eventually be relaxed enough to proceed with the data collection as had originally been intended. However, it became clear that the restrictions would not be eased in time, and the time available to complete the PhD study would become an issue. Thus, the principal researcher and the study supervisor decided to proceed. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was granted virtually.

The literature on this research approach indicates that the data collection process should be done in person. To the best of the knowledge of the principal researcher, this study may be among the first studies to use PVA virtually. Face-to-face interactions might have played out differently had it been possible to conduct the process face-to-face. Thus, it is reasonable to believe that the dynamics involved in the process would have been different. Whether or not face-to-face interactions would have produced different outcomes is unknown, but one must be open to that possibility.

6.5 Answering the research question

The research question that guided the study was, 'How can postgraduate psychology students collaborate to make contributions to developing a decolonised research curriculum in psychology?' The first aspect to consider relates to the student collaboration to consider different aspects of the decolonisation of the curriculum. The study managed to achieve collaboration among students to consider different aspects of decolonisation critically. Although some co-researchers withdrew during the study, the co-researchers who remained assisted in these deliberations.

Secondly, through these collaborative deliberations, the co-researchers reflected on the colonial history of psychology and research. The exploration of the colonial history of psychology provided insights into the current state of psychology. More specifically, this

exploration pointed out various points of inflexion that the co-researchers experience as having their roots within the colonial history of psychology.

Thirdly, the exploration of the colonial history of psychology highlighted the need for decolonisation. However, some stumbling blocks to decolonisation were indicated, and the co-researchers explored these stumbling blocks. Fourthly, co-researchers made suggestions about the decolonisation of psychology. The suggestions that the co-researchers made were consolidated to create an approach to decolonisation that focused on research and development, pedagogical approaches, and community engagement. Therefore, it can be said that the objectives set out at the beginning of the process were achieved.

However, one aspect appears outstanding. The methodological approach adopted for this study was PAR. One of the guiding principles of PAR is agitation for social change. In the case of this study, the social change that was envisaged was the contributions that the students would make to the decolonisation of the psychology curriculum. The contribution would be achieved by screening the video to the identified stakeholders. This screening would have been the beginning of the dialogue on the decolonisation of psychology with these stakeholders. Time constraints meant that this screening could not occur within the allotted duration of the PhD study. One of the contributing factors was the COVID-19 restrictions which delayed the research process. More details about this aspect are addressed in chapter 5.

Another aspect is that the initial aim of the study was to have a sharper focus on the research aspect. However, during the recruitment process, none of the students in research psychology volunteered to be part of the study. As a result, due to the composition of the research team, the focus of the study shifted to include psychology as a whole. However, interesting insights emerged about research and the co-researchers could contribute to the decolonisation conversation about research in psychology programmes.

6.6 Conclusions

The current study has created space for postgraduates to act as co-researchers to contribute to the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum. To this end, space was created using PAR and PVA to reflect on their perceptions of decolonisation, coloniality within psychology and research, stumbling blocks to decolonisation and strategies contributing to decolonisation. It emerged that the co-researchers viewed decolonisation as the process of change to a new normal within psychology and research. The new normal that emerges is just and based on the critique of the prevailing systems within the curriculum. The systems that were subjected to critical consideration are implicated in the marginalisation of most of the people of the world.

The prevailing systems that were critiqued are driven by coloniality and neoliberal ideology and continue to marginalise. Within psychology and research, the findings suggest that coloniality can be seen in the inaccessibility of the psychology curriculum and psychological services, the uncritical universal application of Western psychological theory across the world, the role of regulatory bodies in reinforcing Western psychological theory, the continued prominence of English and the reinforcement of the unequal power relations between researchers and participants. The outcome is that these aspects have contributed to making psychology irrelevant and unable to contribute to addressing the challenges faced by communities. The exploration of these aspects suggested that the decolonisation of psychology was indeed needed.

However, the journey to decolonisation is not a simple one. Various stumbling blocks along the way require attention. The co-researchers reflected on the possible challenges to the decolonial project within psychology and research. The challenges that the co-researchers identified included the unequal power relations among the stakeholders of the curriculum and the way these contributed to the status quo. Additionally, challenges that emerged included the influence of the regulatory structures of psychology on the decolonial project, the influence

of institutional structures on decolonisation and the apparent lack of initiative besieging decolonisation.

