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# There's Beauty in the Struggle: From Bantu Education Toward Decoloniality in Indigenous South African Education

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Dissertation Thesis:
There's Beauty in the Struggle: From Bantu Education
Toward Decoloniality in Indigenous South African Education

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Introduction

While the devastation of colonialism has impacted many countries throughout the world (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014), South Africa shares the cataclysmic history of settler colonization with fewer nations. Settler colonialism generally differs from other forms of colonization in its function of replacing aboriginal populations with an invasive settler society (Mitchell et al., 2018; Wolfe, 2006). Historically enacted settler colonial policies include land seizure, forced transfer of the Indigenous population, racial segregation, restricted movement, separation of families, and Anglo-Western centered education for assimilation purposes (Mitchell et al., 2018). Education established by colonial settler governments for Indigenous people was primarily created as a vehicle to maintain dominance and advance repressive policies (Charbonneau-Dahlen et al., 2016; Mitchell et al., 2018; Poesche, 2019; Tom et al., 2017). Historical documents and educational curriculum and content are written to promote settler-dominant narratives, are European/Western-centric, and erase Indigenous history and thought from the national conscience (Brown, 2019; Poesche, 2019; Tom et al., 2017). In nations with histories of settler colonization, for the Indigenous populations, the legacy of colonialism has had devastating, long-standing residual effects. The extant disruptive effects to Indigenous societies and cultures have resulted in current crises among the aboriginal population of South Africa - including the prevalence of high rates of poverty, unemployment, and crime, the loss of traditional spiritual and cultural ways and language, the weakening or dissolution of family structures, poor academic performance in schools, and high drop-out rates (Uleanya et al., 2019; Mampane et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2018). Decolonization scholars posit that in order for healing, reconciliation, and advancement to take place, past injustices must be redressed, and

Indigenous narratives must be centered (Harvey & Russell-Mundine, 2019; Poesche, 2019; Tom et al., 2017).

**Terminology and Usage**

While the terms Indigenous, native, and aboriginal can refer to the same group of people, there is a slight distinction in usage. The term and concept of indigeneity has emerged to distinguish the native peoples in settler colonized nations who, during the decolonization movement of the 1960s and 1970s, were overlooked (Veracini, 2007). In spite of the national liberation efforts elsewhere, these peoples remained invisible and unable to make their stories heard (Veracini, 2007). The term recognizes their existence as first peoples and the liminal space that they inhabit by living in both "First and Third Worlds" in ways that negate Indigenous autonomy (Veracini, 2007, p.2). The terminology of indigeneity is used widely in scholarly work to distinguish the native peoples in settler colonized nations (Veracini, 2007).

This work adopts the term Indigenous and additional terminology such as aboriginal, native, or first peoples, and uses these terms and concepts interchangeably. The word "Indigenous" and concepts related to Indigenous culture are intentionally capitalized to demonstrate respect for the culture and perspectives. Additionally, in reference to the people of South Africa, the term Indigenous South African refers to the native Black South African people, and the two terms, Indigenous and Black, are used to distinguish this population of people. The term White refers to the population of people of European descent in South Africa who were enforcers and/or primary benefactors of the apartheid government policies. As this research is a study of decolonization, the work employs various terms that express either historical colonialism or the perpetuation of colonial policies, practices, and ideologies. This study adopts the terms colonial and colonialism to refer to the period in history when Western nations

annexed exogeneous states as their legal territories. This research adopts the term coloniality to express the persistent residual effects of colonialism beyond its de jure termination. Coloniality suggests structurally embedded qualities of colonialism that continue to be reproduced, in spite of the passage of time and Western imperial nations' attempts to disavow that history (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014). Terms such as colonial-based emphasize the colonial underpinnings of present-day policies and practices, and this study employs the term to reference apartheid education or the educational remnants of it.

**Settler Colonialism**

While divergent justifications for colonization have been offered by Europeans, the ideology of *terra nullius* or empty land is predominant in historical documents that provide a legal precedence to Indigenous land seizure and transfer of rights (Boisen, 2017; Mitchell et al., 2018; Wolfe, 2006). The *terra nullius* concept is promoted through euphemistic language such as settler, discovery, uninhabited, wild frontier, and unclaimed territory. Theoretically, because the colonists did not find livestock or agriculture farming that adhered to Western practices, the territory was undeveloped and could be annexed. The Indigenous people that were encountered were dismissed as proprietors of their lands in various ways. In typical settler colonial discourse, the aboriginal people are portrayed as nomadic, wandering, rootless – an attempt to nullify any claim to land rights and justify the appropriation of territory (Boisen, 2017; Wolfe, 2006). Paradoxically, when colonists met with native populations who had established agrarian societies, *terra nullius* translated into land usage assertions, such as land underuse, wastage, and inefficient use (Boisen, 2017). Through a Western-centric lens, native peoples had failed to exercise or were incapable of exercising their natural rights to property, which thus justified land appropriation (Boisen, 2017). As religious doctrine held greater influence over political exploits,

natural law and rights ceded to arguments of moral obligation and duty, correlating land possession to a commission from God to cultivate the land and exercise dominion over the earth (Boisen, 2017). Irrespective of the myriad justifications for land seizure, the inherent motivation for settler colonialism is acquisition of territory, and access to land is predicated on the elimination of the aboriginal people (Mitchell et al., 2018; Wolfe, 2006). Built into the settler colonial model is the necessity to eliminate existing peoples and their societies from the desired land. Colonialism scholar, Patrick Wolfe (2006) defines settler colonialism as structural genocide - colonialism that is not merely a historical event, but a history that is continually perpetuated. Wolfe (2006) contends that "settler colonialism destroys to replace" (p. 388) and further quotes Zionist founder Theodor Herzl, who metaphorically posits in order to replace an old building with a new one, one must demolish before beginning construction. However, to further distinguish the South African context of settler colonialism, Wolfe (2006) concludes that genocide was not an objective in South Africa due to the demand for an exploitable labor force.

The processes of aboriginal elimination that were enacted in settler colonized nations involved physical removal and cultural repression (Mitchell et al., 2018). Physical elimination entailed wars, forced removals from homelands, attacks from militia groups (which could culminate in genocide), resettlement on designated land, restricted movement, incarceration, and forced sterilizations (Brown, 2019; Deumert, 2018; McDonald, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2018; Wolfe, 2006). Cultural repression of Indigenous populations consisted of destruction of traditional practices and ways of living, restrictive policies on religion and language, labor migrant systems, family separation through the abduction or forced removal of children from their parents, assimilation through education, and so forth (Brown, 2019; Deumert, 2018; McDonald, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2018).

**Colonial Education in South Africa**

Formal education for the Indigenous Africans in South African began through schools established by the Christian church during the period of Dutch colonial rule between 1652 and 1815 (Cohen, 1993; Simmons, 1990). One of the earliest recorded schools was established in 1805 by the British, and consequently in 1842, German-founded churches began to make inroads into operating missionary schools (Cohen, 1993). The originally expressed goals of church schools were to proselytize the Indigenous peoples to Christianity, and literacy was taught for the purpose of reading the Bible, hymns, and evangelical texts (Cohen, 1993). In addition to religious instruction, missionary school students received an industrial education that consisted of agricultural, horticultural, and trade training for boys and young men, while women and girls were assigned to domestic labor which conformed with gender roles in Christian religion (Cohen, 1993). Germany, Great Britain, and Holland divided occupancy of South Africa in the role of colonizers, and as the White population grew, emphasis on the industrial skills training took precedence over religious teaching in order to meet the labor and servile needs (Cohen, 1993; Simmons, 1990). The inclusion of the native population into the capitalist mercantile economy served as social control by creating a source of cheap unskilled or semi-skilled labor and consumers (Simmons, 1990). The Indigenous peoples were made dependent upon an economic system through the dispossession of their lands and consequently, the eradication of their subsistent ways of life (Simmons, 1990). Upon the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa during the period of the 1870’s to the 1880’s and the pivot to industrialized labor in the 1930’s, the demand for cheap unskilled labor in the form of mine workers accelerated (Simmons, 1990). In order to gain further control of school curriculum and educational goals, the British began to establish secular state schools and wrest control from religious mission schools

(Simmons, 1990). Schools were divided by race and socioeconomics (which generally coincided), educational attainment in the Blacks schools was reduced to the elementary level, and training for low-level manual labor positions was promoted in the stead of academics (Simmons, 1990).

In order to ensure a steady supply of poorly-paid unskilled and low-skilled labor, the European colonialists began to design legislation to create a bifurcated system of privileged White aristocracy and a racialized labor force (Simmons, 1990). The impetus to perpetuate such a system were the seeds that ushered in the apartheid era. Prior to apartheid, however, the Western colonial forces began to legislate changes in education policy at various times. In 1902 and 1906, the British and German states, respectively, mandated free and compulsory education for Whites, while for Blacks, education was neither free nor compulsory (Cohen, 1993; Simmons, 1990). In addition to being fully government-financed, White schools were better organized and maintained longer instructional hours, which ensured a higher quality of education (Cohen, 1993). Moreover, curriculum content explicitly inculcated White supremist notions and values with lessons in how to treat African servants, train them in farming, and how to assume roles of authority in career endeavors (Cohen, 1993). During the 1920's the British-led government upheld the policy to underfund African schools and require the Africans to financially support their own schools (Simmons, 1990). Subsequently, Black schools were not viable, and Blacks were denied an education. The poor quality of the Black schools was made manifest in the depressed rates of attendance – in 1925, four percent of Africans attended, and 20 years later in 1945 attendance had only increased to 7.7 percent (Simmons, 1990).

In addition to creating a permanent underclass of uneducated, unskilled and low-skilled workers, education for the Indigenous population was purposed to develop a class of Africans

who served as a buffer between the White colonizers and the Indigenous majority (Cohen, 1993). Within German controlled territories, government policy of 1910 mandated education for chiefs and their children with the intended outcomes of literacy of the German language and culture, and consequently, loyalty to the Western occupants (Cohen, 1993). An inherent principle in the development and promotion of the schools and their curriculum was that Western culture and values were superior to those of the Indigenous Africans, and the teaching of this was a necessary ingredient in the colonization process. Conversely, as Western language, culture, values, and norms were valorized and promoted, the indigenous African culture, history, and presence were absent from educational content. This omission furthered the goal of separating the Indigene from their own identities, and instilling subservience and reverence toward the colonizers (Cohen, 1993).

The end of World War I resulted in the seizure of German occupied territories in Africa, such as Namibia and parts of South Africa, which subsequently were designated under control of the League of Nations by 1920 (Harber, 1993). As the socioeconomics of racialized capitalism became solidified in South African policy, the practices culminated to the apartheid government. In 1948, the Dutch-led Afrikaner National Party refused to acknowledge the United Nations as the legal successor to the League of Nations and instituted the explicit system of White dominance, racial segregation, and oppression (Harber, 1993). To achieve the segregationist goals, a function of the system was to clearly demarcate race, which the apartheid government exercised in the act of the creating four racial groups: Black, which were Indigenous African Peoples; Coloured, which were people of mixed races; Indian, which were people who were brought from India as indentured servants to work in the sugar cane fields; and White, which were people of European origin (Ndimande, 2013). The education system of the apartheid era

served to perpetuate the stratified racial divisions and maintain the power differential between the dominant minority and subjugated majority. In order to institutionalize the distinctions within South African society, the educational system was reformed to meet the desired outcomes. The Minister of Native Affairs in 1950 and later Prime Minister in 1958, Henrik Frensch Verwoerd, is attributed as being a chief architect of both apartheid and the educational system designed for Indigenous Africans, known as Bantu Education (Harber, 1993; Ndimande, 2013; Tygesen, 1991). Bantu is a term that refers to a family of languages that derived from Central and Southern Africa (Simmons, 1990), and the word "Bantu" in translation means "people". With the instillation of the apartheid government, the term Bantu adopted a racialized and pejorative meaning because it was used to distinguish inferior social institutions, such as the Bantu Education Act of 1953, that were created exclusively for the Indigenous Black majority population (Abdi, 2003).

Upon the delineation of newly formed race categories under the apartheid government, the education system was respectively divided to promote varied educational outcomes. Apartheid education was designated to people of color and was academically inferior to the education made available to Whites (Ndimande, 2013). As previously noted, Bantu Education was created for Indigenous Africans, while Coloureds and Indians received a more generalized apartheid education (Ndimande, 2013). The distinction between forms of education, which had varied goals leading to varied outcomes, can likely be attributed to a greater fear by the White minority of the Indigenous Black majority. According to Abdi (2003), Bantu Education had three policy objectives. First was to develop and maintain a racialized underclass workforce to support the growing economy. This objective is illustrated in a 1954 statement by the H. F. Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs:

> The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour… For that reason, it is no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, where he cannot be absorbed (Harber, 1993, p.417).

The second was to inculcate inherent inferiority into the minds of that underclass as a means of pacification and social control (Abdi, 2003). Again, the architect of Bantu Education, Verwoerd, in a 1953 Parliament speech articulates his vision by stating, "When I have control over native education, I will reform it so that natives will be taught from childhood that equality is not for them" (Simmons, 1990, p.59). The third policy objective was to reduce truancy and thwart the potential radicalization of Black youth and mitigate their influence on receptive elements of working-class people (Abdi, 2003; Carter, 2012). Bantu Education has been likened to the primary apparatus of the apartheid system, in theory and practice - a way for White dominance to become entrenched and systematically perpetuated in South Africa (Abdi, 2003; Ndimande, 2013; Tygesen, 1991).

The disparities between Bantu Education and education for the White minority were intentionally vast. Per capita government spending on education for White children averaged seven times more than for Black children, and toward the end of the apartheid era the amount had risen to eight times more (Simmons, 1990; Tygesen, 1991). Due to underfunding, Black schools were unable to fill positions for tens of thousands of teachers yearly. In 1986, the shortage of African teachers was an estimated 100,000, whereas there was an excess of teachers in the White schools (Simmons, 1990). The paucity of Indigenous Black educators resulted in overcrowded classrooms and disproportionate student teacher ratios. In 1985, the student - teacher ratio in African schools was forty-one to one, while in adequately funded White schools,

the ratio was approximately nineteen to one (Simmons, 1990). Disparities in teacher credentialing further underscored the substandard quality of education that the apartheid government made available to the indigenous population. In 1986, approximately ninety-five percent of African teachers were under-qualified or lacked proper qualification entirely, whereas only three percent of White teachers failed to meet credential standards (Simmons, 1990). Government fiscal budgeting in years 1987 and 1988 allotted 1.5 billion rand for Bantu Education schools and 3.3 billion rand for White schools (Simmons, 1990). The depth of this disparity is illuminated by the fact that lesser amount was dispersed to seventy-five percent of the population - the Indigenous majority, while thirteen percent of the population - the White minority, received more than double that amount (Simmons, 1990). The government's board of education was subdivided into four departments that created separate curriculums for each designated racial group (Simmons, 1990; Tygesen, 1991). To ensure the underdevelopment of Indigenous African academic capabilities, thought, and aspirations, the curriculum content in Black schools was markedly inferior to the curriculum in White schools. Instruction in foundational subjects such as reading and mathematics was minimized (Abdi, 2003), while instead content was comprised of the indoctrination of Western values and qualities that were desirable of workers in subordinate positions, including obedience, punctuality, a sense of duty, politeness, sociability, neatness, and reliability (Cohen, 1993; Ndimande, 2013). Images in Bantu Education textbooks reinforced apartheid ideology by illustrating Whites as peaceful, courageous, and resourceful and indigenous Blacks as warlike and ungrateful (Harber, 1993).

In comparison to the era of missionary schools as an exclusive educational option for native South Africans, in the era of Bantu Education, Blacks were attending schools in greater numbers in spite of the disparities in quality and quantity of education made available (Simmons,

1990). Nonetheless, Blacks were cognizant of the impracticality, substandard value, and underdevelopment objectives of the education they were being offered and responded with low numbers of attendance and high attrition rates. Due to underfunding and under-resourcing, twenty percent of all Black children did not have access to a school (Tygesen, 1991). Within the first four years of school, more than half were likely to drop out, and over sixty percent of all students dropped out before completing the seventh grade (Tygesen, 1991). These numbers were compounded by the fact that Black schools were significantly under-enrolled prior to student drop-out. For example, in 1985 the government calculated a shortage in Black African school enrollment to 193,575 places (Simmons, 1990). By the early 1990s, the systematic divestment in and miseducation of the South Africa's Indigenous people resulted in functional illiteracy for more than half of the Black majority population (Tygesen, 1991).

While Indigenous rejection of Bantu Education had historically been demonstrated by low enrollment and high drop-out rates, the late 1960s and 1970s' gains of independence in other African nations and the growing global Black Consciousness Movement sparked more confrontational opposition (Moloi, 2011). Student protests of Bantu Education, which began sporadically from the 1970's, culminated in 1976 in response to the newly mandated policy of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction (Moloi, 2011; Ndimande, 2013; Tygesen, 1991). Afrikaans is a pidgin, a mixture of two or more languages, with Dutch as its basis, and it developed in the early years of colonialism in the Cape Colony (Ndimande, 2013). Moreover, because it was the language of the National Party (instituters of the apartheid government), Afrikaans was viewed by Black students as the language of the oppressor (Ndimande, 2013; Harber, 1993; Tygesen, 1991). Fueled with the inferior quality of education for Blacks, dilapidated township schools, overcrowded classrooms, poor standards of teaching, and the

imposition of a language that would further distance them from educational attainment, students organized school boycotts and massive protests (Moloi, 2011). During the historical Soweto uprising, students demanded reform to the oppressive curriculum and burned down several schools in protest (Ndimande, 2013). Their calls for reform were met with a violent government response; state police opened fire and killed thousands of children (Ndimande, 2013). This event is thought to be a watershed moment in the struggle against apartheid (Seroto, 2018; Tygesen, 1991). Schools and universities became the sites of resistance (Carter, 2012), and Indigenous student opposition was voiced in a 1976 statement by the Soweto Students Representative Council: "We shall reject the whole system of Bantu Education whose aim is to reduce us, mentally and physically, into 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'" (Simmons, 1990, p.59). What was instituted as a means of permanent repression and social control, Bantu Education essentially became the catalyst to upend the apartheid system (Ndimande, 2013; Seroto, 2018; Tygensen, 1991; Zimu-Biyela, 2019).

The legacy of Black student-led civic unrest to invoke educational change was revisited in the 2015-2017 #FeesMustFall[1] and #RhodesMustFall protests at historically and predominantly White universities (Timmis & Muhuro, 2019; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). Demands for decolonized education reform were expressed as the critical centering of "African discourses as the point of departure…and only examining Western traditions in so far as they are relevant to our own experience" (Zimu-Biyela, 2019, p.44). Once again, the calls for decolonized curriculums were spurred by poor academic outcomes and diminished economic prospects that are the consequence of a history of substandard education.

[1] FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall are preceded by a hashtag (#), indicating that they were campaigns on the social media site Twitter to rally students to protest university costs and colonial education. Rhodes in #RhodesMustFall refers to Cecil Rhodes, a British imperialist and one of the architects of South African apartheid.

An overview of the historical foundations of Indigenous education in South Africa reveals the consistency in the design of settler colonial education for Indigenous populations. Education was mandated, not for cognitive development or social advancement, but to function as a colonial tool to disrupt the historical traditions and knowledge systems (Abdi, 2003; Shizha, 2010), to indoctrinate youth with self-deprecating foreign ideologies (Abdi, 2003; Shizha, 2010), to create a racialized underclass for an exploitable labor force (Cohen, 1993), and to permanently disadvantage the population so as not to fully engage in or threaten the invasive settler society (Harber, 1993; Simmons, 1990).

Many scholars conclude that because the educational objectives were largely non-academic, schooling as opposed to education is the proper term for what was provided for Indigenous populations worldwide (Abdi, 2003; Lomawaima, 2014; Margolis, 2004; Simmons, 1990; Tharpe et al., 1999). As defined by Abdi (2003), schooling is a process employed to perpetuate and maintain the existing power relationships and institutional structures within society. Quite tragically, colonial schooling was largely successful in its destructive objectives and has been instrumental in the societal underdevelopment of the diasporic Indigenous populations (Charbonneau-Dahlen et al., 2016; Mampane et al., 2018; Running Bear et al., 2017; Tygensen, 1991). Some direct outcomes of weaponized colonial schooling are academic underachievement, high rates of illiteracy, high drop-out rates, the loss of spiritual traditions, cultural ways, and language (Uleanya et al., 2019; Mampane et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2018). Indirect societal impacts include high unemployment, poverty, crime, poor health conditions, and substance abuse (Hough, 2019; Running Bear et al., 2018; Shaughnessy et al., 2004).

**Statement of the Problem**

The history of colonization in South African education is of relevant concern because colonialism and its residual effects have not been eradicated but are reified in ways that continue to negatively impact the African continent and diaspora, Indigenous populations, the global South, and so forth. Many postcolonial scholars contend that globalization has historical roots in imperialism, yet states have reconstructed their national elementary, secondary and tertiary level curriculums to meet globalization demands (Gyamera, 2019; Lunga, 2008; Stone-Mediatore, 2018; Richards, 2014; Rizvi, 2007). While the definition of globalization is contested (Lunga, 2008; Rizvi, 2007), a general interpretation of the term includes a homogenization of global economic systems and enhanced accessibility to information networks (Lunga, 2008; Richards, 2014; Rizvi, 2007). Globalization conceptualizes a shrinking world by way of inter-connectivity, interrelations, and interdependence (Lunga, 2008). Globalization is enacted in education through the predominance of Western-centered perspectives and values, standardization, privileging of the English language, market-oriented approaches, internationalization of universities, and the promotion of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curriculums (Gandolfo, 2009; Gyamera, 2019; Hultgren, 2014; Huttner-Koros, 2012). Rizvi cites Burbules and Torres (2000) in their assertion that globalization threatens:

> the autonomy of national educational systems and the sovereignty of the nation-state as the ultimate rule in democratic societies, threatening to weaken education's links to the imperatives of a community, while making stronger its relationship to the requirements of the global economy (Rizvi, 2007, p.257).

South Africa's apartheid government made education largely inaccessible to the nation's majority Indigenous population, and while the present democratic government has reformed national curriculum and has attempted to ameliorate harmful policies of the past, globalization

objectives threaten to, once again, distance disenfranchised learners further from educational attainment (Shizha, 2010; Timmis & Muhuro, 2019). The curriculum demands of globalization that the South African national Department of Basic Education (DBE) have adopted manifest in numerous ways. The privileging of the English language above Indigenous languages has mandated that English is the primary medium of instruction and required at both elementary and secondary levels of schooling (Department of Basic Education, 2012). At the tertiary level, English is almost exclusively the language of instruction, and for certain fields, such as STEM, English language instruction is practically obligatory (Huttner-Koros, 2015). For Indigenous language speakers, for the majority of their education, their home languages are not officially utilized or recognized as capable or valuable for modes of teaching and learning (Gandolfo, 2009). This policy disadvantages the majority of learners within their own country (Uleanya et al., 2019) because a lack of fluency in the first language translates to weakened second language acquisition, and consequently leads to lower literacy rates. Additionally, as globalization promotes a hegemonic language policy, in concordance, entire curriculums and educational products are designed through an ethnocentric, Western lens (Mampane et al., 2018). While the post-apartheid South African government has attempted to indigenize parts of the curriculum, the demands to meet global standards of education has allowed for the inclusion of deleterious, Western-centric educational goals (Mampane et al., 2018).

Presently, as a result of schooling that lacks relevance, Indigenous South African students are plagued with high drop-out rates, low academic performance, and disproportionally high illiteracy rates (Ndimande, 2013; Timmis & Muhuro, 2019; Uleanya et al., 2019). According to Amnesty International (2020), South Africa's school system is among the most unequal in the world, and academic achievement disparities are visible through lenses of socioeconomic and

race. To illustrate, students in the top 200 performance-ranked schools receive more distinctions in math than the students in the lower 6,600 schools combined (Amnesty International, 2020). An international standardized literacy test revealed that eighty-three percent of grade four children cannot read for meaning, and in rural and predominantly Black provinces, such as Limpopo and Northern Cape, the low-performing literacy numbers increase to eighty-five percent and ninety percent respectively (Department of Basic Education, 2023; PIRLS, 2021). Societally, these educational inequalities translate to drastically limited job opportunities, poverty, unemployment, higher crime rates, and diminished health outcomes (Ndimande, 2013; Timmis & Muhuro, 2019; Uleanya et al., 2019).

**Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of the research is to foreground decoloniality work in education in South Africa with a particular focus on decolonized education within a localized African context. The research examines the lives and practices of Indigenous South Africans who are active in promoting a decolonized education, and it gives insight into how an alternative lens of education is fostered in the presence of colonial education initiatives. Decolonization discourse in education has largely resided in higher education spaces (Maldonado-Torres, 2011), and likewise, scholarly efforts in decoloniality exist predominantly at the tertiary level in South Africa (Zimu-Biyela, 2019); however, there is a dearth of extant research on decolonization work in primary and secondary education (Zimu-Biyela, 2019). This research examined decoloniality work at all levels of education. Lastly, the study offers an alternative lens to examine decoloniality work and illuminate the various forms of expressing opposition to subtractive education and the myriad ways that decolonial education can be practiced.

**Significance and Contribution of the Research**

The research examines and articulates the expression of Indigenous decoloniality work in education during different periods of time in South Africa's history to the present. Because of the country's long history of an explicitly disparate colonial education system, various forms of decolonization in education expression also likely have a lengthy existence. This research illuminates Indigenous decoloniality work in education in ways that may not have been previously recognized. This research further expands notions of education beyond the confines of Western-centered formal education ideologies to include Indigenous education definitions and practices. Creating space for the Indigenous experience is an act of empowerment and restitution by giving back what was taken and denied (Charbonneau-Dahlen et al., 2016). Additionally, there is a dearth of literature about the lives and experiences of Indigenous South Africans, due to censorship of data about the Black populations by the apartheid government (Reed, 2013). The research centers the voices, experiences, and work of people who were the worst impacted by apartheid legislation and separatist education policies. Moreover, centering the epistemologies and ontologies of the Indigenous South African provide an alternative from the hegemonic Western Anglo lens through which education curriculum and content are framed. In decolonized education, marginalized cultures and ways of knowing are included in curriculum and content. The research is essentially restorative and peacebuilding work through an attempt to further social justice.

The most significant findings of this research are (1) the resistance to Bantu Education in its many various forms, (2) Indigenous South African student commitment to education in spite of Bantu Education, (3) the impact of student protest movements on national migration trends, (4) the transcendent unifying effect that protest songs had on people during protests, (5) multidisciplinary decolonization of education work in practice, and (6) the decolonial educator's

dedication to community building and uplift. Culmination of the phenomenological method produced the essence of the experience or invariant structure of community regeneration, which encapsulates the common experiences of the participants.

**Method of Analysis**

The questions that guide the research are: How did Indigenous South Africans, who received colonial, apartheid-era schooling, gain a decolonized education? How do the same Indigenous South Africans, with their experience of colonial education, promote decolonized education? The qualitative method of research is phenomenology. Creswell and Poth (2018) state that the phenomenological method is utilized to capture the substance or essence of a particular phenomenon. Participants who share a common experience explain or describe the circumstances that led them through the experience to result in a universal essence (Creswell & Poth, 2012). Vagle (2018) however, eschews the notion of universal truths that transcend time and space and are not reflective of social context, power, and agency. He instead offers the concept of manifestations rather than essence, which are constructed through the intentional relations. (Vagle, 2018). These intentional relations are always being interpreted, and the phenomenon would materialize as "plausible interpretation of the manifestations" (Vagle, 2018, p. 32). The research is a study into Indigenous South African apartheid-era learners and their experiences in reconciling their education with their realities. The participants of the study were chosen for their common experiences as learners taught within the apartheid government education system, and additionally, their praxis in decoloniality in education. According to Vagle (2018), phenomenologists "like to study the obvious…to potentially help us to see and understand things in new ways – to reveal things that have become so 'normal' that we do not even notice what might be at work and what might be assumed". Phenomenology is well-suited for this study

because while there is general understanding and acceptance that a colonial/apartheid education was intentionally substandard for the Indigenous populations, how someone acquires a decolonized education in spite of colonialism or apartheid education is an unknown and unseen reality. Participants of the study were between the ages of 40 and 65 years old. Because Bantu education in apartheid South Africa began in 1953 and ended in 1994 (Thobejane, 2013), adults within that age range should be able to recall their schooling experiences during the apartheid era. An additional criterion of participation is that those same Indigenous South Africans espouse a decolonized education. The participants' promotion of a decolonized education were identified through their intentional teaching of Indigenous South African (or African) culture or ideologies that counter dominant Western ideologies. The implicit or explicit purpose of the participants' work were aligned with decoloniality goals, such as redress of past injustices and the oppression of those who were colonized, reframing history to include and center perspectives of the Indigenous experience, or the usage of Indigenous languages and culture for didactic and/or upliftment purposes (Mampane et al., 2018). The lived experience that was essentialized is how someone who was schooled under the apartheid system of education acquired a decolonized education, in spite of an education designed to stunt their academic development. Creswell & Poth (2018) posit that phenomenology research should culminate in a description of the essential nature of the shared lived experience. The description details what was experienced and how it was experienced (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data included interviews from Indigenous South Africans who were educated under the apartheid era school system and work in decolonization in education.

**Conclusion**

The history of settler colonialism within South Africa created the foundation for a disparate and stratified education system (Cohen, 1993). Extraction and exploitation of the nation's natural resources became further incentive for the colonial and apartheid governments to weaponize education to maintain a poorly educated, and low-skilled workforce (Simmons, 1990). Those policy decisions have underdeveloped generations of Indigenous South Africans, undermined the economic and societal growth of the country, and contributed to problems that continue to plague South African society (Abdi,2003; Uleanya et al., 2019). The following chapter will present a historical and present-day analysis of the purpose, nature and outcomes of colonized education in settle colonized nations, nations that were formerly colonial territories, and in South Africa, in particular.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

A review of the seminal and current literature on colonial-based education and decolonized education will provide an understanding of how scholars have qualified the two types of education. The chapter also broadens the scope of colonized education to include the works of indigenous and non-indigenous, but marginalized, scholars in formerly colonized nations. The inclusion of the divergent writers provides insight into the expansiveness of colonial-based education and in contrast, decolonized education.

### Seminal Colonial-Based Education

In order to approach a decolonized education, colonial education must be defined. Seminal work in decolonized education by scholar Carter G. Woodson (1933/2008) dates back nearly a century, and an assessment of the prevailing themes in colonial education reveal that the

purpose, nature, and outcomes of colonial education have largely remained unchanged to the present (Freire, 1970; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). When considering how colonialism took form in subjugated nations, it is salient to note that imperialist nations implemented some universal practices, such as land annexation, extraction of natural resources, and the exploitation and oppression of the people within the territory (Rodney, 1972). However, as South Africa is a nation unique to others, colonialism and colonial education in South Africa had distinctions that will be explored in this chapter.

### *The Purpose of Colonial Education*

Education decoloniality scholars, such as Paolo Freire (1970), Walter Rodney (1972), and Carter Woodson (1933/2008), illustrate complex motives in the introduction of colonial education. Early European travelers, if not initially held, adopted notions of inferiority for the Indigenous people they encountered. Consequently, their own perceptions of moral, intellectual, and cultural superiority stimulated the desire to influence, school, and/or control the Indigenous populations. Carter G. Woodson (1933/2008) wrote in 1933 that the endeavor to educate Blacks in the United States was initially prompted by philanthropic motives. Upon the end of the Civil War, with a population of Blacks who were denied education for generations in slavery, the prevailing government, through the Freedmen's Bureau, envisioned a basic education of life skills (Woodson, 1933/2008). In contrast, during that postbellum period, Woodson (1933/2008) contends that opponents to Blacks' entry in society designed education to teach inferiority and servility. Apartheid-era South African scholar, Mokubung Nkomo (1990a) likewise cites the national policy of educational underdevelopment of the Indigenous Africans as a means to socialize students to accept their subjugated statuses and teach that segregation and racial stratification are natural order. Woodson (1933/2008) contends that for Blacks in settler

colonized United States, schools are places of indoctrination, and education, whether by design or inadvertently, inculcates a mindset of inferiority. Nkomo (1990a) delineates consistent goals in education for Indigenous South Africans that were explicit in promoting Whites as superior and Blacks (non-Whites) as inferior. Pan-African scholar, Walter Rodney (1972) provides a stark, comprehensive, and detailed analysis of the devastation of colonialism on the African continent. While colonial education abroad almost invariably began in Christian missionary schools, the colonial European governments introduced schooling with goals that supported the oppressive colonial structure. Rodney (1972) states that the foundational goals for promoting colonial education were to maintain a lower-class workforce and to train Africans for service. South Africa is an example of where this policy was implemented, and the "petty bourgeoisie" were educated only to the extent that they could become clerks, interpreters, police officers, and so on (Nkomo, 1990). Paulo Freire (1970), approached educational coloniality from a theoretical lens. Freire (1970) contends that the motives for imperialist pedagogy has self-aggrandizing interests which are cloaked in paternalism and humanitarianism that maintain oppression. Decolonial scholars contend that a goal of colonial schooling is the underdevelopment of an oppressed group in order to maintain an exploitable workforce (Freire, 1970; Nkomo, 1990a; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933). In South Africa, a goal of colonial education was to create a Black labor force with minimal skills to supply the demands of the capitalist economy at the lowest possible cost (Nkomo, 1990a). Freire (1970) concurs and references an oppressor class that "tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination" (Freire, 1970, p. 40).

### *The Nature of Colonial Education*

Because colonial education was exported from imperial nations and imposed upon people in disparate regions, cultures, epistemologies and ontologies, by nature it is foreign, inorganic, and intrusive. The act of supplanting a national conscience and history with the carefully curated and sanitized history of other nations is an act of dominance, erasure, and violence. Colonial schooling curriculum privileges dominant Western culture and ideologies (hooks, 1994; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). Walter Rodney (1972) points out the superfluous content in colonial curriculums that centered Europe and Europeans to the exclusion of all else. In nations under colonial regimes, children in hot, tropical climates learned of the Swiss Alps and the Rhine Valley, the British defeat of the 1588 Spanish Armada, and the knighting of a slave trader by Queen Elizabeth I (Rodney, 1972). bell hooks (1994) recounts her personal experience with colonial schooling when, in response to desegregation mandates, she and her schoolmates had to leave their "beloved all-[B]lack school" to integrate a White one that was halfway across town (hooks, 1994, p. 24). The act of uprooting the children from their community school was an imposition, and their organic, culturally relevant, and culturally centered education was replaced by one that was foreign and marginalizing (hooks, 1994). hooks (1994) cogently illustrates how the responsibility of desegregation was weighted on the Black community. The sacrifices were tangible – the loss of a neighborhood school and its ecosystem, while the students sacrificed community and identity. South African scholar, Keto (1990), avers that colonial education is foreign in how it reflects and transmits the "political values, economic interests, cultural priorities and preferences of European immigrant communities" (Keto, 1990, p. 23). Rather than an organic education that promoted social cohesiveness and continuity of culture, colonial education emphasized the acquisition of knowledge and skills for African students that African adults had not learned, and therefore education was no longer reflective of life in the African

community (Keto, 1990). Conversely, the omission and/or dismissal of Indigenous history, geographies, cultures, and ways of knowing is also a pervasive characteristic of colonial pedagogy (Baldwin, 1963; Freire, 1970; Keto, 1990; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). According to Keto (1990), in South Africa white immigrant historians contend that education did not exist in any form before Europeans landed in Africa. Freire (1970) expands upon this juxtaposing feature of imperial schooling to illustrate the banking concept of education, where education is an act of depositing information into receptacles. Freire asserts that "Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry" (Freire, 1993, p.53). Freire (1970) proposes that the banking concept of education is an instrument of oppression through the understanding of knowledge as a gift bestowed upon the ignorant by the knowledgeable and gifted.