Despite the challenges, work can still be done to contribute to the decolonisation of psychology and research. Based on the findings of the research, suggestions on strategies to contribute to the decolonisation of psychology and research were made. The strategies that emerged centred on the different approaches to research, the recovery and archiving of Indigenous knowledge, establishing a safe space for collaboration, different approaches to teaching and learning, greater community engagement and embracing Ubuntu values within the curriculum. Hopefully, the suggestions presented can bring psychology and research closer to a decolonial future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information Sheet



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INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

As a postgraduate psychology student at the University of Pretoria, you have been invited to participate as a co-researcher in this study. The study will be relying on your experience with the research curriculum within psychology. The full title of the study and the procedures linked to the study are outlined in this information sheet. The anticipated risks, benefits and your rights as a co-researcher are also described. If you have any questions or anything that needs further clarification before, during and after the study, you are free to contact the researcher.

Title of the Study

Towards a decolonised research curriculum in psychology: A Participatory Action Research exploration of students' perspectives

Purpose of the Study

This study is part of a doctoral degree for which the researcher has enrolled at the University of Pretoria. Consequently, the end products of the study will be presented in a doctoral thesis, at academic conferences and in academic journals. Furthermore, as this is a participatory action research (PAR) study, the end products will also be used to contribute suggestions to the development of a decolonised research programme within the psychology and research methods curriculum.

As mentioned, the study seeks to employ a PAR approach to create a space for you, as a postgraduate psychology student at the University of Pretoria, to participate as a co-researcher and contribute to the decolonisation of the research methods curriculum within psychology. In this study, you will be invited to use film to reflect critically on the history of research in psychology, your experiences as a student learning about research in psychology and the decolonisation of the research curriculum in psychology. The guiding research question for this study is as follows: How can postgraduate psychology students collaborate to make practical contributions to the development of a decolonised research curriculum in psychology?

The specific objectives of this study include the following:

- Exploring postgraduate psychology students' perspectives on the colonial history of psychology and how it informs the research curriculum.

- Exploring postgraduate psychology students' perspectives of barriers to decolonisation and the transformation of the research curriculum within psychology.
- Together with postgraduate psychology students' perspectives, develop strategies for decolonising the research curriculum in psychology.

Procedures

The current study will employ a PAR approach and use a participatory video approach (PVA) to collect data. The PVA process and the timelines attached to the process will be outlined in this document. The process will depart in some respects from the proposal to make allowances for the COVID-19 restrictions. One of the key differences is that the contact sessions will unfold virtually instead of face-to-face. Second, the co-researchers will be able to use a camera, which will be provided, and their cell phones.

The project will be made up of the following broad steps.

1 Initial orientation and project briefing

During this step, the researcher will impart all the relevant information about the project. The information will include the aims and objectives of the project, the methodology and the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and co-researchers. This process will take approximately two hours. At this point, the co-researchers will be expected to gain an understanding of how the process will unfold in the coming months and their part therein. It is necessary, therefore, that they ask questions in case of any difficulties.

2 Informed consent

After all the information has been given to the co-researchers and the opportunity to ask questions has been made available, informed consent will be requested. The consent forms will be completed electronically via Google Forms. Alternatively, the forms could also be emailed. The co-researchers are expected to have completed the forms after the initial orientation and project briefing and before the Decolonial Encounters Workshop.

3 Decolonial Encounters

During this phase, the researcher will arrange an online workshop to introduce the co-researchers to the concept of decolonisation and postcolonial theory. This will ensure that the co-researchers are familiar with the theory, current debates and critical protagonists, locally and internationally. The workshop will be arranged by the researcher and there will also be guest speakers. Co-researchers are expected to attend and participate in this workshop. It is envisaged that this workshop will take three hours and a suitable day for the Decolonial Encounters Workshop will be discussed and finalised after the initial orientation and project briefing session.

4 Training of co-researchers on camera equipment and video editing

For this stage, a videographer will be brought in to provide training to the researcher and co-researchers on filmmaking, the filmmaking process, camera equipment, camerawork and video editing. Co-researchers will be requested to participate in this workshop and ensure that they understand how to use the equipment. It is envisaged that this will be a 3-hour workshop. The suitable day for this training will be discussed and finalised at the end of the Decolonial Encounters Workshop.

5 Discussions and planning

This stage aims to ensure that the researcher and the co-researchers understand the subsequent phases of the processes. It further creates an opportunity to discuss the research objectives and clarify the expectations of both the researcher and the co-researchers. Co-researchers will also be requested to be available for this stage because it will help clarify the next steps. This process will also allow co-researchers to contribute to the planning process. It is envisaged that this will be a 2-hour session on a day that is most suitable for the co-researchers. The suitable day for this planning will be discussed and finalised at the end of the training on camera equipment and video editing. At the end of the discussion and planning session, the co-researchers will be requested to prepare their artistic representation, which they will present in the next session. The co-researchers will be requested to present their artistic representation on a mutually agreed upon day. The details of the requirements are outlined in the next section.

6 Artistic representations

The fundamental purpose of the following stages is to generate themes that will eventually be presented through the medium of film. The first of the three stages is the artistic representation stage. During this stage, co-researchers will be requested to reflect on what decolonisation means to them. The purpose of which is to develop the research goals, identify filming ideas and establish distribution channels. Co-researchers will be requested to use magazine pictures, poetry, drawings etc. to create individual art pieces to express thoughts about decolonisation. The guiding questions will include: Critically reflect on the current curriculum on research methods in psychology and its historical foundations. What does decolonisation in psychology and research methods mean to you? Is

it needed and why? How do we apply decolonisation within research methods in psychology? What would a decolonised research methods curriculum look like relative to the current curriculum? Co-researchers will share the art pieces and after that, the group will collaborate using these various art pieces to create one art piece that is representative of the group. Through that artistic representation and the ensuing discussions, generative themes will emerge and, based on these themes, a storyboard will be developed. As mentioned, the presentation of the artistic representation will take place on a mutually agreed upon day. It may be necessary to determine another day where the group will collaborate using these various art pieces to create one art piece representing the group. The collective decision on arranging an additional day will be made after the co-researchers have presented their artworks.

7 Storyboard

During this stage, the group will use their artistic piece to develop a storyboard. The co-researchers will be requested to revisit the themes and explore ideas on how to approach the film. The storyboard process will take place over three hours. The storyboarding session will take place on the mutually agreed upon date. After the storyboarding, the co-researchers will then be requested to collect video footage for the film. The process of collecting the video footage will take place over three weeks. There be weekly meetings to assess progress. The identified videographer will also take the co-researchers through the training on storyboarding.

8 Collective editing

It is envisaged that this process will take place over two weeks. During this process, the researcher and the co-researchers will review and discuss the raw video. The editing process will involve viewing the material, discussions, reflection and action. The final product will represent the themes identified, clarified and analysed in the preceding stages.

Risks

The subject matter of this study is sensitive. Thus, your participation as a co-researcher has the potential to elicit feelings of anxiety and possibly anger. Furthermore, there is also a possibility that it may bring back painful memories in cases where there have been prior negative experiences relating to this subject matter. Should that happen, psychological services will be made available to you and the group at all stages of the study. The psychological service will be provided through the University of Pretoria Student Counselling Services. The contact information is for the Student Counselling Services 012 420 9333, during office hours. In case of after-hours emergencies, the contact information for UP/SADAG 24 Hour Care is 0800 747 747. Alternatively, a private clinical psychologist can be arranged should such services be required.

Benefits

Several envisaged benefits may emanate from this process. These possible benefits will be to yourself as a co-researcher and to the scientific community. First, through your participation in this process, you will have an increased awareness of the decolonial project within academia and the need to contextualise curricula. Second, if you go on to register as a psychologist, the insights that you will have gained from being part of this process might give you greater cross-cultural sensitivity which will

further enhance your ability to provide services in a multicultural context. Third, you will also learn new skills for making and editing videos that you might use later in life. Fourth, the project will contribute to the advancement of the decolonial project within research in psychology. It is, however, essential to note that there will be no financial benefit emanating from participation in the study.