Due to its alien, inorganic nature, colonial education holds little to no relevance or value to the vast majority of Indigenous people. Woodson (1933/2008) addresses the impracticality of colonial schooling for Blacks, regardless of geographic region. In rural areas, Blacks in the United States had knowledge of sustenance agriculture that was devalued or unrecognized as knowledge. In industrial regions, schooling left Black people ill-prepared, and the lack of entry points and opportunity made entrepreneurial education of little value (Woodson, 1933/2008). Ultimately, Woodson (1933/2008) posits, colonized classical education encouraged Blacks to pursue livelihoods that were largely nonexistent. Rodney (1972) concurs, and in the African context he underscores the educational disparities of access and quality relative to dominant European standards. Not only were the teaching methods, materials, and disciplines inferior, but they were also outdated and failed to reflect advancements in knowledge (Rodney, 1972). Imperialist nations applied their own national curriculums within colonial schools; curriculum

content bore no relevance to the lives, experiences, or conditions of the people within the colonized countries (Rodney, 1972). To illustrate, in French colonies, African children were taught that "the Gauls, our ancestors, had blue eyes" (Rodney, 1972, p. 247). Moreover, when colonial education included localized references, they were framed through the lens of White supremacy, such as Europeans "discovered" Mount Kilimanjaro (Rodney, 1972). Freire (1970) illustrates the alienating nature of colonial pedagogy in the ways that students are not considered in the creation of curriculum. Freire (1970) contends that the banking concept of education establishes a power imbalance between teacher and student, whereas the "teacher chooses and enforces choice, and students comply. The teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it" (Freire, 1970, p. 54). The banking education system creates dichotomous relationships between teacher and student that place educators in dominant positions over passive, subordinated students (Freire, 1970). In South Africa, students were acutely aware of the disconnect between their experiential and contextual realities and the curriculum content of Bantu Education (Jansen, 1990). In 1980, a student protest document stated that:

> *They* decide what we are taught. Our history is written according to their ideas. Biology and Physics are taught…but [not applicable] to our everyday lives. [Biology does not teach us] that most of the diseases of the workers stem from the fact that they are undernourished and overworked. [We are not taught] … the biology of liberation, where we can tackle the concept of race to prove that there is no such thing as race. [We are not taught] the geography of liberation…[and]…that 80 percent of [Indigenous] South Africans are dumped on 13 percent of the land. We are taught accountancy merely to calculate the profits of the capitalist (Jansen, 1990, p. 328-329). (Jansen's emphasis).

Jansen (1990) underscores the students' cogent critiques of the irrelevancy of their educational content and the simultaneous inclusion of the context in which the students want the material presented.

A prevalent characteristic of colonized education is the practice of underfunding schools along race and class divisions. In the United States, Woodson (1933/2008) contrasts schooling environments for Black and White children, and whereas White children are equipped with a curriculum of science and mathematics designed to the practicalities of their lives, Black children receive less instruction in the subjects and are taught in rented, one-room hovels, without equipment and by poorly-educated teachers. In South Africa, Nkomo (1990a) extends the critique by stating "if apartheid education has relegated [B]lack educational attainment to the rear seat, in the areas of science and mathematics, especially, it has cast the [B]lack pupil outside the school bus" (Nkomo, 1990, p. 11). In the effort to thwart advancement into white-collar fields and to limit the professional futures of the racialized underclass(es), the subjects of math and science were withheld or taught at an absolute basic level (Nkomo, 1990a; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). Woodson (1933/2008) describes segregated Black schools as inadequately supported, and at the post-secondary level, struggling Black institutions of higher education failed to prepare graduates for the demands of employment. He illustrates how Black industrial schools lacked the basic machinery that necessitated proper training, and yet White apprentices were trained within the factories where they sought employment. (Woodson, 1933/2008). Although Black graduates received diplomas, the qualification had little practical value for workforce demands (Woodson, 1933/2008). Abroad, imperial nations made little effort to educate the displaced and exploited African people (Rodney, 1972). Ironically, while reaping the gains of natural resources and exporting wealth back to Europe, colonial governments

claimed that there was not enough money to educate Africans (Rodney, 1972). To underscore the paucity of investment in education,

> [for] Africans in French West Africa, only 4.03 percent (of the economy) was utilized on education. In the British colony of Nigeria, it was only 3.4 percent. In Kenya, as late as 1946 only 2.26 percent of the revenue was spent on African education (Rodney, 1972, p. 242).

With such neglect of the education for Africans, the quality of the education was predictably poor. As illustrated in the previous chapter, per capital spending per pupil was scant, and the low standard of colonial education for Africans dissuaded them from attending school (Rodney, 1972). In fact, the dropout rate was as high as fifty percent at the primary level, and Rodney (1972) explains that the primary level dropout rate was so high because primary school was likely the only the level of school available – secondary schools, technical schools and universities were largely non-existent. The policy of Bantu Education explicitly sought to restrict Indigenous South Africans from entering professional employment and from making societal gains, yet as the country further industrialized, the number of qualified White laborers did not meet workforce demands, which threatened to stymie national economic growth and technological development (Nkomo, 1990b; Setai, 1990). South Africa provides a stark example of how the policy of educational underinvestment for the majority of the population had a deleterious effect upon the development of the entire nation (Nkomo, 1990b; Setai, 1990).

The use of language as a political tool for dominance and control is a longstanding feature of colonialism and colonial schooling. Woodson (1933/2008) noted that European languages are awarded premiere status in United States' schools, and yet African American speech patterns are disparaged and dismissed as dialect instead of language (Baldwin, 1979;

hooks, 1994). African-American English developed during slavery and is a mix of African ancestral languages and American English (Baldwin, 1979; hooks, 1994; Woodson, 1933/2008). Although there are rules that govern the speech patterns, racism and classism determine the politics of language standards, and African American English is given a subordinated status, and worse, considered evidence of ignorance or the inability to communicate (Baldwin, 1979; hooks, 1994). Invariably, African-American English is not recognized in formal colonial schooling practices (Baldwin, 1979; hooks, 1994). Language as a political tool of dominance gains greater significance when the pedagogical goals of imperialist nations are examined. Rodney (1972) recounts the motives of French leaders who wanted to solidify French dominance and presence in Africa by establishing schools that teach French language and culture. With the existence of rival imperialist nations, such as Britain or Portugal, the French imposed their language in hopes that Africans would adopt some level of French identity and reject France's European competitors on the continent (Rodney, 1972).

A final characteristic of colonial education is its reflection of and promotion of capitalism and capitalist values. Woodson (1933/2008) illuminated how White people boasted of their monopolizing control of natural resources and the production of raw materials, to the extent that Blacks were excluded from participating in enterprise. He concludes that capitalism perpetuated disparities and the oppression of Black people, and he favored socialism as a means to promote greater economic equity (Woodson, 1933/2008). Rodney (1972) draws connections between the historical underpinnings of education in Europe with its dominant ruling class origins, and he cogently states that the class bias that was foundational to education in Europe was exported abroad. Rodney (1972) posits that the racism and Eurocentrism that are inherently a part of capitalism are also a part of colonial education. In fact, Rodney (1972) asserts that capitalist

individualism is the most important principle of colonial schooling. The political effect of colonial education in many parts of Africa was the benefit of a minority at the expense and enslavement of the majority. When applied to labor practices, the concept of individualism translated to personal wealth and advancement instead of the support of the greater collective, such as the clan or ethnic group (Rodney, 1972). What was once the cultural norm of "collective labor and egalitarian social distribution" was replaced by 'accumulative tendencies' (Rodney, 1972, p. 254). Because of its antithetical nature to African ontology, Rodney (1972) claims that the concept of individualism had a widely destructive effect on African society: "In Africa, both the formal school system and the informal value system of colonialism destroyed the social solidarity and promoted the worst form of alienated individualism without social responsibility" (Rodney, 1972, p. 255). The entirety of Freire's work in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) is a rejection of capitalism and in particular its foundational place in colonial education. Freire (1970) equates the capitalist tenets of individualism and private ownership to the desire to dominate, oppress, and imagine the world as an object of possession and control. To illustrate, Freire (1970) posits, "The oppressor consciousness tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination. The earth, property, production, the creation of people, people themselves, time – everything is reduced to the status of objects at its disposal" (p. 40). Additionally, Freire (1970) connected the need to possess with materialism and the ideation of money as power and the measure of everything. Consequently, profit and acquiring possessions become primary motivations (Freire, 1970). Colonial education further promotes capitalism through various myths (Freire, 1970; Rodney, 1972). Freire (1970) points to the concept of a free society where ostensibly, people have free choice of where to work and the opportunity to find better employment at will. Rodney (1972) addresses the teaching that industriousness leads to

wealth and contends that many who work tirelessly are underpaid and exploited. The premise of a universal right to education is popularized through capitalism, however Freire (1970) counters with disparities in education and the relative few who attend university. Additionally, as previously illustrated, in South Africa the use of Bantu Education to exclude Indigenous South Africans from skilled labor employment and economic advancement translated to a national dearth of qualified candidates during the time of increasingly industrialized labor demands (Nkomo, 1990b; Setai, 1990). As a consequence, the apartheid government would only entertain reforms to Bantu Education in response to the labor shortage crisis, and proposed changes would educate Blacks to the extent of the necessary skills for lower tiered industrial jobs (Setai, 1990). Setai (1990) cogently underscores the irony that in democratic societies, people are educated to advance the industrial and technological development, and ultimately, the economic growth of the nation. Conversely, in South Africa the level of education for Indigenous Africans is dependent upon national economic growth and upon whether the number of White skilled laborers cannot meet industry shortage demands (Setai, 1990). In the example of South Africa, the capitalist underpinnings of colonial education are explicit. The economy and labor market are direct drivers of education policy, the quantity, and quality of education that the majority of the South African people receive.

### *Outcomes of Colonial Education*

There were, are, and will continue to be a myriad of detrimental outcomes from colonial schooling. When the early scholars of decolonization in education researched and published their works, many of the outcomes had not yet manifested. While the seminal literature was written as much as nearly a century ago, the delineated effects have very present relevance.

#### Effects of subtractive schooling policies

One of the predictable outcomes of colonial education is the lower levels of educational attainment in terms of advancement and completion rates and in levels of academic proficiency (Rodney, 1972). As a result of underdevelopment and underfunding of education for subordinated groups in colonial nations, Rodney (1972) attests to the majority of Indigenous Africans who had no opportunity to attend school. In many parts of the African continent, schools did not exist, and of the children who had access to schools, less than half completed primary school, and only three out of one hundred matriculated to secondary school (Rodney, 1972). In relatively few schools that existed, the quality of instruction was poor, and curriculum was outdated and failed to reflect advances in the disciplines (Rodney, 1972). Additionally, Rodney (1972) posits there were some subjects, such as complex math and science, that were not taught. Cited by Rodney (1972), a UNESCO report estimated that the illiteracy rate was between 80 to 85 percent of the African continent's population. Woodson (1933/2008) illustrates segregated education in the United States with squalid school conditions and underqualified teachers for Black elementary and secondary school children. At the post-secondary level, federal school funding disparities translated to Black industrial schools that were inadequately equipped, only to graduate students who were improperly trained and unprepared for industrial job requirements (Woodson, 1933/2008). Decades of educational underdevelopment under Bantu Education has resulted in multiple generations of illiterate and poorly educated Black South Africans (Nkomo, 1990b). The policy of underinvestment in education for Indigenous Africans was clearly exemplified in national per capita expenditures for learners (Nkomo, 1990b). While the South African government spent 17 rand on a Black African student in years 1953 and 1954, public schools received 128 rand for a White student, which amounted to 7.5 percent more than what was spent for an Indigenous child (Nkomo, 1990b). Thirty years later, in years 1983 and

1984 the national per capita expenditure for a Black African learner was 169 rand and 1,702 rand for a White learner (Nkomo, 1990b). The government spending difference had increased from 7.5 to 10 percent for White learners compared to Black Africans. The colonial education impact has a reverberating effect, as learners whose educational attainment was restricted became teachers that were ill-equipped to educate their own students. In 1976, only 20 percent of teachers in the African schools had completed high school and 2.6 percent had attained university degrees. In the latter years of apartheid education, in 1986, the numbers had not increased - only two percent of Black African teachers had university degrees, eighty-two percent of Black African teachers had attained Standard 8 (10th grade) or lower academic qualifications, and nineteen percent of Black African teachers had no academic qualifications (Mehl, 1990). The crisis of underqualified teachers was compounded with a severe shortage of teachers in Indigenous African schools (Matabane, 1990). In 1975, the teacher to student ratio was 1:54 for Africans and 1:20 for Whites, and in some instances the imbalance approached 1:100 for Indigenous Africans (Matabane, 1990). In 1984, the rates improved slightly to 1:41 for Africans and 1:19 for Whites (Matabane, 1990). Overcrowded classrooms were exacerbated by inadequate facilities, and to accommodate the numbers some lower primary schools had to restrict learners to half-day attendance, so that two groups of learners can alternate between a day and afternoon schedule (Matabane, 1990). In addition, compared to primary schools there were significantly less secondary schools (Matabane, 1990). In 1970, of the total 9,108 Indigenous African schools, only 415 (4 percent) were secondary schools, and only 104 of those schools reached the terminal Standard 10 (12th grade) (Matabane, 1990).With divestment by design in Bantu Education, predictably, the effects on Indigenous African learner pass rates were tangible. In 1973, 43 percent of Black African learners progressed to Standard 4 (6th grade) and only four

percent persisted to Standard 10 (12th grade) (Mehl, 1990). In more than a decade later, in 1984 there was little improvement to those numbers. In 1984, 55 percent of Black African learners progressed to Standard 4 and only 16 percent progressed to Standard 10 (Mehl, 1990).

**Education to subdue and instill an inferior mindset**

An intended outcome of colonial education is the creation of a subordinated mindset – of conformity and passivity, readily adapting to a world that the oppressors have created (Baldwin, 1963; Freire, 1970; Woodson, 1933/2008). Woodson (1933/2008) states that teaching White supremist history assures an acceptance of inferiority for those who are subjugated in that narrative. Woodson writes,

> When you determine what a man shall think, you do not have to concern yourself with what he will do. If you make a man feel that he is inferior, you do not have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he will seek it himself. If you make a man think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to the back door. He will go without being told, and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one (Woodson, 1933/2008, p. 55).

Freire (1970) concurs and asserts that an educated person is an adapted one, she or he fits better within the dominate societal design. The more the oppressed conform to the purposes of that dominant have prescribed, the more easily the dominant group can continue to dictate and maintain authority (Freire, 1970). Freire (1970) draws a direct correlation between pedagogical practices, such as lecturing, reading requirements, assessments, a lack of commonality between teacher and student, and promotion criteria and the inability to think critically. Additionally, he posits that the imposition of one's knowledge upon another or mere co-existence between educator and student cannot be true education (Freire, 1970).

### Education for assimilation

Ironically, a further outcome of colonial schooling is the inability of the educated to fit into their former communities (hooks, 1994; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). Woodson (1933/2008) contends that the failure of colonial education, and higher education specifically, is made manifest in the educated person's estrangement from her or his community. He states that the educated lose touch with community, and their works do not translate to investment in community uplift, but are more self-aggrandizing (Woodson, 1933/2008). He posited that an outcome of a Eurocentric classical education was often a disdain for traditionally Black vocations (Woodson, 1933/2008). Using anecdotal references, he concluded that colonial education was impractical and left graduates ill-prepared to develop enterprise or serve their communities (Woodson, 1933/2008). Rodney (1972) undergirds this theory and posits that the most educated of Indigenous Africans were also the most alienated on the continent. To further illustrate, Rodney includes the personal account of Dr. Kofi Busia, former Prime Minister of Ghana:

> At the end of my first year of secondary school…I went home [after] four years, and on that visit, I became painfully aware of my isolation. I understood our community far less than the boys of my own age who had never been to school. …as I went through college and university, I felt increasingly that the education I received taught me more … about Europe and less … about my own society (Rodney, 1972, p. 246).

He parallels the advances in education to further submission to capitalist values, whereas at each subsequent level of schooling salaries increased, a taste for imported luxuries grew, lifestyles reflected the desire to emulate all things Western (Rodney, 1972). hooks (1994) highlights the tension between Black intellectuals and the Black community's need for revolutionary thought

and leadership. She concludes that a colonized education outcome is assimilation, and its highest attainers consciously (or unconsciously) abandon community uplift for personal advancement and economic status (hooks, 1994). In South Africa, the policy of Bantu Education was met with opposition from the onset of its implementation (Nkomo, 1990a). Student protests were well organized and an integral part of the protest movement to end apartheid schooling and the overall system itself (Naidoo, 1990; Nkomo, 1990b). However, to thwart student militancy, Naidoo (1990) posits that university administrators sought to inoculate students with a bourgeois appetite for individual success. While students may have been passionately dedicated to the cause for social transformation, their education offers participation in a capitalist economy which is at odds with militancy and political struggle (Naidoo, 1990). Summarily, Naidoo (1990) avers that more exposure to formal education resulted in a wider divide between the educated and their community – the oppressed majority.

## Seminal Decolonized Education

Decolonial scholar, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2014) avers that colonialism was instituted in 1492 with Christopher Columbus' claim of discovering the Americas. Nevertheless, decolonial thought and activism have long existed to counter Western colonialism in its many forms (Maldonado-Torres, 2011). In the myriad ways that colonial education disenfranchised its recipients, a decolonized education either preexisted or subsequently developed to counter the harmful effects of the subtractive education.

### *African Precolonial Education*

To counter colonial myths, seminal education decoloniality scholars attest to the existence of formal and informal education that far predated colonial schooling (Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). Woodson (1933/2008) lists various disciplines that Africans had made

advances in, such as chemistry, livestock, and the musical arts, and records the existence of powerful kingdoms that would rival the Roman empire. Because of colonialism's decimating impact on the African continent, Rodney (1972) devotes an entire chapter on precolonial Africa to emphasize the multitude of complex, thriving societies prior to their destruction. He defines formal education as "a specific program and a conscious division between teachers and pupils" and provides examples of ceremonies and rites of passage, religious rituals, and the practice of medicine in early African societies (Rodney, 1972, p. 239). Rodney (1972) asserts that the societies that utilized a writing system had an advanced education. He lists countries along the Nile, in Northern Africa, Ethiopia, Western Sudan and the East African coast as places with literate populations (Rodney, 1972). Rodney illustrates the existence of secondary and post-secondary education in precolonial Africa by referencing Egypt's Al-Azhar University, the University of Fez in Morocco, and the University of Timbuktu in Mali (Rodney, 1972).

### *Organic, Context-Rich Education*

A characteristic of decolonized education is its organic development from the surrounding environment and the ontology of the people, in essence – its relevance to the learners (Baldwin, 1963; Freire, 1970; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). Because Rodney (1972) was a historian, he did not imagine what a decolonized education would entail for Indigenous populations. Instead, he detailed the nature of education within an African society prior to imperial imposition. He heralds features of Indigenous African education: "…its close links with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense; its collective nature; its many-sidedness; and its progressive development in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional, and mental development of the child" (Rodney, 1972, p. 239). An underlying feature of African education was that it made no distinction between manual and intellectual education

(Rodney, 1972). This is in sharp contrast to Western education, which privileges intellectual over manual and forms the basis of a ruling class bias that pervades colonial education. The decolonized education that Woodson (1933/2008) favored was culturally relevant, localized knowledge taught by Black educators. For example, the study of science would incorporate agricultural chemistry within the context of farming practices of southern Black farmers. He posited that sociology should focus concern on Black poor and working classes, and economics study should strive to remedy the lack of capital, cooperative enterprise, and the low success rate of establishments (Woodson, 1933/2008). Woodson (1933/2008) cogently drew ontological connections to African proverbs and folklore and promoted the African perspective in the study of anthropology and history. Educational decoloniality for Woodson (1933/2008) was heralding African thought, paying homage to African culture and its influence on Black American (and mainstream American) culture. In contrast to pro-slavery propaganda that storied the African continent as devoid of historical and cultural relevance, Woodson (1933/2008) proposed curricula that recognized ancient African civilizations that predated European empires. Additionally, he argued for the study of slavery through the lens of the African influence on the thoughts and practices of enslaved Black people (Woodson, 1933/2008). He exhorted the study of African languages and their influence on Black American dialect as a way to reclaim devalued Black speech patterns (Woodson, 1933/2008).

Freire (1970), expounds the theme of an organic decolonized education, but he adds the element of the teachers being members of a different community from the students. For Freire (1970), decolonized education begins with the act of dialogue that constitutes action and reflection. He distinguishes dialogue from the practice of depositing ideas into others, from the act of discussion or the mere exchange of ideas, and from contentious arguments that do not seek

understanding, but rather the “imposition of their own truth” (Freire, 1970, p. 70). Freire (1970) introduces the ‘problem-posing method’ of instruction, which is antithetical to the banking concept of education, and organic in that it is constructed within the students’ community and from a student-centered perspective. He proposes that the prospective teacher through observation and dialogue, examine all aspects of life within the students’ community and subsequently gain knowledge and familiarity with the students’ living experiences (Freire, 1970). To juxtapose the banking concept of instruction, instead of presenting the acquired information as a lecture, it is presented as a problem that the teacher does not have the answer to, but through collective inquiry with students as participants, the answers may be discovered (Freire, 1970).

For bell hooks (1994), her earliest experiences of school are described as a decolonized education, and its organic nature derived from the teachers who were a part of her community. While the teachers may not have subscribed to a particular radical theory, hooks (1994) recalls their actions as “enacting a revolutionary pedagogy that was profoundly anticolonial” (hooks, 1994, p. 2). She illustrates how the teachers fostered a dedication to learning, nurtured students’ intellect, and encouraged critical thought, which she deemed was “a counter-hegemonic act, a fundamental way to resist every strategy of [W]hite racist colonization” (hooks, 1994, p. 2). hooks (1994) reinforces Freire’s belief that teaching is an act of love that begins with educators having an intimate knowledge of and being immersed within their students’ community. She recounts that her teachers’ familiarity of their students spanned a generation and went beyond the confines of the school building and context of education (hooks, 1994). Teachers who were deeply invested in the lives of their students cared about their well-being and outcomes.

A 1961 UNESCO conference on education in Africa revealed that African educational content does not represent existing conditions in Africa nor the political climate of self-

determination, but it is based on a foreign, non-African context (Jansen, 1990). In response to the era of African political independence, the conference concluded with the recommendations that education administrators should reform the content of curricula, textbooks and methods, so that it reflects the African environment, historical culture, child development, and the demands of technological advancement and economic growth (Jansen, 1990).

### *Education as a Community Effort and for Community Empowerment*

Anti-colonial education scholars shift the perspective on teachers as not only educators, but ultimately leaders who bear the responsibility for community building and uplift (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994; Rodney, 1972; Woodson, 1933/2008). Rodney (1972) did not explicitly characterize the role of teachers in society, but he proposed that education should lead to confidence in youth and pride in their African societies. He credited pre-colonial African education with its development of people with healthy psyches that were well-adapted to their communities (Rodney, 1972). To Woodson (1933/2008), higher education should evoke a higher calling – those who been fortunate receive an education must seek to improve Black society. Woodson (1933/2008) discouraged education for aristocracy, but instead advocated for leadership that exemplified solidarity and service. He contended that true leadership required dedication to underserved populations - living amongst them, thinking with them, sincerely feeling for them, and even dying for them (Woodson, 1933/2008). Woodson (1933/2008) envisioned leadership as submission, giving a voice to the oppressed, and creating opportunities for community empowerment. In his words,

> If the ‘highly educated’ Negro would forget most of the untried theories taught him in school, if he could see through the propaganda which has been instilled into his mind

> under the pretext of education, …he would fall in love with his own people and begin to sacrifice for their uplift (Woodson, 1933/2008, p. 28).

Freire (1970) presents an ontological view of the struggle between the oppressed and oppressor as the struggle for liberation and humanization. Freire (1970) undergirds Woodson's vision of educators that have a deep affinity with the people in the community that they serve. For Freire (1970), the dialogical process that is a fundamental part of education leads to cultural revolution – the antithesis of colonization or cultural invasion. hooks (1994), who studied and built upon Freire's work, reiterated the ideology of teachers performing acts of liberation and "learning as revolution" (hooks, 1994, p. 2). She credits the Black teachers from her segregated schools with a praxis that developed the mind and prepared students to be intellectual leaders for the betterment of the community and race (hooks, 1994). South African scholar Matabane (1990), envisions decolonized education as inclusive. In the reform of educational materials, she advocates for matters of concern to women to be integrated into all materials, rather than be separated into a designated women's issues domain (Matabane, 1990). In fact, Matabane (1990) contends that equality mandates in the constitution do not sufficiently ensure that women can participate equally in decisions that affect them and their community. She posits that education plays a vital role in ending discrimination against women, and the national agenda must prioritize the reformed approached to education for men, women and children (Matabane, 1990). Additionally, South African scholar, Jansen (1990) avers that any curricular research and praxis should be reflective of a collaborative effort that includes all members of the community, such as teachers, students, parents, academics, community leaders, union workers, and so on.

During the period of apartheid education, much of the ideology of educational decolonization in South Africa was framed in terms of countering Bantu Education policies and

redress of societal harms that resulted from apartheid education (Jansen, 1990; Matabane, 1990; Nkomo, 1990b). South African scholar, Nkomo (1990b) attests that upon the anticipated demise of the apartheid government and reformed Bantu Education, there are minimum requirements to initiating a national education system. To address the disparities in access to education, Nkomo (1990b) argues first for universal education which is extended to all and is compulsory and free to African children, as it was for White children. Second, Nkomo (1990b) calls for the eradication of racially inspired curricula, which would bring an end to educational engineering for a racially stratified society. Nkomo's (1990b) third objective would be to immediately improve the quality of Indigenous South African teachers. He proposes a "massive, accelerated teacher training program" that should be instituted at the onset of reconstruction to address the shortage of teachers and enhance teacher training programs (Nkomo, 1990b, p. 305). Jansen (1990) concurs and he promotes teacher empowerment through a participatory role in curriculum development and greater classroom autonomy. To counter curricular deficiencies, Nkomo (1990b) avers that science and mathematics instruction and the required program supports must be implemented. Finally, a national literacy campaign launch must be prioritized to empower the thousands of people who were denied a basic education, by either the substandard quality of education or by its nonexistence in rural areas (Matabane, 1990; Nkomo, 1990b).

**Current Work in Colonial-Based/Decolonized Education**

Although one of the earliest publications on decolonized education was written close to a century ago (Woodson, 1933/2008), current research in educational decoloniality echoes many of the same themes recorded then. As time has progressed, new concepts, terminology, and even economic systems have come into being, yet some argue that they are simply iterations of what have already existed. As more aboriginal scholars enter the work of decoloniality in education,

their perspectives expand the dialogue on what constitutes colonial and decolonized education (Batz, 2019; Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2019).

### *Colonized Education*

With a concentrated focus on tertiary education, Indigene scholars illuminate how settler populations conducted research that misrepresented the Indigenous People, misinterpreted data, marginalized communities, ultimately further maintained unequal power relationships, and was often invasive (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). In fact, decoloniality scholars posit that imperialism began and was bolstered by research conducted through a Western-centric lens of the Other that was collected, classified, and transmitted back to the West (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). This knowledge resulted in oppressive ideologies that constructed the superior / inferior paradigm that is imposed upon racialized groups (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) avers that for aboriginal peoples, the term research itself conjures memories of horrific acts done in the name of science. Smith contends that:

> Research is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized. It is regulated through the formal rules of individual scholarly disciplines and scientific paradigms, and the institutions that support them (including the state). It is realized in the myriad of representations and ideological constructions of the Other in scholarly and 'popular' works, …the media, official histories, and school curricula (Smith, 2012, p. 8).

Western research has foundational beginnings in travelers' tales and writings that detailed curiosities of distant lands with uncivilized and primitive peoples (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). The information was gathered with little or no input from the people studied, with little or no

knowledge of the lived experience of the subjects of the research, decoded through a Western lens, and disseminated for a Western audience (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). This process of "scientific colonization" (Chilisa, 2020, p.7) stimulated the belief that researchers have the right to access any information or sources of knowledge owned by the peoples and lands of oppressed territories (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2014). In turn, the sourced data and acquired knowledge are appropriated as Western knowledge, in the forms of articles, books, and so forth, without acknowledgement of the people who provided the information (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012).

Because education is touted as a way to increase economic opportunity and elevate social status, many people in marginalized communities look to education with high expectations (Batz, 2019). Increasingly, however, people are finding, particularly in non-urban areas, that the anticipated jobs are not there and do not exist (Batz, 2019; Mampane et al., 2018). More schools are built in urban areas and those sites are privileged with larger facilities and more financial investment compared to rural schools (Rodney, 1972). This fact leads many to infer that the quality of education at the metropolitan schools is better than in rural schools and to consequently devalue the rural schools and their surrounding communities (Batz, 2019). A further outcome of the disparate perceptions of the quality of education based upon region is that students in non-urban areas believe that it necessary to look outside of their communities for educational opportunities and a more promising future (Batz, 2019), thus deprive their communities of growth and development (McBreen, 2019). Moreover, many of the urban, colonial-schooled graduates, ostensibly prepared for higher social status and success, disregard their former communities and elect not to return home (Batz, 2019). Once educated, many Indigenous graduates express shame of their former neighborhoods (Batz, 2019) to the extent

that the ideology and language of escape from marginalized communities has become orthodoxy. Yet, as stated above, many Indigenous students in former colonial countries, upon graduation discover that the desired jobs cannot be found (Batz, 2019; Mampane et al., 2018). South African decoloniality scholars concur and attest that a Western-centered education creates a disconnect between what the graduates are taught and the demands of the labor market (Mampane et. al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019).

Although the time of its beginning is contested (Lunga, 2008), many decolonial scholars equate globalization with imperialism or colonialism and argue that globalization exacerbates inequalities in education, and its outcomes mimic colonial education outcomes (Mampane et al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019). As stated in the previous chapter, while the definition of globalization is contested, a general interpretation of the term includes a homogenization of global economic systems and enhanced accessibility to information networks. It conceptualizes a shrinking world by way of inter-connectivity, interrelations, and interdependence (Lunga, 2008). Globalization is enacted in education through the predominance of Western-centered perspectives and values, standardization, privileging of the English language, market-oriented approaches, internationalization of universities, the promotion of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curriculums, and prioritizing academic publication in English-language, Western-centric international journals (Gyamera, 2019). The language of globalization homogenizes nations into a global village with no regard for cultural variance or societal forces and assumes that its existence offers universal benefit (Rizvi, 2007). Upon interrogation, globalization centers Western ideologies and its epistemological core is European or American; however, this becomes problematic when globalization imperatives inform educational curriculum in the global South and within developing nations (Lunga, 2009; Rizvi,

2007). Rizvi (2007) asserts that the autonomy of national educational systems and the sovereignty of nations are threatened by globalizations' dominant role in democratic societies. When globalization demands reform school curriculums, the Western-focused education is placed at odds with the societal realities and educational needs of people in marginalized communities and developing nations (Rizvi, 2007). Because globalization assumes the universal existence of technological infrastructures, access to advanced technologies, and digital literacy, globalized educational curriculum reflect these assumptions and thus, disenfranchise many aboriginal learners in South Africa, particularly in rural areas (Timmis & Muhuro, 2019). Consequently, globalized education holds limited usefulness and little relevance to myriad learners, and as with colonial education, an imposed, foreign, curriculum disadvantages learners and creates detrimental outcomes (Uleanya et al., 2019). In South Africa, decoloniality scholars find little to distinguish globalized education initiatives and the education of underdevelopment promoted during the apartheid era (Mampane et al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019). The dissonance of an alien, Western curriculum implemented in marginalized community schools results in devastating outcomes such as reduced or substandard academic and literacy skills, under-resourced schools, ill-equipped classrooms, high drop-out rates, under-prepared teachers, poor academic performance, post-school unemployment, disparate labor market demands and knowledge/skills of graduates, and increased poverty rates (Mampane et. al., 2018; Uleanya et. al., 2019).

**Current Work in Decolonized Education**

As previously illustrated, there is overlap in the prevalent themes in educational coloniality between the seminal and the current work, and similarly, there are iterative themes in

what current scholars believe constitute decolonized education (Batz, 2019; Chilisa, 2020; Mampane et al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019; Zimu-Biyela, 2019).

There are common misconceptions of colonial settler and Indigenous Peoples' histories within mainstream society due to long-standing, prevailing narratives that cast Euro-Western settlers in a favorable light over Indigenous Peoples (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2019). These distortions of history are reinforced through curricula at all levels of education and continue to be present in textbooks, teaching, and lecture content of educators (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2019). Some current anti-colonial scholars contend that decolonized Indigenous education promulgates the history of oppressive colonial era policies/practices and historical injustices for marginalized communities (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2019; Mampane et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2018). However, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) asserts that:

> In a decolonizing framework, deconstruction is part of a much larger intent. Taking apart the story, revealing underlying texts, and giving voice to things that are often known intuitively does not help people to improve their current conditions. It provides words, perhaps, an insight that explains certain experiences – but it does not prevent someone from dying (Smith, 2012, p. 3).

Some scholars aver that understanding settlement histories and past relations between nations and Indigenous Peoples is the starting place for decoloniality studies (Mitchell et al., 2018).

Proponents for a decolonized education in South Africa unequivocally point to the national language policy on the medium of instruction and language practices for decolonization reform (Makalela, 2018; Mampane et al., 2018; Maseko, 2017; Uleanya et al., 2019). The South African Department of Basic Education language policy states that children at the foundation phase, which includes grades R (reception) through third (R-3), of schooling must be taught in

one of the eleven official languages for the entirety of that phase, at home language level (Department of Basic Education - RSA, 2012). While Indigenous South African children can be taught in their Indigenous languages during the foundation phase, many parents opt to place their children in English medium schools at the sacrifice of learning language and culture (Ndimande, 2013). Globalization promotes English as the language of commerce, enterprise, and learning (Guerrero, 2010; Yeoh et al., 2014), and consequentially, there is a tacit dismissal and devaluation of Indigenous languages as unprofitable and ill-equipped for rigorous coursework (Gandolfo, 2009). Many Indigenous South African parents recognize the pressure to conform to globalization standards, and in the intent to give their children an advantage, many reject their local Indigenous schools for English medium schools (Ndimande, 2013). Conversely and ironically, this creates cultural dissonance for the Indigenous children, as there is a disconnect between language spoken at home and at school, and further, the children are not taught to read and write in their mother tongues, which ultimately puts them at a disadvantage (Makalela, 2018; Mampane et al., 2018; Ndimande, 2013). The notable losses of language and culture coupled with their perceived losses of relevance and value has spurred calls to reform the language and curriculum development policies (Makalela, 2018; Mampane et al., 2018; Ndimande, 2013; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). Decoloniality proponents contend that to preserve the marginalized Indigenous languages, educational policy must support the development of their orthographies, and there must be concerted effort to raise consciousness about the salience and value of mother tongue fluency (Mampane et al., 2018; Ndimande, 2013; Maseko, 2017).

Current Indigenous scholars point to the academy as a generator of Western ‘knowledge’ that creates and perpetuates marginalizing ideologies that inform oppressive colonial policies (Batz, 2019; Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2019). In response, Indigenous scholars

have created and practice Indigenous research methodologies for research endeavors within and for Indigenous populations (Batz, 2019; Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). On a basic level, Indigeneity research must resist promoting Euro-Western centered thought and the continued appropriation of aboriginal knowledge (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). Indigene scholars assert that the end goal of decolonial work is Indigenous self-determination (Batz, 2019; McBreen, 2019; Smith, 2012), and consequently, a primary focus of the Indigenous research agenda is social justice (Smith, 2012; Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019). The social justice that emanates from Indigenous research entails recovery, healing, community harmony, and unity (Chilisa, 2020; Smith 2012). While Indigenous scholars acknowledge that there can be common attributes between Western and Indigenous research methods, such as interviews or the use of artifacts, there is divergence on interpretation of how research is ethically conducted (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2019; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). Smith (2012) illuminates how Western research ethics terminology emphasizes the individual and individualized property, as in informed consent and the right to share one's knowledge. For Indigenous scholars, ethical research consists of respect, reciprocity, relationship, and responsibility to community (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). Chilisa (2020) and Smith (2012) concur that the Indigenous perspective of ethical codes of conduct is reflective of their interactions with each other and the environment. Similarly, Indigenous research methods measure validity and reliability in terms of relational responsibility (Ormiston, 2019; Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019). Relational responsibility is enacted through the guiding principles of authenticity, credibility and reciprocity by developing a trust and respect for the aboriginal people and their community, for example – not asking for knowledge or objects, but instead waiting for these things to be shared (Ormiston, 2019). A final defining aspect of Indigenous research methodology is its creation by

and for Indigenous researchers (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). Problematically, much of the language in Western research methodology assumes that the Indigenous People are the subject of the study and not the researcher (Smith, 2012; Whetung & Wakefield, 2019). Indigenous research methods make no assumptions on the study participants, but instead offer research methods developed through the ontologies and epistemologies of Indigenous Peoples (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012).