Rights

As a co-researcher for this study, you will be entitled to the following rights. In the first place, you have the right to be informed regarding the nature of the study, the objectives, the outcomes, the potential usage of the research and the potential risks and benefits of the study. Based on this information and any other consideration, you are entitled to withhold your consent for participation. Furthermore, should you give consent, you still have the right to withdraw your consent at any stage of the research. Feel free to contact the researcher should you need any additional information.

Second, as a co-researcher, you have the right to confidentiality. Furthermore, you are also obligated to maintain the confidentiality of the group by not divulging the details of the discussions and the people involved in the group to people outside the group. The researcher will maintain confidentiality by reporting the results for the group in their entirety. Therefore, no identifying information will be made public during publication and submissions unless prior information has been obtained from yourself and the other co-researchers. Apart from the co-researchers, only the researcher and the academic supervisor will have access to the data. The artistic material and storyboards will be anonymised and stored in a locked cabinet. Raw video footage will be removed from the recording devices and stored in a password-protected computer.

The artistic material, storyboards and raw and edited videos will only be used for this research project and will not be reused for any other purpose.

Third, you are also entitled to be protected from psychological and physical harm. To this end, the researcher undertakes to ensure that you are protected from harm by respecting and maintaining equal relationships, keeping co-researchers informed and proceeding with the research on their terms. Furthermore, the researcher undertakes to ensure that co-researchers are referred to Student Counselling Services to mitigate against the possible harm in cases where needed. Fourth, the researcher undertakes to take all reasonable steps to create a safe space for collaboration and to involve co-researchers in the decision-making processes.

Thank you for reading the information sheet and for considering participating in this study. If you have any questions, contact the researcher or the academic supervisor. If you would like to participate in the study, please complete the attached consent form.

Appendix 3: Information Sheet for Video



Researcher: Malefane Kenneth Maine

Cell: 0828595086 Email: maine.kenneth@gmail.com

Supervisor: Prof. Claire Wagner

Email: claire.wagner@up.ac.za

INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

You have been involved in the PhD study on decolonisation of the psychology and research methods curriculum. The study has followed a participatory action research (PAR) method using a participatory video approach (PVA). Ethical approval was obtained for the study in its entirety. The reference number for the ethical approval is HUM039/0919. The methods and the purpose of the study have been explained to you and you consented to participate in the study.

The study is at a point where the video, which is part of the PAR approach, needs to be developed. The planning of the video has already taken place and a decision was taken on the type of video that will be developed. During the storyboarding phase, a decision was made for the co-researchers to be interviewed on camera. That development has made it necessary that additional ethical clearance be obtained. The reason for this is that conducting video-recorded interviews with the co-researchers was not part of the initial clearance. This particular development emerged from the collaborative planning that took place during the storyboarding phase.

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide information regarding the making of the video. Once you have reviewed the information, you will be requested to indicate consent for being interviewed and for being video recorded. The information sheet will

include a restatement of the title of the study and the anticipated risks, benefits and rights of the co-researchers. If there are any questions or anything that needs further clarification before, during and after the study, you are free to contact the researcher.

Title of the Study

Towards a decolonised research curriculum in psychology: A Participatory Action Research exploration of students' perspectives

Purpose of the Study

This study is part of a doctoral degree for which the researcher has enrolled at the University of Pretoria. Consequently, the end products of the study will be presented in a video production, in a doctoral thesis, at academic conferences and in academic journals. Furthermore, since this is a participatory action research (PAR) study, the end products will also contribute suggestions to develop a decolonised research programme within the psychology and research methods curriculum.

As mentioned, the study seeks to employ a PAR approach to create a space for you to participate as a co-researcher and contribute to the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum. In this study, you were invited to reflect critically on the history of psychology, including research methods, your experiences as a psychology student and the decolonisation of the curriculum through the use of film. The guiding research question for this study is as follows: How can postgraduate psychology students collaborate to make practical contributions to the development of a decolonised research curriculum in psychology?

The specific objectives of this study are the following:

- Explore postgraduate psychology students' perspectives on the colonial history of psychology and how it informs the research curriculum.
- Explore postgraduate psychology students' perspectives of barriers to decolonisation and transformation of the research curriculum within psychology.
- Together with postgraduate psychology students' perspectives, develop strategies for decolonising the research curriculum in psychology.