Not only as a response to the exogenous nature of colonial education, but also for community empowerment, decolonized education elevates local knowledge sourced from marginalized Indigenous communities (Batz, 2019; Chilisa, 2020; Mampane et al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). South African proponents of decolonized education call for community-based education for grounding curriculum in context-rich, learner-centered, relevant, and meaningful content (Makalela, 2018; Mampane et al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). For aboriginal peoples in remote regions, there have been and presently are existential threats to their surrounding environments, sources of sustenance, and their communities. This can take the form of deforestation, mining and extraction efforts, hydroelectric dam construction, massacres and removal campaigns, and so forth. Anti-colonial education centers local histories and relevant realities of the Indigenous community (Batz, 2019; Mampane et al., 2018; Uleanya et al., 2019; Zimu-Biyela, 2019), such as knowledge of the landscape and its natural features, the community's neighboring borders, the flora and fauna and their/our interdependent roles, and the names, locations and histories of sacred sites (Batz, 2019). Localized anti-colonial education recognizes community members, such as ancestral authorities, spiritual guides, elders, community leaders, and family members, as sources of knowledge (Batz, 2019). With a decolonized education curriculum, learners will gain an intimate knowledge of

their communities, a greater respect for the importance and value of their environment, and be able to defend their community against external threats (Batz, 2019).

**Theoretical Framework**

As this research queries the history, impact and legacies of colonial era education, a theoretical framework that grapples with such legacies is postcolonial theory. The definition of postcolonial theory is contested (Lunga, 2008; Rizvi, 2007), but it can be loosely defined as a study of the effects of colonization on countries, cultures, ethnicity, gender, identity, race, and racism with historical colonial influence (Lunga, 2008; Rodriques, Albuquerque & Miller, 2019). Postcolonial theory includes the articulation and celebration of cultural identities and explores questions of agency and resistance (Lunga, 2008). It involves deconstructing knowledge systems that undergird colonialism, neocolonialism, and forms of oppression and exploitation that pervade to present day (Lunga, 2008). There are three leading theorists and foundational scholars in postcolonial theory, which include Homi Bhabha (1994), Edward Said (1978), and Gayatri Spivak (1988). In Homi Bhabha's (1994) book, *The Location of Culture*, he proposes the theory of a 'third space' that is revealed through the dismantling of narratives of cultural domination (Bhabha, 1994). Edward Said introduced postcolonial theories of dichotomous themes such as Occidentalism/Orientalism, West/East, and the concept of the 'Other' (Saada, 2014). Said avers that Orientalism is foundational in colonial discourse, and it is undergirded by "structures of power, knowledge, hegemony, culture, and imperialism that work politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively to produce and reproduce the inferior status and images of the East compared to the West" (Saada, 2014, pgs. 605-606). Gayatri Spivak's (1988) most notable and widely referenced work, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* illuminates the complexities of oppression and marginalization within subgroups (Spivak, 1988). Spivak

(1988) introduced the concept of ‘epistemic violence’, which is when those in the dominant culture ignore oppressive colonial actions and seek to rewrite the histories and experiences of the oppressed, thus silencing them and denying agency (Saada, 2014). The scholars’ works are unified in denouncing Eurocentrism, promoting difference, and representing postcolonial voices (Lunga, 2004). Moreover, postcolonial theory emphasizes the practice of a hyper-self-reflexivity as a method of recognizing the complicities and investments of everyone (oppressor and oppressed) in perpetuating repressive and coercive knowledge and belief systems and enabling relationships of inequality, particularly in education contexts (Rodrigues et al., 2019). Properly applied, postcolonial discourse is “always questioning its own assumptions and grounds, scrutinizing its own definitions to avoid becoming a master narrative” (Lunga, 2004, p. 193).

The theoretical framework of postcolonial theory is suited for the proposed research as the research examines a period of colonialism in South Africa and how colonial education impacted learners who were educated under that system. Further, the study attempts to illuminate decoloniality work and offer an alternative lens to view education praxis, which are explicit goals in postcolonial theory studies. This study aligns with Gayatri Spivak’s (1988) work in postcolonial theory in education that privileges local knowledges and perspectives over dominant Western knowledges and valorizes marginalized groups such as Indigenous populations (Rodrigues et al., 2019). The philosophical underpinnings of the proposed research are postcolonial discourse and Indigenous knowledge systems, as Chilisa (2020) states are mutually theoretically supportive. Some Indigenous scholars aver that to properly appreciate and interpret Indigenous knowledge and ways, an alternative lens and approach is necessary, and Indigenous work cannot be fully actualized without Indigenous methodologies (Batz, 2019; Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). Chilisa (2020) cogently argues that many aboriginal practices do not easily

translate to Western interpretation. For example, Indigenous peoples commonly maintain and transfer oral histories and traditions, which are rich in cultural expressions, subtle nuances, underlying meanings, and housed in Indigenous ontology that Western research methodology is ill-equipped to disentangle and make sense of.

Informed through a postcolonial and Indigenous research paradigm, research outcomes should counter deficit-thinking and pathology ideologies of the historically colonized, and reconstruct a body of knowledge that offers hope, transformation, and social change (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). The research recognizes and heralds the voices and experiences of Indigenous peoples of South Africa, and this approach aligns with the ontological understanding that multiple realities exist and are socially constructed (Chilisa, 2020; Smith et al., 2019). Because the research examines the sources of strength and knowledge that the Indigenous South Africans drew from, the study honors Indigenous ontology of interconnectedness with the environment, the cosmos, the living and non-living. The methodological approach for the study is a qualitative phenomenology. Creswell and Poth (2018) state that phenomenology recounts stories of a group of people with a common lived experience. The approach seeks to distill the universally shared experiences into a description of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

**Conclusion**

This chapter foregrounds common themes that illustrate ideologies and practices in colonial-based education and decoloniality education. While seminar work on colonial-based education was written nearly a century ago (Woodson, 1933/2008), subtractive schooling practices have existed longer (Rodney, 1972). As colonized education has persisted for decades, its expansive global reach and pervasiveness at all levels of education underscores the necessity for counter-narratives and for a decolonized education.

# Chapter 3: Method

## Introduction

The use of the term indigenous and work that centers Indigenous perspectives suggest that the knowledge and ways are not commonly promoted, recognized, or practiced in mainstream society. This would also suggest that to study Indigenous knowledge and ways, mainstream or common theoretical frameworks and research practices would not be properly suited (Chilisa, 2020). The third chapter delineates how the study was designed to elevate Indigenous knowledge and ways, and the various theoretical lenses that framed the research design and its later interpretation.

## Indigenous Research Paradigm

The focus of the study is the Indigenous South African experiences of apartheid education and their interpretations and applications of a decolonized education, and therefore, the work is situated in an Indigenous research paradigm (Chilisa, 2020). According to Chilisa (2020), the Indigenous research paradigm "challenges deficit thinking and pathological descriptions of the formerly colonized" (Chilisa, 2020, p. 46). The proposed research aligns with this paradigm definition. Reports on the current state of South African education are frequently couched in language of deficiency (Amnesty International, 2020). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development placed South Africa's overall education system 75 out of a ranking of 76 nations (Amnesty International, 2020). The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) standardized literacy tests have placed South African learners last among the 50 participating nations and in 2021 concluded that of the grade 4 children assessed, 81 percent were unable to read for meaning (PIRLS, 2021). Educational assessments and

performance outcomes evoke consistent themes of academic underperformance, low proficiency levels in math and literacy, high drop-out rates, and subpar graduation rates (Amnesty International, 2020; Howie et al, 2017). An indigenous theoretical framework contextualizes the study focus and acknowledges the impact that the history of colonization has upon present realities. This research methodology conforms to the theoretical framework through the philosophical underpinnings of postcolonial discourses, critical theories, critical race theory, and Indigenous knowledge systems (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2019). Moreover, an Indigenous research paradigm seeks to elevate the body of knowledge, offer hope, and promote social change for the historically oppressed (Chilisa, 2020). Social change is advanced by holding space and promoting visibility for Indigenous groups who have been erased from colonial histories (Smith, 2012). Social change of the Indigenous research paradigm gives voice to the marginalized groups whose perspectives and stories have been excluded from dominant Western culture (Smith, 2012). Social change is reframing narratives of disempowerment to acknowledge the resistance and agency of Indigenous Peoples (Smith, 2012). The proposed research queries the experiences of Indigenous South Africans who, despite the history of apartheid schooling, obtained a decolonized education. Additionally, the research inquires how the Black South Africans promote a decolonized education. The research is a study into Black South African apartheid-era learners and their experiences in reconciling their educations with their realities. The study seeks to reframe the orthodoxy of substandard educational results and examine an alternative perspective of educational outcomes, goals, and vision. The proposed research aligns with an Indigenous research paradigm because the experiences, stories, and voices of Indigenous South Africans are centered within the context of education.

**Reflexivity Statement**

I approach the work from the perspective of a woman of African descent who has the experience of being native to and living within a historically settler colonized nation. I was born and grew up in New York City and I attended the neighborhood public schools which were racially integrated. My elementary school was predominantly White, and I was aware on some level that the teachers, some more than others, made distinctions between the children of color and the white children, and there were sometimes lower expectations for the children of color. I recall being in middle school and although I was rather shy and reticent to participate, my state proficiency test scores placed my reading and math abilities within the highest percentile. My academic achievement was recognized in middle school, and I was placed in the advanced reading group and in a higher-level math group, but in high school my academic proficiencies were not recognized. While the high school itself was racially integrated, internally the school was highly segregated. White students almost exclusively populated the advanced placement classes, while students of color were largely relegated to the lower performing courses. An African-American English teacher, early in my twelfth grade of high school, made note of my abilities and petitioned to have me transferred into an advanced placement English class. Had it not been for her, in spite of my grades, state test scores, and proven abilities, I would been held to a lower standard of performance with the majority of the students of color. I also remember feeling a sense of invisibility in school because within the curriculum, textbooks, and lessons there was little to no reference or recognition of Black people (or people of color in general), their accomplishments, or contribution to the country and society. I was painfully aware of the lack of representation and the absence of the stories and perspectives of people who looked like me. That absence felt like a deliberate silencing of me and my world of Black people, and that educational erasure would continue until my first African-American studies classes in my junior

year as an undergraduate. These particular experiences in the elementary and secondary levels of school have formed my understanding of how education policies and practices are delivered in settler colonial nations, and these experiences have helped me form an understanding of colonized education. Additionally, as an English language educator, I am aware of the monolinguistic English ideals that are held nationally and of the hegemonic English policies promoted abroad. However, through my profession, I have participated in advancing the English language abroad and either subconsciously or consciously, I have contributed to United States' imperialistic goals of language dominance. Consequently, as an English language educator and an educator from the United States, I have promoted colonized education. With this knowledge and understanding, I approach this work as a recipient of colonized education, an educator within a society that promotes colonized education, a contributor to colonized education, and actor in transforming colonized education. My profession of an English language educator has granted me the opportunity to travel internationally in various capacities. These opportunities gave me insight into the United States government investment into promoting English language dominance, how those policies translate to local contexts in other nations, and how those policies negatively impact many learners in other nations. However, through my profession of English language educator, I had the opportunity to live in South Africa and become familiar with the education system at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, in policies and practices – with triumphs and challenges. In recognition of my experiences of receiving a colonized education and promoting a colonized education, I acknowledge a sense of personal investment in disrupting the hegemonic effects of a dominant, Western-centric education. With that bias, I found that I initially gave preference to the participants' narratives that were demonstrably in opposition to colonial education. However, using the phenomenological method of bridling, I acknowledged

and recorded my bias. Additionally, credibility checking via the Indigenous research method of negative case analysis also created an opportunity to examine and reconcile bias. Through negative case analysis, I became open to the complexities of the research and was conscious to not advance an agenda or ignore findings that were counter to my perspective.

As an African-American who was born and has lived in an economically prosperous, industrialized country I am afforded certain privileges. I have never been denied access to an education, and the quality of my education was relatively good compared to schools in other parts of the United States and compared to many or most schools internationally. The schools I attended were always racially integrated – which ensured that substantial economic support existed for the schools. Living in the United States involves being exposed to the propaganda of national superiority – rhetoric that is promoted both subtly and overtly. Additionally, because racism has a foundational role in the history of the United States, it continues to shape national policy and practices. Consequently, adopting the perspectives and language of mainstream U.S. society creates an unfavorable racial bias against non-Western nations and societies. While I am aware that the dominant mainstream U.S. cultural lens places me within the inferior Other category, I was conscious of not adopting that lens for the South African nation and the South African people within this study. Moreover, while I lived in South Africa for a little less than one year, I noted the awe and deference that I was given simply because I was from the United States. I am also cognizant of the favorable bias that some people in other nations tend to have toward the U.S. and its citizens. In order to mitigate the potential biases listed above, I developed a rapport with the participants. Each interview began with general conversation about immediate events such as how the participant is doing or the weather, and it continued to my knowledge of their decoloniality work and/or who recommended them for the study. There was value in

establishing a mutual respect and understanding for the people that I interviewed, and during this time I welcomed their questions about myself and my work. I dedicated time to introducing myself and sharing my knowledge of the South Africa, their education system, and decoloniality efforts there. The adopted interview style supported the goal to build trust and understanding. The semi-structured interview format allowed for flexibility in the ordering of questions, the number of questions asked, and the depth of inquiry into any of the topics discussed. The flexibility of the interview protocol allowed for a more natural and conversational flow to the interview, which also increased rapport. Additionally, the study employed the Indigenous research method of participant storytelling, which allows the participant to set the pace of the interview, and it further creates a relaxed, conversational style. This approach to the research fostered an environment of trust and mutual respect, and that foundation reduced the opportunity for bias to influence the research.

**Methodological Research Design**

The research method adopted a phenomenological design (Vagle, 2018), but within an Indigenous paradigm (Chilisa, 2020). A phenomenological study derives meaning from the lived experiences of people who commonly share a concept or phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The result is a description that distills the nature of the individual experiences to a universal essence (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This research is well-suited for phenomenological method, as it seeks to draw meaning from the lives of people who were subjected to colonial apartheid education yet challenge their past and promote a decolonized education. Chilisa (2020) posits that phenomenology was developed through an interpretivist or social constructivist paradigm, and within the paradigm, what counts as reality is socially constructed. The traditional phenomenological approach examines human thought, perception, mental and physiological acts,

and spirituality to derive truth from human experience (Chilisa, 2020). Because the lived experiences of multiple individuals inform reality, the nature of reality is varied and bound by time, space, and context (Chilisa, 2020). This interpretation of the phenomenological method is consistent with the research design because while all participants attended school during the apartheid era, there was variation in their schooling eras, which led to a diversity of experiences. That diversity of experiences lends to the relational nature of an Indigenous paradigm, and it gives a broader perspective on how the lived experience translates across multiple realities. The application of an Indigenous research paradigm creates a shift in epistemological approach, and whereas Western-centered epistemologies privilege individual knowledge, the Indigenous epistemology is relational (Chilisa, 2020). According to Chilisa (2020), relational epistemologies view knowledge as something developed by people in their experiences with each other and the world. Consistent with Indigenous paradigm, knowing is socially constructed by people through relationships and connections with one another, the living and non-living, and the environment (Chilisa, 2020). A primary focus of the research is Indigeneity and privileging Indigenous ways of knowing over imposed Western ideologies. Also consistent with the Indigenous paradigm, the participants honored relationships and connections with others, and this was evidenced through their expressed desire to elevate their communities. For this reason, the phenomenological approach within the Indigenous framework is altered to adhere to the relational epistemology.

**Participant Sampling**

The locus of the study is South Africa, and the study queries the lived experiences of Indigenous South Africans who were educated during the apartheid era government and under Bantu education policy. The study focus is the development and application of a decolonized

education, and the research examines how Indigenous South Africans, despite their colonial education, acquire and promote a decolonized education.

### *Criteria*

The participants of the study were chosen for their common experiences as learners taught within the apartheid government education system, and additionally, their praxis in decoloniality in education. Participants of the study were between the ages of 40 and 65 years old because apartheid in South Africa ended in 1994, and adults within that age range should be able to recall their schooling experiences during the apartheid era. An additional criterion of participation was that those same indigenous South Africans espouse a decolonized education; therefore, each study participants was active in somehow promoting a decolonized education. The participants' support of a decolonized education was primarily identified through their teaching, publications, or community work to promote Indigenous South African (or African) culture. The implicit or explicit purpose of the participants' work aligned with decoloniality goals, such as redress of past injustices and the oppression of those who were colonized, reframing history to include and/or center perspectives of the Indigenous experience, or the usage of indigenous languages and culture for didactic and/or upliftment purposes (Mampane et al., 2018)**.**

### *Recruitment*

Participants were also invited to take part in the study by means of criterion sampling and snowball sampling, and according to Creswell & Poth (2018), the number of participants for a phenomenological study should range from five to twenty-five. The desired number of participants in the study was between eight and fifteen. There were invitations sent to 47 individuals, and 18 agreed to participate. With the exception of one individual who objected to

the term “subject” in the consent form (Appendix A), no other individual gave a reason for electing not to participate. Of the 18 invitees who agreed to participate, nine progressed to the interview process, and because one participant neglected to consent to the entire research process, that individual was eliminated from the final number of participants. The research findings consist of responses from eight participants.

**Participant Demographics**

The study participants were lecturers or professors at major universities in South Africa and self-identified as actively involved in decolonization in education work. All participants held doctoral degrees, were employed at universities, and were engaged in administration, research, teaching and/or community service. To provide context, terminology to distinguish tertiary education professional levels of rank in South Africa range from lecturer, senior lecturer, to professor, whereas in the United States the equivalent titles are assistant professor, associate professor and full professor. The participants’ titles adhere to South African standards. The eight participants were evenly divided by gender – four female and four male. The participants’ ages range between forty years and seventy years old. With the exception of one participant, they passed their matriculation exams, which would be the equivalent of graduating 12$^{th}$ grade, within the apartheid era. The one participant who was the exception passed his matriculation exam after the end of the apartheid era. The years of matriculation ranged from the late 1970’s to the early 2000’s. The participant who was the exception was also the only one who attended a racially integrated high school. The decoloniality work focus of the participants varied but there was often overlap in their areas of interest and concentration. To maintain confidentiality, the participants were assigned pseudonyms from the names of songs that are reflective of answers that they provided about expressions of protest. The participants’ personal information, such as

places of employment, is also deidentified using general descriptors. The pseudonyms and demographic information of the participants are listed in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1**

*Participant Demographics*

| Pseudonym* | Title/ Department | Age Range | Matriculation Period** | Decoloniality Interest |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Azania | Professor/Faculty Youth & Development | 50 – 60 | Mid 1980's | Gender-based violence |
| Ekuseni Ngo | Executive Administrator/ Professor/Education | 40 - 50 | Early 2000's | Sexual identities |
| Mayibuye Afrika | Lecturer/Information Sciences | 60 - 70 | Late 1970's | Crop farming for women |
| Senzeni Na | Lecturer/African Language | 40 - 50 | Early 1990's | Mother-tongue literacy |
| Shosho Loza | Executive Administrator/ Professor/Psychology | 50 - 60 | Early 1980's | African Psychology |
| Somlandela Luthuli | Senior Lecturer/ Education | 40 - 50 | Late 1980's | Mother-tongue literacy/Rural education |
| Thula Ungakhali | Senior Lecturer/ Social Work | 50 - 60 | Late 1980's | African identities |
| Thuma Mina | Senior Lecturer/ Psychology | 50 - 60 | Late 1980's | African Psychology/ identities |

*Participants were assigned pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality. **Matriculation period is the timeframe in which the participant completed secondary school.

**Data Collection**

In phenomenological data collection, the phenomenon itself dictates how it should be studied and any technique or process can be used to explore and illuminate the phenomenon

(Vagle, 2018). The study employed the use of three methods of data collection: interviews, art / performance-based techniques, and artifacts. Chilisa (2020) states that a relational interview enables the interview structure to welcome in the discussion ways that people are connected to one another and the environment. Interviews were the initial method of data collection, and while they were not required to, participants were encouraged to respond in the form of anecdotes or stories. Because Indigenous knowledge is generally maintained and communicated through oral traditions (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012), often through songs, stories, dances, and folklore, using anecdotes and storytelling are well-suited methods of gathering data. Moreover, because the subject matter of the research is a difficult, painful, and traumatic historical period, a story-telling interview method avoids direct questioning and allows for a less intrusive way of obtaining knowledge. According to Chilisa,

> Focused life-story interviews are very appropriate for sensitive topics as they encourage a reflective, narrative style where the interviewee sets the pace and the interviewer listens, clarifies, probes, and possibly brings up topics which need to be covered in the interview that have not arisen spontaneously in the course of the conversation. This interview style allows for a relaxed, almost conversational approach to data interview (Chilisa, 2020, p. 254).

A second method of data collection was the use of songs, chants, expressions, or dances that refer to or represent the struggle against apartheid education. South African Indigenous Peoples have a long history of incorporating songs and dances with stories or particular messages (Makalela, 2018), and significant historical events, such as student protests during apartheid-era education, would generate songs, chants, phrases and expressions, and dances to articulate the Indigenous experience and represent the collective Indigenous voice. For example the Broadway

play *Sarafina!*, (Playbill, 2021) by the South African writer Mbongeni Ngema, was a story set to music about the Soweto student protests during apartheid era South Africa. The study participants were asked to choose a song, chant, phrase, expression, or dance that has relevance to apartheid-era education in South Africa. If a song, chant, or poem was chosen, participants were asked to share an audio file with the performance of the work or to produce the transcription of the song, chant, or poem – with translation to English. To build robust, saturated themes that illustrate the lived experiences of the study participants, the third data collection method was to solicit images or artifacts that represent decoloniality in education. The artifacts were representative of the participants' praxis in decolonized education, and they were an example or physical representation of how the participants teach or promote a decolonized education.

***Sources of Data Collection***

For the study, data collection from the field were sourced from email correspondences, semi-structured interviews that were conducted virtually via the Zoom online meeting platform, and review of related documents. Through email correspondences the participants received the interview protocol, and seven of the participants shared data via email that was relevant to the interview questions either before or after the interview. For the purpose of member checking, the participants were sent their interview transcripts via email, and they confirmed the content and/or gave feedback about the interviews. Once the data were analyzed and dominant themes emerged from the data, participants were sent emails that illuminated the themes and the context in which the themes surfaced. This correspondence gave participants the opportunity to confirm, negate, add, or subtract from the information provided, and participants responded through email by offering comments and/or insights into the prevailing themes. Because of the nature of semi-

structured interviews, the interviews varied in length by participant. Participants also shared an artifact that represented their decoloniality work in the semi-structured interview. Document review consisted of transcription of the recorded interviews, which was assisted through Trint online software. Time to transcribe the interviews included verification of the Indigenous African words for names, places, songs, and concepts. Documentation of the participants' titles, institutions, and research foci was also recorded in the document review process. Table 3.2 records the data collection processes and time allotment per participant.

**Table 3.2**

*Duration of Data Collection in Field*

| | Data Collection Type | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participants | Email Correspondences | Semi-structured Interview | Document Review | Total Field Time |
| Azania | 2 hrs. | 2 hrs. | 10 hrs. | 14 hrs. |
| Ekuseni Ngo | 1.75 hrs. | 1.5 hrs. | 8 hrs. | 11.25 hrs. |
| Mayibuye Afrika | 2 hrs. | 2 hrs. | 10 hrs. | 14 hrs. |
| Senzeni Na | 1.5 hrs. | 2.5 hrs. | 11 hrs. | 15 hrs. |
| Shosho Loza | 2 hrs. | 2 hrs. | 11 hrs. | 15 hrs. |
| Somlandela Luthuli | 1.75 hrs. | 2 hrs. | 11 hrs. | 14.75 hrs. |
| Thula Ungakhali | 1.5 hrs. | 1.5 hrs. | 9 hrs. | 12 hrs. |
| Thuma Mina | 2 hrs. | 1.5 hrs. | 9 hrs. | 12.5 hrs. |
| | Total time: | | | 109 hrs. |

### *Sequencing of Data Collection*

The data collection methods were organized to follow a sequence. One purpose for organizing the data in the designed sequence was to create a chronological flow that likely

followed the participants' lived experiences. However, there were additional reasons for ordering the data collection methods.

**Focused Life-Story**. The focused life-story was solicited in the initial phase of the interview. The initial interview phase focused on the participants' experiences with apartheid-era, colonial education. Participants were asked to share a memory of apartheid era schooling through the method of anecdote or story. For clarity of meaning and/or to expand upon an aspect of the story, participants were asked follow-up questions (Appendix B). The purpose for beginning with the life-story question was that it allowed participants to set the tone of the narrative of whether their early years of schooling evoked memories that were fond, unpleasant, or otherwise. This also gave insight into how the participants would characterize their educational experiences, and it illustrated the narrative trajectory of where and why their decolonization work began. The focused life story data collection method is harmonious with the Indigenous research paradigm as Indigenous knowledge is often kept and managed by elders or respected members of a community, and that knowledge is shared and advanced through the art of storytelling. Oral traditions are historical ways of maintaining knowledge and ways of knowing in Indigenous cultures. The focused life-story method of data collection created a less-formal interview structure, and the process adopted a more relaxed and conversational tone. This method is consistent with the Indigenous research paradigm objective to reduce power imbalances in research and elevate marginalized voices, which is equally a goal of decoloniality work. Essentially, this data collection method established an environment in which participants could feel comfortable enough to share difficult or unpleasant memories or past experiences which told the story of apartheid education in South Africa.

**Expression of Protest.** The second mode of data collection solicited participants' experiences in developing a decolonized (education) mindset. Participants were asked to conjure a memory of an action or expression of decolonization that was meaningful to them. This prompt encouraged participants to share a poem, song chant, dance, or other expression that exemplified the struggle for a decolonized education. In a semi-structured interview format, participants were asked to articulate what the performative act of decolonization means, which would include a translation of their Indigenous language to English if necessary and/or an explanation of nuanced meanings (Appendix B). Participant were asked to illuminate how the action impacted them. This was the second in the sequence of data collection because it was a logical progression from their experiences with apartheid education to an expression that they personally identified with or engaged in. In theory, how the participants characterized their education would provide insight into what did or did not inspire them in decolonization efforts. The expression of protest prompt solicits data that exemplifies collective action. Because the Indigenous research paradigm elevates relational epistemologies, this data collection method invites participants to examine how they unified efforts or engaged with others towards a collective purpose.

**Artifact.** For the third method of data collection, participants were invited to share an artifact that illustrates their practice of decolonized education. The artifact could be as detailed and literal as an educational curriculum, a course syllabus, or a lesson plan. The artifact could also have a more figurative meaning, and it may be symbolic of how the participants approach their praxis in decoloniality work. Through a semi-structured interview, participants were asked for further explanation of meaning and purpose of the artifact and how their decoloniality praxis is promoted (Appendix B). Artifact elicitation as a data collection method is concordant with postcolonial Indigenous research paradigms because it invites the research participants (which

can be a disempowering role in itself) to choose how they would like to be represented and the story they would like to advance about themselves through their chosen artifact. This third method of data collection was sequenced last for several reasons. First, it provided a segue into the participants' decoloniality work, which would be discussed after introduction of the artifact. Next, it prompted participants to consider and articulate how they envision their work. Also chronologically, this data collection method followed the previous methods to parallel the time sequencing of the participants' life events.

The collection of three various sources of data provides methodological triangulation in order to enhance credibility. The various types of data, life-story, protest expression, and artifact, collected from each participant are recorded in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3**

*Data Elicitation by Participant*

| Participant | Focused Life-Story Period | Protest Expression | Artifact |
|---|---|---|---|
| Azania | Secondary school | Protest songs | Self-authored book |
| Ekuseni Ngo | Secondary school | Celebratory song | None offered |
| Mayibuye Afrika | Catholic boarding school | Chants | University charter |
| Senzeni Na | Secondary school | Protest song | African language program |
| Shosho Loza | Primary school | Protest songs | Course catalogue |
| Somlandela Luthuli | Secondary school | Protest songs | Pan-Africa T-shirt |
| Thula Ungakhali | Secondary school | Protest songs | African-centered curriculum |
| Thuma Mina | Primary school | Unity song | Her name & Symbol of African unity |

**Participant Demographics**

The first participant, Azania, is a professor and faculty member in the Department of Youth and Development in Humanities, Social Science, and Education at a large university in the northern South Africa region. The primary concentration of his research and instruction are gender, economic development, and education, with a specialized focus on gender-based violence. He completed the matriculation year in the early 1980's. He offered a book that he wrote and published as an artifact of his decoloniality work. Its title is metaphorical to the pain and suffering endured by Black South Africans during the apartheid period, and it also references an injury that he carries from that time in history. The artifact clearly articulates his approach and contribution to decolonization work because he offers suggestions in the book on how to move South Africa forward from the damaging history and effects of apartheid. The artifact informs the research question of how someone who received a colonized education practices/promotes a decolonized education in that it details his personal struggle against the apartheid government, which elucidates his initial decolonial endeavors and creates a trajectory for his current work.

The second participant, Ekuseni Ngo, is an executive administrator and faculty in the College of Education at a large, urban university in a large, east coastal city. While his responsibilities are largely administrative, he has used his stature and influence to create scholarship opportunities for students with financial need, and he has developed career advancement programs for young scholars. His primary school education took place during the apartheid era, and he attended secondary school during post-apartheid government rule. He completed his matriculation year in the early 2000's. He neglected to name or offer an artifact that represents his decoloniality work.

The third participant, Mayibuye Afrika, is a professor of Information Sciences in a large, urban university in the capital region of the country. Her research foregrounds Indigenous knowledge systems and crop-farming for women in rural communities. She is also active in community service by promoting early literacy in mother-tongue languages. She graduated from secondary school in the late 1970's. She chose her university charter as her artifact. It proclaims that their vision is to be an African university in the service of humanity. She finds the charter to be inspirational and she endeavors to integrate the vision in her course syllabi and her teaching. Her artifact of choice supports her approach to decoloniality, which is crop-farming for women and a way for Indigenous people to learn and re-establish traditional methods of sustenance. When delineating her decoloniality focus, Mayibuye Afrika spoke of service and providing ways for under-resourced communities to support themselves and thrive. The artifact is in concord with her interpretation of how to approach decolonial work.

The fourth participant, Senzeni Na, is a professor of an Indigenous South African language at a large, urban university in a large, east coastal city. She has been an advocate for institutionalizing the African language and giving it equal footing with English at the university. She graduated from the 12$^{th}$ grade in the early 1990's. She chose the bilingual African language tutoring program as her choice of an artifact. It is something that she is passionate about, and at a very low period in her life, she believes that the program's contribution to others gave her the will to exist and carry on. For this participant, her actual work was the artifact, so there was literal translation of the meaning and impact of her decolonization work. There is some irony in her choice of decolonial artifact. During her high school years, the study of and passion for her native language became the catalyst for her to desire to attend university and reach higher goals. Now, as an educator, she promotes the same vehicle for her students to strive for and attain more.

The fifth participant, Shosho Loza, is an executive administrator and faculty in Psychology at a large, urban university in metropolitan east coastal city. He developed and introduced the first African Psychology course at the university. He is active in community health research and initiatives, and he developed an organization that advances Afrocentric culture, thought, and values at the university. He completed his matriculation year in the early 1980's. The university course handbook was his choice for an artifact because it is emblematic of the struggle that he embarked upon many years ago to introduce the first African psychology course to the university. His university introduced the field in South Africa, and it is the leading university in the field of African Psychology in South Africa. The course is listed with its original title in the faculty handbook, and the artifact represents the accomplishment gained despite many obstacles. Shosho Loza's artifact choice is representative of his struggle to decolonize the university by offering a course that countered the exclusively Western-centric influenced field of psychology. The course represents the embarkment of his journey in a life of practice in decolonization efforts.

The sixth participant, Somlandela Luthuli, is a head administrator of an institute for education and rural development and faculty in the College of Education at a large university in the Eastern Cape. He is recognized for his work in mother-tongue instruction, and he has partnered in the development of literacy and math intervention programs for young learners in under-resourced rural schools. He completed his matriculation year in the late 1980's. For an artifact he chose a t-shirt with an image of the African continent and the phrase, "I am African" written in various African languages through the continent map. He gives the t-shirt to exceptional students as a gift and to remind them of their African identity. The t-shirt symbolizes African unity and African pride, which he spoke passionately about and hopes to promote in his

work. The t-shirt is a fitting representation of Somlandela Luthuli's work in decolonization, as the promotion of mother-tongue language recognizes the value of African identity, culture, and self-expression.

The seventh participant, Thula Ungakhali, is a professor and faculty member of the School of Social Work at a large, urban university in a metropolitan, east coastal city. She develops and teaches courses in her field that center African perspectives. She is actively involved in an organization of the university that promotes Afrocentric culture, thought, and values. She completed secondary school and matriculated in the late 1980's. She chose her Human Behavior and Social Environment course curriculum as the decolonial artifact because she has worked to Indigenize the course content. According to Thula Ungakhali, she incorporates drama, music, and ways that build resilience and spirituality in African contexts. She offered the example of an assessment that require a student exhibition instead of the traditional written question and answer format to illustrate ways of knowing that are more reflective of African culture and traditions. Her artifact is her actual work in decolonization in education. As she discovers ways to question or counter Western dominated curricula and ideologies, her course content updates to reflect that. As Thula Ungakhali had a clear and practical vision of her protest efforts against apartheid, she incorporates the decoloniality work with a practical understanding and approach.

The eighth participant, Thuma Mina, is a lecturer of psychology at a large, urban university in a metropolitan east coastal city. She is actively involved in an organization of the university that promotes Afrocentric culture, thought, and values. She devotes many hours to community service by providing free mental health counseling and literacy instruction for young children. Her primary school education occurred in a rural area, and she took her matriculation

exam (or graduated high school) in the late 1980's. Thuma Mina offered her name and a symbol and logo for the organization that she is involved in as her chosen artifacts. She chose her name as an artifact because the meaning of her name is encouragement for her to remain humble and to see the value in others. The second artifact is a symbol which is an appropriation of the Egyptian ankh – the symbol of life, and it shows a balanced scale on either side of the ankh. She explained its meaning and its advancement of African thought. Thuma Mina's choice of her name as an artifact figuratively represents her approach to decolonization work. Her decolonization interest is African identities, and her name is, in itself, representative of identity and an expression of who she is and how she chooses to live.

**Data Analysis**

The transcription of data gathered through oral expression and observations was done as soon as possible after gathering the data, and transcription software assisted in transcribing the interviews. Qualitative researcher, Hatch (2002), recommends not sleeping on raw field notes, nor collecting additional data before writing up and analysis of previously collected data. Attention to detail and accuracy are vital to capturing meaning and salient information, so Hatch (2002) recommends not relying on memory long after the event. While the study employed transcription software, because the study participants spoke with a non-American English accent, manual transcription was also necessary – as the software at times did not properly transcribe words that were pronounced differently.