Procedures

The current study employs a PAR approach and uses a participatory video approach (PVA) to collect the data. The process that was outlined in the initial information sheet has unfolded accordingly. In line with COVID-19 regulations, the contact sessions were held virtually instead of face-to-face. The next phase of the process involves the development of a video that will enable the co-researchers to reflect on decolonisation within the psychology and research curriculum. Therefore, this information sheet will necessarily focus on the collection of video footage and collaborative editing. It is important to note that the process was developed by the co-researchers and principal researchers working collaboratively.

1 Storyboard and collection of footage

This section outlines how the video will be compiled. The video will be made up of five scenes. In the first scene, there will be a voice-over narration that will introduce the study and some of the important issues of decolonisation. As the voice-over is playing, specific images will be looping. We selected images related to decolonisation, the university emblem and logo, scenes on campus, architecture on campus and the humanities building at the University of Pretoria.

For the second scene, the first co-researcher will be interviewed on camera. The interview will take place indoors with a White background and a chair. The face of the co-researcher will be hidden and their names will be withheld.

The third scene of the video will be formatted in the same way as the opening scene in that there will be a voice-over narration and relevant image looping as the narration plays. The images that will loop throughout the narrative will be the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) building and logo, scenes on campus, cover pages and covers of psychometric assessments and local communities.

The fourth scene of the video will be an interview with another co-researcher. The interview will also be indoors with a White background. The face of the co-researcher will be hidden and their name will be withheld.

The closing scene of the video will be a voice-over narration that will discuss the future of the decolonisation of the psychology and research curriculum. The closing scene will include a looping display of images and videos. The images

included are of scenes on campus, images depicting Ubuntu, the university logo and the national flag. The interview recording will take place over one day on a day that will be agreed upon with the co-researchers. The recordings will be made with a camera and cellular phones. One of the co-researchers has also volunteered to do the voice-over narration.

2 Collective editing

It is envisaged that this process will occur on a date as agreed by the researcher and the co-researchers. During this process, the researcher and the co-researchers will review and discuss the raw video. The editing process will involve viewing the material, discussions, reflection and action. The final product will represent the themes identified, clarified and analysed in the preceding stages.

Risks

The subject matter of this study is sensitive. Thus, your participation as a co-researcher has the potential to elicit feelings of anxiety and possibly anger. Furthermore, there is also a possibility that it may bring back painful memories in cases where there have been prior negative experiences relating to this subject matter. Should that happen, psychological services will be made available to you and the group at all stages of the study. The psychological service will be provided through the University of Pretoria Student Counselling Services. The contact information for the Student Counselling Services is 012 420 9333, during office hours. In case of after-hours emergencies, the contact information for UP/SADAG 24 Hour Care is 0800 747 747. Alternatively, a private clinical psychologist can be arranged should such services be required.

Benefits

Several envisaged benefits may emanate from this process. These possible benefits will be to yourself as a co-researcher and to the scientific community. First, through your participation in this process, you will have an increased awareness of the decolonial project within academia and the need to contextualise curricula. Second, if you go on to register as a psychologist, the insights that you will have gained from

being part of this process might give you greater cross-cultural sensitivity, which will further enhance your ability to provide services in a multicultural context. Third, you will also learn new skills for making and editing videos that you might use later in life. Fourth, the project will contribute to the advancement of the decolonial project within psychology and research. It is, however, essential to note that there will be no financial benefit emanating from participation in the study.

Rights

As a co-researcher for this study, you will be entitled to the following rights. In the first place, you have the right to be informed regarding the nature of the study, the objectives, the outcomes, the potential usage of the research and the video material and the potential risks and benefits of the study. Based on this information and any other consideration, you are entitled to withhold your consent for participation. Furthermore, should you give consent, you still have the right to withdraw your consent at any stage of the research. Feel free to contact the researcher should you need any additional information.

Second, as a co-researcher, you have the right to confidentiality. Furthermore, you are also obligated to maintain the confidentiality of the group by not divulging the details of the discussions and the people involved in the group to people outside the group. The researcher will maintain confidentiality by reporting the results for the group in their entirety. Therefore, no identifying information will be made public during publication and submissions unless prior information has been obtained from yourself and other co-researchers. Raw video footage will be removed from the recording devices and stored in a password-protected computer. The artistic material, storyboards and raw and edited videos will only be used for this research project and will not be reused for any other purpose. In addition, your faces in the final video will be hidden and there will be no identifying information on the video itself.

Third, you are also entitled to be protected from psychological and physical harm. To this end, the principal researcher undertakes to ensure that you are protected from harm by respecting and maintaining equal relationships, keeping co-researchers informed and proceeding with the research on their terms. Furthermore, the researcher undertakes to ensure that co-researchers are referred to Student Counselling Services to mitigate against the possible harm in cases where needed.

Fourth, the researcher undertakes to take all reasonable steps to create a safe space for collaboration and involve co-researchers in decision-making.

Thank you for reading the information sheet and for considering participating in this study. If you have any questions, contact the researcher or the academic supervisor. If you would like to participate in the study, please complete the attached consent form.

Appendix 4: Consent Form for Video



Researcher: Malefane Kenneth Maine, PS 0102075,

Cell: 0828595086 Email: maine.kenneth@gmail.com

Supervisor: Prof Claire Wagner Email: claire.wagner@up.ac.za

CONSENT FORM

As a post-graduate psychology student at the University of Pretoria and a co-researcher for the study titled, *“Towards a decolonised research curriculum in psychology: A PAR exploration of students’ perspectives’*, you are invited to participate in an on-camera interview as part of the above-mentioned doctoral study. Please read the form carefully and indicate consent by ticking the box below.

Please initial the boxes below:

The nature, objectives and purpose of the video recording have been clearly explained to me.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered satisfactorily.

I understand the benefits and risks of being interviewed on-camera in the study.

I understand that my participation in this on-camera interview is voluntary.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation without any negative consequences.

I understand how the final video of the study will be used.

I have the researcher’s contact details should I have any questions or concerns.

I undertake to maintain the confidentiality of the group; this includes the discussions, artistic representation and the raw video material.

I consent to use my cell phone to collect video material for the research project should it be required.

I hereby consent to be interviewed on camera as part of the study mentioned above.

Co-Researcher: Signature Names Date

Researcher: Signature Names Date

Appendix 5: Letter from Psychologist



Simphiwe Sinkoyi
Clinical Psychologist

M.Soc.Sc (Natal) PR Number: 0263052

CONSULTING ROOMS:
2591 Valley View Estate
Rooihulskraal road
Kosmosdal
Centurion

CONTACT DETAILS:
Tel: 081 506 1109
Fax: 086 538 7044
Email: simphiwe.info@gmail.com

CONSULTING ROOMS:
Suite 4 – City Life Medical Centre
City Life Building
477 Anton Lembede
Durban

04 February 2020

Mr. Kenneth Maine
185 Rose Street
Riviera Pretoria
0828595086
Maine.kenneth@gmail.com

Dear Mr Maine

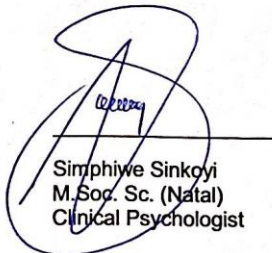
REQUEST FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES DURING DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Your letter dated 31 January instant bears reference to the above subject.

After careful consideration to your request, I am glad to inform you that we will avail our services as requested. Kindly inform us of the specifics in terms of times and venues of the project at your earliest so we can plan accordingly.

Trust that you find the above in order.

Warm regards



Simphiwe Sinkoyi
M.Soc. Sc. (Natal)
Clinical Psychologist

Director: SimphiweSinkoyi

Appendix 6: Permission for research with students




April 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Permission is hereby granted to Mr Malefane Kenneth Maine, student number 19373504, to conduct a doctoral study titled, 'Towards a decolonised research curriculum in psychology: A Participatory Action Research exploration of students' perspectives' with Postgraduate psychology students at the University of Pretoria.

Kind Regards

 Digitally signed
by Tharina Guse
Date: 2020.04.08
09:58:49 +02'00'

Prof Tharina Guse

University of Pretoria

Head of Department: Psychology

Humanities Building, Room 11-15, Main Campus

012 420 2403

tharina.guse@up.ac.za