Data collection analysis adhered to the method protocol for phenomenological research, but also it incorporated an Indigenous ontology into the questioning and interpreting of the data. Phenomenologist Mark Vagle (2018) presents several approaches to the method, and the research adopted an interpretive phenomenological approach. Interpretive phenomenology

recognizes the impossibility of creating a full description of an aspect of life through the awareness that “lived life is more complex than any explication of meaning can reveal” (Vagle, 2018, p. 61). The three tenets of the approach are that phenomenological research is work that one actively does; it is interpretively done; and it is something that is never final (Vagle, 2018). The data analysis in the study applied the whole-parts-whole process, which according to Vagle (2018) is appropriate for phenomenology. This involved intentionally reading the data in whole and in parts to extract meaning. The inductive analysis process began with the initial step to read the data in its entirety in order to get a sense of it as a body of work (Hatch, 2002; Vagle, 2018). During the initial reading stage, material was identified that provided insight into the phenomenon (Hatch, 2002; Vagle, 2018). The second step of analysis entailed a closer reading of the data through a line-by-line approach (Vagle, 2018). At this stage, there was critical analysis of language, phrasing, intonation, emphasis to extract greater meaning and depth to the participants’ responses. The next phases of analysis incorporated phenomenological “coding”, which began with a form of bracketing or setting aside the personal experience of the phenomenon by the researcher in the attempt to reveal and announce the researcher’s assumptions, perspective, and prejudices (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Associates, 2002). However, instead of bracketing, Vagle (2018) presents the concept of bridling that offers an alternative goal than to suspend one’s judgements. The study employed bridling, which was an act of naming and questioning judgements to become more familiar with them so that they did not restrict being open to the phenomenon (Vagle, 2018). This step was paired with note-taking or journaling, which allowed for processing of the data. This step was crucial to data analysis because of the emotionally upsetting content in parts of the data. The act of journaling allowed for me to work through my thoughts about the stories that the participants shared. Writing down

my thoughts, feelings, and interpretations was a release of energy that I held and stored because of the disturbing nature of some of the data. This exercise was necessary because I began to experience secondary traumatic stress symptoms, so the process was not only analytic, but also cathartic. The data analysis process also incorporated an Indigenous African lens. Indigenous ontology-centered research valorizes relational connections, and an African ontology that exemplifies relations is the concept of Ubuntu, which in part translates to "I am because you are; you are because I am" (Chilisa, 2020; Makalela, 2018). The origins of Ubuntu are in the African concept of being, which illustrate a common bond and a destiny for humanity (Makalela, 2018). This African philosophy is harmonious with Vagle's (2018) explanation of how to approach phenomenology. Vagle (2018) posits that phenomena is not individually defined or constructed in the "autonomously-encased human mind separated from the world", but rather it is produced by the "ways in which we find ourselves being in relation to the world through our day-to-day living" and "in relation with others". Consistent with Indigenous research methodologists, Vagle (2018) emphasizes having an intentionality throughout the practice and recognizing the interconnectedness of human beings with each other and the world around us. For these reasons, the methodological and theoretical lenses are complimentary and were applied to the research and data analysis designs.

The next step in the analysis process involved phenomenological reduction, which required returning to the phenomenological experience to distill the meaning and inner structure to allow for revelation of its essence (Merriam & Associates, 2002). The initial procedure was to create a list of significant statements that developed from the interviews and other data sources. This step is called horizontalization of the data, and the end result was a list that was nonrepetitive and nonoverlapping (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Horizontalization involved laying

out the data and assigning equal weight and value to all of the data (Merriam & Associates, 2002). As a next step, the significant statements were grouped into broader chunks of information, which are called meaning units or themes, and these themes created the foundation for interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The next two data analysis procedures involved generating descriptions of the phenomenon. The answer to what the participant experienced is called the textural description of the experience, and this included verbatim accounts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The answer to how the experience happened is called the structural description, and the focus of the description is on the setting and context of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A final step in phenomenological data analysis was to write the composite description, which brought together the textural and structural descriptions to form the essence of the experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The composite description was expressed in a lengthy passage that explained what the participants experienced and how they experienced it (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In contrast, however, Vagle (2018) suggests that the essence of an experience is difficult to universalize and offers the term invariant structures instead. Using the language of invariant structures proposes that there are characteristics of the experience that are consistent and do not vary through contingencies and contexts (Vagle, 2018). In recognition of Vagle's (2018) interpretation of the final step, the study identified invariant structures of the phenomenon.

Because the research adopts an Indigenous African ontology and the philosophy of Ubuntu, the participants' experiences were interpreted through a relational lens by how they were influenced and how they influenced others, their connection to people they interact with, their communities, nation, greater humanity, their environment, the living and non-living. This analytic lens was applied to the research during each stage of the data reduction process and

particularly when identifying dominant themes. Additionally, because postcolonial theory is also a guiding framework and decoloniality work aligns within the framework, the participants' work, their reasonings for their work, and their perspectives were examined through a postcolonial theory lens. Summarily, the research itself is meant to be a work of decolonization in education, and the entirety was deductively analyzed through the lens of postcolonial theory.

**Trustworthiness and Credibility**

Member checking is a critical step that occurred after transcription and initial analysis of the data. Participants were asked to review the original transcribed data and to confirm or clarify the interpretations of meanings. At that point, participants were given the opportunity to expound or revise their expressed ideas in the data. Because the researcher does not reside in the study locus and was not present at the site of the study for the interviews, the participants were interviewed via Zoom online meeting software. Each virtual meeting was recorded via the online meeting platform and transcribed using Trint, an online audio transcription software (Appendix A).

Chilisa (2020) asserts that member checking is most important in establishing credibility, and researchers must confirm with the study participants the interpreted themes and patterns that emerge from the data. To verify accuracy of interpretations and extracted meanings, the participants in this study reviewed summaries of their statements and drafts of research findings. Participants were invited to comment, correct, or add to their portion of the research data. Additionally, once the themes emerged from the data, the participants reviewed the major themes and confirmed accuracy of data interpretation.

The research credibility was further established using negative case analysis. As Chilisa (2020) posits, qualitative research recognizes multiple realities and truths, and credibility of the

research is strengthened by acknowledgment and inclusion of cases that do not conform to the prevailing themes. The study employs negative case analysis by including instances when a few participants had experiences that contrasted from the majority. These deviations from the prevailing themes provide an alternative perspective and support the credibility of the findings. Triangulation of the data included methodological triangulation, which was a comparison of the data that was obtained through the focused life story, expressions of protest, and artifacts (Chilisa, 2020). An additional triangulation approach was theoretical triangulation which referenced the theoretical perspective of Indigenous knowledge systems, which informed the conceptual framework, the wording of interview questions, the design of the interview structure, data analysis, and interpretation (Chilisa, 2020).

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is purposefully built into the research design. Transferability is enhanced by sampling or dense description (Chilisa, 2020), and this study employed criteria and snowball sampling to ensure that the participants had knowledge and experience in the focus of the study (Crewell & Poth, 2018). Dependability can be improved by using a variety of methods of data collection, dense description, and triangulation (Chilisa, 2020), and this study used the three methods to enhance dependability of research findings. Confirmability is another measure of trustworthiness in qualitative research, and it involves how much the data findings can be sourced from the study participants and the research setting, and not from researcher bias (Chilisa, 2020). Confirmability can be strengthened by external audit, triangulation, and reflexivity (Chilisa, 2020), and this study employed triangulation and reflexivity to support confirmability of the research.

### *Limitations*

The fact that the research and researcher were geographically distant from the locus of the study may have limited the number of participants. Because of the research queried into topics that were deeply political and solicited memories that were likely distressing for the participant, being at the site of the research to allow for face-to-face interaction may have mitigated some of challenges in recruitment. In addition to the limited number of people who followed through with the interview process, as the participants took part in the interviews, the substance of the interviews themselves became a limiting factor. As illustrated in the Findings section, many of the participants recounted memories of bloodshed and violence during the apartheid era, and to obtain and analyze the data of the events caused secondary trauma stress for me, the researcher. I had to take breaks from the data and be mindful of my mental and emotional well-being during those times. While I had intended to have a larger sample of participants, the difficult nature of the data dictated a smaller sampling.

Further limitations to the research include a reliance on the participants' long-term memories for significant parts of the interview. Considering the length of time since the participants' attendance in school in the apartheid era and possibly the participants' ages, being able to remember the details of their educational experiences may have been a challenge. In order to counter their potential inability to remember, participants were encouraged to share brief anecdotes – which may make recollection easier. Additionally, participants were encouraged to recall artistic expressions which may jog their memories. Another limitation is the researcher's absence from the locus of the study. Although the researcher has spent a significant amount of time in the researched location, data collection was done remotely. Consequently, the reliance on the stability of certain technologies for data collection, such as WiFi and software capabilities, created some connectivity and audio quality challenges. Additionally, the rapport and trust that

physical presence may encourage was potentially reduced or nullified because of the remote data collection methods. In order to counter the limitation of the researcher located outside of the locus of the study, data collection consisted of interviews, member checking, and triangulation of data to increase rapport, trust, clarity, and accuracy of findings. A further limitation was that the researcher does not speak the Indigenous languages of the study participants, and the meanings of the songs, chants, stories, expressions, and so on, without translation were incomprehensible, and moreover, subtle meanings such as tone and connotation could have been lost in translation. To ameliorate possible misinterpretations and to capture subtle meanings, once the interviews were transcribed and themes began to emerge from the data, the participants were sent questions to ensure accuracy of interpretations. This member checking step, along with triangulation of data, increased clarity and accuracy of interpretations.

**Conclusion**

The Methods section of the study illustrates how Indigenous ways of knowing was foundational to the research design, and it maps out the course that guided the research. Because an Indigenous research paradigm was woven throughout the research design prior to execution, it dictated a consistency of approach in data collection methods and in the theoretical lens to design and interpret the research. This chapter demonstrates how intentional attention to study design and fidelity to the theoretical framework resulted in research that revealed, supported, and elevated Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing and being.

# Chapter 4: Findings

## Introduction

The research is a study in the decolonization of South African education, and it is based upon the premise that the state-sanctioned, formal education perpetuates Western-centered, colonial ideologies and values (Mampane et al., 2018; Ndimande, 2013). The study queries the education that the participants received during their primary and secondary years of schooling. The study further examines the participants' perceptions of their education, influences on those perceptions, and any actions they took in response to Bantu Education, which was the apartheid government mandated education for Indigenous Black South Africans. Lastly, the study delves into the participants' present work to dismantle colonized education. The questions that guide the research are as follows:

1) How does someone acquire a decolonized education, in spite of receiving an education that was designed to stunt achievement?
2) How does someone who received a colonized apartheid education manage to practice and promote a decolonized education?

First, it was salient to characterize and qualify the education that the participants received in their primary and secondary years of education. Essentially, it was crucial to establish that the study participants had in fact received an inferior, academically limiting, and Western-centered education. The findings of the research revealed that the study participants, without exception, received some level of colonial-informed education and almost all participants were conscious of the inferior quality of their education while they were students. Moreover, the participants recognized and sought to counter the hegemonic colonial ideologies that exist in their present

education system, from primary to tertiary levels. Analysis and coding of the interviews revealed five major themes and five subthemes.

**Overview of Findings for Question One**

In response to the first research question, three major themes and five subthemes emerged. Research question one queries: How does someone acquire a decolonized education, in spite of receiving an education that was designed to stunt achievement? The first major theme, resistance to Bantu Education was consistent across all themes for the first question, and it revealed that although the participants received an education that was substandard to the quality of education that White learners received, there were many efforts to improve their education. The subsequent five themes were subthemes of resistance to Bantu Education. The second (sub)theme was inferior Bantu Education, which illustrated the inferior quality and disparities of Bantu Education for Black learners. The third subtheme was student efforts to counter Bantu Education, which revealed attitudes and actions students took to learn and succeed in spite of Bantu Education. The fourth subtheme was teacher practices to challenge Bantu Education, where participants recalled teachers' efforts to improve instructional content and/or the learning experience for Black learners. The fifth subtheme of protesting Bantu Education and apartheid government includes the experiences of confrontational opposition. The sixth subtheme was the lamentable consequences of protesting Bantu Education, which exposed the brutal reality and loss of life that could be attributed to protesting the apartheid government. The seventh and major theme of movement/migration/disrupted education explored the prevalence of relocation for education and survival during that period. The eighth major theme was the unifying power of song, which demonstrated how singing (protest) songs created collectiveness and cohesion among students.

**Resistance to Bantu Education**

The research queried into the participants memories of their primary to secondary years of education and seven participants recollected the inequities in the education system and the inferior quality of education that they received. The classes were overcrowded, schools were underfunded, and classrooms were under-resourced. As recipients of Bantu Education themselves, naturally, the majority of teachers in the segregated Indigenous Black schools lacked the necessary education and credentials to teach the students. The knowledge of educational inequities also became apparent when participants became directly or remotely aware of the disparity of government funding for segregated education. With the awareness that Bantu Education was substandard for the purpose of underdevelopment, three participants illustrated the harmful impacts of Bantu Education policy and undergirded the theme of being conscious of the substandard nature of their education. One participant, Ekuseni Ngo, attended school after the end of the apartheid era and enrolled in formerly all-White segregated (Model C) school and therefore he noted the stark distinctions between the two types of institutions. Their thematic statements are recorded in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1**

*Inferior Bantu Education*

| Participant | Example quote |
|---|---|
| Azania | Some of us felt like we were in prison when we were actually in the classroom. That is what Bantu Education did. You would be given a book of maybe 500 pages or more to memorize and come into the exam room. Most of us didn't pass because we were reading all over, hoping that one, two, or three of the subjects would be in the exam room. That was deliberately done so you can fail. |
| Ekuseni Ngo | The transitioning from the township school to the former Model C* school is huge. I remember first seeing White kids in school playing [field] hockey. That struck me because it's a sport I had never seen before. The |

| | |
|---|---|
| | culture of reading was something I had never had all throughout my education until I got to the former Model C school. Yet the kids in this former Model C school had grown up with the culture of reading. They could read several books in a year, and I could not do that. I battled. So moving from a system that was under-resourced, deliberately under-resourced by the state, to a system that was privileged and had all the resources you could think of … That transitioning is something that plays in my head quite a bit. |
| Shosho Loza | The biggest challenge was the size of the classes and the curriculum itself, which was prescribed by the state. The unavailability of resources – the state did not sponsor basic education for Black learners, or the ratio of sponsorship was ridiculous. We had to share books and sometimes we would go without a pen or pencil, which was an offense not to have a pen. You don't have pen – it's not your fault [but], you could be expelled for not having a pen. I know of people who left school because they didn't have a pen to write. And you could be punished for not having it. Those were the challenges, but because we were so young and innocent, we didn't see it in the most serious light that we ought to have seen it. |

*Former Model C schools are schools that were exclusively White, government funded schools.

The quotes in Table 4.1 provide details of how three participants remembered the impact of policies that were designed to thwart the inclusion of Black South Africans into an industrialized workforce and limit employment potential. Azania recalled this through students being ill-prepared for matriculation exams and the unreasonably high bar that was set in order for students to pass. Shosho Loza referenced the vast disparity of government funding for Indigenous Black schools compared to the fully sponsored White schools, and memories of his education gave testament to the subjugating policies. Ekuseni Ngo, because he attended school after the collapse of the apartheid government, was the only participant who had the opportunity to enroll in a former Model C school and contrast the quality of education and practices at both Black and White institutions. In his words, the difference made a lasting impression on him.

***Student Efforts to Counter Bantu Education***

While there was awareness that Bantu Education was an inferior form of education and that its goal was to maintain Black South Africans' marginalization, the respondents recognized the value of education itself and some actively sought alternative methods of education and schooling. Four participants recounted efforts to overcome the obstacles that Bantu Education posed. Table 4.2 records the various attitudes and methods students maintained to challenge their substandard education.

**Table 4.2**

*Students' Attitudes and Practices to Counter Bantu Education*

| Participant | Theme Quote Example |
|---|---|
| Senzeni Na | We had the knowledge that we were being given a different education. We did not trust Bantu Education. In my high school there was a lot of discussion on things of that nature. We developed this mindset – when we were given a prescribed economics textbook… 'Why [is] the owner of the company a White man? Why are we learning about White men's companies? How about us? It means we will never have companies? Even if we are learning mathematics, when it comes to equations and you are given an example, they will say, 'Mr. So and So who owns a company is making so much.' In accounting…everything. Wait a minute. Are we being fed something? So we will continue to be subordinates of these people? [Why do] we have to understand the subjects in their world, not our own world? |
| Azania | Some managed to get distinctions in spite of that because we had some of the brightest students who would say 'to hell with your kind of teaching, we can still make it' and they did. |
| Shosho Loza | Fortunately, those experiences made us very mentally strong. We knew that we had to fight the system and the only way we could do that was through education. |
| Somlandela Luthuli | A lot of our education was in student movements, in politics, in clubs, but not really in school as such. Remember back then books were banned, so we used to have book boxes. We would get [books] from people that were at universities. That's how I got introduced to people like Ngũgi wa Thiong'o and those in the African Writers Series. There'd be book boxes that travel around different high schools, so a lot of our reading was done outside of school. We would have books smuggled into school, and then |

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|---|---|
| | we go home and then have reading circles and we come and discuss the books. We also encountered Paolo Freire in high school. We got books from students at universities because they have more access to material – it was less restricted. It was really the police [that] had policed high schools – what students could get access to. University students had much more access to reading materials and also people in labor unions. We got books from unions. We looked at socialist and communist literature – so a lot of reading. |

In Table 4.2, four participants recounted how students recognized that the education that they were offered was inadequate, and a meaningful education would require a shift in attitude and/or action. According to Senzeni Na, students adopted a critical lens toward Bantu Education. Through analytical questioning, she and her schoolmates began to recognize the colonial underpinnings and the oppressive machinations. Shosho Loza reflected on the hardships of growing up during that era. He was aware of the many obstacles that students faced, yet he believed that education would make way for systemic change. Somlandela Luthuli recalled how teachers in his school entirely eschewed discussion about apartheid oppression and he attributed that to their fear of being arrested. For this reason, students took it upon themselves to become organized, educated, and mentally prepared to engage the oppressive apartheid government system.

### *Teacher Practices to Challenge Bantu Education*

Four participants recalled teachers who were overtly or covertly supportive of the struggle against Bantu Education and the apartheid regime. Some educators devoted time outside of classroom hours to mentoring or tutoring so that students were better prepared for their courses or better equipped for the struggle. Other educators found ways to undermine the Western-centered, white supremist curriculum and elevate African culture, thought, and

histories. The participants recognized the grave risk and sacrifice that their educators took to provide this service to their students. The four participants' expressions of their experiences are recorded in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3**

*Teacher Practices to Challenge Bantu Education*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Thula Ungakhali | As part of our political mobilization we had mentors who were conducting evening classes, so that during the day we do not go to class. We disrupt the classes, but evenings we prepare for our examination. The slogan at the time was Freedom First, Education Last. [The teachers] were the same people who were in the struggle as well. They wouldn't be open about their political ideologies in the classrooms, but by mentoring in the evenings, that's how they were committed to the struggle. Not all of them were supportive, but those who were committed politically took it upon themselves to be mentors, and those who were not committed politically were totally against everything. |
| Shosho Loza | One of my teachers was [teacher's name]. [He] was a prominent underground member of the ANC and he was assassinated. He is the one who initiated me and my friends into real politics when we were in high school. He would teach during the day and in the afternoons would call us and start discussions – telling us that we had a mission beyond ordinary education. |
| Thuma Mina | We knew that there were some books that we're not supposed to read, but they were circulated among us by the nuns and would tell us about what is happening. I knew the education that we are getting – they are trying to make it a better education. We were exposed to the fact that education offered to them was substandard and they were trying to do their best to really bring the level of our education to a point where we can compete anywhere without being deprived. |
| Ekuseni Ngo | A strategy that I saw my teachers doing in primary school to undermine apartheid was the use of the curriculum. They were conscientizing us as kids about what it means to be Black and what has happened in the country – colonization, the arrival of the [Dutch settlers], talking through how the land was stolen, those types of things. They were deliberate intentions that were not scripted in the curriculum but were subversive to try and undermine the apartheid state. [It was] quite radical because they |

> were not allowed to do this, but they did it…at huge personal sacrifice, especially those that did it in the late seventies and eighties throughout.

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The four participants quoted in Table 4.3 emphasize the dedication of their former teachers as well as the risk that they took to subvert the curriculum. Thula Ungakhali described their role as "mentors" and not simply teachers, which provides insight into her perception of that relationship and their personal impact on her.

**Negative Case Analysis.** All eight of the participants acknowledged that Bantu Education was engineered to undermine Black societal advancement; however, not all participants came away with negative feelings about their schooling experiences. Mayibuye Afrika attended a Catholic boarding school where the students engaged in vocational classes that taught skills such as grass mat weaving and sewing. While she took exception to the strict, controlling school environment at the time, she later appreciated the skills she learned as Indigenous arts and ways to maintain them. Another participant, Thuma Mina, attended a rural primary school where her mother taught, and she recalled times during bad weather events when other teachers could not make it to school, her mother and another teacher took the responsibility of teaching the entire school – grades one to seven. In her words, "Most of my memories were quite positive. I was lucky". What impressed upon her was that two teachers were ensuring that the students were taken care of and that they were supporting their community.

***Protesting Bantu Education/Apartheid Government***

While one response to the intentional underdevelopment of Bantu Education was to seek subversive, alternative forms and sources of education, there was also outright confrontational resistance to Bantu Education and the apartheid regime. Six of the participants recalled their personal efforts to protest. Of the two students who did not participate in protest, one, Thuma

Mina, attended a girls only rural Catholic boarding school, and she recounted pleasant memories of her R-12 education. The other participant, Ekuseni Ngo, who did not engage in student protests, started school during most tumultuous years of protest and the apartheid government dissolved soon after. It is salient to note that because Bantu Education was a primary instrument of oppression and a calculated method to perpetuate an Indigenous Black underclass, opposition to Bantu Education was a direct affront to the apartheid system and it was met with deadly force. For this reason, to outwardly protest Bantu Education was precarious and students died by the thousands during the protest era (Ndimande, 2013). The participants who engaged in protests remembered those experiences with detail and emotion. Descriptions of their accounts are recorded in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4**

*Protesting Bantu Education / Apartheid Government*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Somlandela Luthuli | The people may form a circle and start singing and chanting. Some of them are war songs from the past. When people are going into battle they go singing to be intimidating – to intimidate the other side. For example, when I go to protest, and the police are there, and we're singing and we're going into that whole -ummm! (sound made for emphasis) and throwing stones and ummm! – you do feel invincible. |
| Mayibuye Afrika | We were protesting against the use of Afrikaans as one of their languages. We didn't want Afrikaans to be one of the languages in the curriculum. We would chant the names of the leaders who we are not for [and] be chanting what we need. Maybe saying 'Mayibuye Afrika', meaning that we want our continent, Africa, back. We'll have a leader – calling that name, 'Botha, we don't want you. De Klerk, we don't want you. We want Mandela. We want Steve Biko. And we don't want Bantu Education'. |
| Thula Ungakhali | To be honest with you, in my matric year I was hardly in class. We were hardly in class and always in the streets. There were disturbances in school – remember this was 1989. So [those were] the years of pressure, and it was intentional pressure. We were making the schools ungovernable. I come from a township and we're making the township ungovernable. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Those are the pressures that led to the freeing of Mandela in 1990. The three years – my matric, grade eleven, and grade ten – those were very intense years, and I was always in the streets. And the slogan at the time was Freedom First, Education [Later]. |
| Senzeni Na | They will plan something where they will want us to go and destroy something. I wouldn't want to go because I knew the police or the army will be waiting for us. But I did participate when we were fighting against the use of Afrikaans as a subject in our school, and I was at the forefront. …We were not dancing; there was this rhythm, but we were not dancing. We were doing some sort of physical activity so that your body will warm up. When they say 'Run!', you're going to run because your body is already warm. If they say, 'Here are the police!' 'Here is the army!' or 'Forward!', we had our hidden language or slogans. They will use [them] and we will know what they mean for us to do. |
| Azania | I became an activist within the Black Consciousness school of thought. That was linked with decolonization, and we reclaim our self-worth as people, Black people. We understand what Bantu Education did to us – self-loathing, self-denigration, and making us believe that we are inferior. So those concepts needed something antithetical or something very strong to change the status quo. So I said, to hell with this, I may as well join the liberation forces so that we can fight the system on an equal basis. This really worked in a way because we gave our lives and everything. I remember in the seventies or eighties, we were arrested for protesting against Bantu Education. I was a high school student then, so I was sent to jail and eventually spent like three years in jail. |

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While all but two participants engaged in protests against Bantu Education, one participant used language that suggested that she was not supportive of protest efforts. Mayibuye Afrika spoke of the student protests at her school, and she considered whether those events were in her words, "contaminated from the June 1976 Soweto uprising". When asked about protest activities, she responded:

> By singing songs and chanting, the mob psychology – as students they expected everyone to be involved. You can't remain behind and say 'I'm not taking part in that'. They want

everyone to be out of the dormitories, out of the classes. We had to follow the leaders singing those songs and chanting those chants. We had no option. We had no option.

When asked to expound upon support of the protest movement, she underscored that her classmates were unified in their opposition efforts. Mayibuye Afrika's use of pejorative language when referencing the protests is evidence of the complexity of attitudes and perceptions of the protests. While she engaged in the school protests, she may have had reservations about doing so. There were many reasons to not feel comfortable participating in the protests. As stated above, the protests evoked a swift and brutal response from the apartheid government. Moreover, it is crucial to note that within any political movement, consensus within the movement may be difficult to achieve, and support for its operations can vary widely.

### *Lamentable Consequences to Protesting Bantu Education*

All the study participants attended school during one of the two most intense Bantu Education protest periods, in 1976 during the Soweto uprisings and in the late 1980's. Both periods marked a height in student resistance and the apartheid government's brutal attempts to suppress opposition. Most participants recalled some of the effects of that violent period, whether on themselves, on their classmates, or on the entire community. Table 4.5 provides vignettes of seven participants' reflections on some of the tragic consequences of resistance efforts.

**Table 4.5**

*Lamentable Consequences of Resistance Efforts*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Azania | Unfortunately, it was a very bloody struggle. I can only talk about imprisonment, but people lost their lives. You had the Sharpeville massacre. You had the Soweto uprising, and so many of the young people were killed. For me personally, I was thrown into jail, harassed and |

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|---|---|
| | tortured. One of my colleagues died in the process. I lost sight in my left eye because of that torture. I'm going through that quickly to avoid the personal pain. Ultimately a lot of those guys of that epoch who suffered were very selfless in bringing about change. |
| Senzeni Na | During the peak of apartheid I was not feeling well. I ended up withdrawing from school. Now that I am an adult, I know I was having anxiety attacks or depression or some sort of emotional disturbance, but I wasn't aware. All I know is I got sick and [it] was labeled spiritual sickness because the doctors could not diagnose me. But now when I recall on the incidences and events, I was so afraid. I will go to school and panic while I'm in the classroom, and I remember having episodes where I will just cry. That was because we were going to school at the time where somebody is being killed outside of the classroom – so those images.<br><br>[The song, Sezeni Na] was sung at funerals – at the grave sites where there will be more than 20 people being buried at the same time. |
| Shosho Loza | Because of that unrest a lot of people lost out on school opportunities and lot of people were mentally affected. So the transition was a very difficult one. The schooling system was affected in a bad way. |
| Mayibuye Afrika | [The student protests] did help in a way because Afrikaans was abolished. It was removed from the curriculum. But at the same time, it had a negative impact on some of the students because some of them never went back to (boarding) school. |
| Ekuseni Ngo | Your friend would go home today and tomorrow you'd hear that they're gone because the home was burned down overnight. You would hear gunshots at night and be told to lie down because of shooting in the area. It was extremely violent – people died in the hundreds. It was the brutality of the apartheid government in inflicting war amongst Black people and making sure Black people turn against each other. |
| Thuma Mina | Most of my classmates at primary – that's when they passed away. They just died. It was a part of apartheid because they were instigating people fighting against each other. And so a massacre – literal. You ask people, 'where is…?' 'So and so is gone', 'so and so is gone' and these were my age mates. |
| Thula Ungakhali | On the negative side, what pains me is that a lot of us did not survive and there were lots of deaths. All my weekends I was at the cemeteries because [of] funerals. Honestly, that was my youth …I think it robbed us. It robbed us [of] a sense of being a child – a sense of being young. Yes, it made us also more resilient, but for others, they never survived it. |

In Table 4.5, each participant attested to how the protests efforts directly and personally affected them or their peers. Azania quickly recounted his experience of confronting the apartheid government forces, as he was conscious about not wanting to relive the painful memories. Senzeni Na spoke at length about the emotional distress that she exhibited and how that came to characterize her during her primary and secondary years of education. Several participants referenced acts of violence due to factional fighting that was engineered by the apartheid government. According to the three participants, Ekuseni Ngo, Shosho Loza, and Thuma Mina, this was a government effort to dilute anti-apartheid opposition. Other participants remembered the violence of that era as marked by the death of many of their classmates and the countless funerals they attended.

**Movement/Migration and Disrupted Education**

One of the first interview questions queried the participants on how many students completed high school with them during their matriculation year. The purpose for the question was to gain perspective into the deleterious impact of Bantu education, as one of the outcomes of the policy was high rates of student attrition. However, responses to the question revealed an unanticipated theme of migration and disrupted education. As noted in the previous theme, the unfortunate effects of resistance to Bantu Education, many students did not survive the epoch of intense anti-apartheid protests. In the theme that emerged here, the disruption to the participants' educational journeys was largely attributed to relocating to one or more residences during their primary and/or secondary schooling to avoid political conflict. According to five participants, during this tumultuous time in South African history, there was factional fighting among Indigenous Black South Africans that the apartheid government instigated to undermine anti-

apartheid efforts. This political fighting among Blacks coupled with intensified oppression from the police and military made the townships volatile and dangerous places. For those reasons, four of the participants spoke of relocating to avoid the violence. Table 4.6 illustrates the commonality of the experience of movement, migration and/or a disrupted education for seven participants during their years of schooling.

**Table 4.6**

*Movement/Migration and Disrupted Education*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Thuma Mina | I remember my parents relocated in 1976 because of the riots. We changed our course of life. We had to relocate from one part of a township. By the age of four, they had to uproot all of us – the whole family and go because my father was saying, I can't raise my kids. It's so unsafe every day – I'm worried if they were coming back from school. So we had to change our life for ten years. |
| Ekuseni Ngo | I was born and started school in a rural area. I moved from the rural area into the township, and it's there that I started standard one, grade three. Then I moved, and remember that before the collapse of apartheid, Black kids were not allowed to study in White schools. It's only when there's a collapse around 1992 that schools started having the conversation about integration. In 1994, my dad bought a house in town, so when we moved to town, I went to high school with White people. |
| Senzeni Na | Due to those incidences – political fights and wars, I attended two primary schools – in your American term, middle schools. I went to two middle schools because my family kept on moving from one place to another place. I went to three high schools because of the movement…and then when the war was at the high peak, we moved to [a] village in another city. |
| Shoso Loza | One of the memories that stands out was when I was in lower primary. It was the influx of students from other provinces in our province. And this was due to the student unrest – the 1976 unrest. The starting point would be the Transvaal or Gauteng province, which forced thousands and thousands of learners into the province of Natal at the time. |

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|---|---|
| Mayibuye Afrika | It was during the 1970's, and we had some student protests. I don't know whether it was contaminated from the June 16, 1976 Soweto uprising and then also spread to the other schools. The nuns had to send us back home because the students were uncontrollable. They were chanting and singing protest songs, and the nuns were so fearful. They couldn't take it and they had to call our parents to come and collect us from the boarding schools. Then [my parents] decided to put us in a day school and we had to finish our secondary school in that day school. Then they had to apply to another boarding school when we had to complete our high school education. |
| Thula Ungakhali | One of my aunts (whom I call my sister) was involved in political activism. I got exposed to all the biggest political lawyers at an early age because our house was burnt at one stage, so we had to run away. We were refugees living in other peoples' homes because my sister was in love with political activism. |
| Azania | I remember in the seventies or eighties we were arrested for protesting against Bantu Education. I was a high school student then, so I was sent to jail and eventually spent like three years in jail – maybe more if I count some of the days in and out of jail. |

As recorded in Table 4.6, although one participant, Shosho Loza, did not recount experiencing a disruption personally, he reinforced the theme by his account of the migration of other Indigenous Black South Africans throughout the country during that period. Mayibuye Afrika was forced to attend a different school when her boarding school was temporarily shuttered due to political unrest, and Thula Ungakhali had to flee a former residence due to factional violence. Azania experienced a disruption to his education in two ways. First, he elected to join oppositional forces to confront the apartheid government militarily, and resistance groups routinely left the country to train and plan operations (McFadden, 1990). Second, Azania was intermittently imprisoned for approximately three years for protesting the apartheid regime. In Table 4.6, the participants recounted the disruptive effect that the protests had upon education and school completion rates for themselves and their peers. Many of the participants concluded that the student uprisings created conditions in which returning to school was difficult or

impossible for some students. According to Mayibuye Afrika, there were a myriad of reasons for attrition, including the inability to pay school costs to the loss of instruction time. While Somlandela Luthuli did not recount an interference in his schooling, he experienced it, nonetheless. Like most other participants, he engaged in protests of Bantu Education, which involved boycotting classes, and at the very least, his political activism underscored his commitment to disrupting the apartheid education system. The participants' responses elucidate the very tangible destructive force of Bantu Education and apartheid policies on the lives of Indigenous South Africans.

**Unifying Power of Song**

Participants were asked to recall experiences of protesting Bantu Education, and they were invited to share an art form that expressed their experience. Eight participants reported that singing and chanting were the most popular methods of protest during that era, and six participants chose at least one song that was of significance to them. According to two participants, many protest songs were inspired by religious or official songs and were often adaptations of them. An unexpected theme that surfaced from their memories of engaging in protest activities was the empowering and unifying effect of singing together. Five of the participants credited the songs and their uniting power with instilling courage in the singers, and four recalled a visceral experience that manifested from singing the songs in the face of opposition forces. Not only did they gain a sense of invincibility, but three participants also recounted entering a subconscious state in which the group acted as one body. Somlandela Luthuli's recollection of singing protest songs encapsulated this phenomenon:

> The people may form a circle and start singing and chanting – some of them are also war songs from the past. When people are going into battle, they go singing to be intimidating

> – to intimidate the other side. The thing about singing [is] that it brings people to cease to be an individual – you become a unit, almost like one body. You become literally fearless. For example, when I go to protest and the police are there and we're singing, and we're going into that whole umm! (sound made for emphasis) and throwing stones and umm! You do feel invincible. It's almost like you go into a trance. We become a single body. I think you feel less vulnerable.

The other five participants' accounts of the unifying effects of protest songs further support the theme, and Table 4.6 displays vignettes of their experiences.

**Table 4.6**

*Unifying Power of Songs*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Senzeni Na | After singing and dancing, or after destroying, or when we are caught by the police, or we are being surrounded by the army, we will be stopped in the middle of all of them with these guns. We will be singing with our fists up and singing [what] I interpret as a cry out song – Senzeni Na? We will sing that until we cry tears, and we will not move from where they have surrounded us. That song, among many, is the prominent one because I remember so vividly. |
| Azania | Imagine you are far from home, training as a [freedom fighter] or guerilla, and you have no family around you. The songs gave us inspiration to move on – to be able to train even when we thought of the situation back home where people were still in bondage. It gave us a high morale to come back and engage the enemy. That's how important those songs were. Because remember, when you are in exile or in the trenches fighting, you don't have enough support. Some people would go for days without a decent meal, and when morality was weak, they would draw courage from singing, dancing. So, it worked. That's probably why you're talking to me today. It means it worked. |
| Shosho Loza | The protest action at the time was mainly through songs - singing and chanting, but mainly singing. The songs are carrying a message – sometimes of inspiration, but it's sometimes a message emphasizing we need to work together in unison. Even up to now they remain the common |

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|---|---|
| | songs sung by the youth because they continue to struggle for a decolonized education, even when the education system is led by us – people like me and you. It's very emotional to sing these songs – some of them are a prayer. It's very emotional, and if you are in a group, you can easily be taken away by the momentum of the group and find yourself doing things that you should not be doing. |
| Thuma Mina | I'm inspired by a song which I still sing whenever I'm invited as a guest in various settings. It says, Thuma Mina. This song evokes the spiritual[ity] and identity that I am a person of value, but without pushing people into corners of being religious or Christian. I do it deliberately and it changes us. It connects people together, but not only connecting people in terms of fight[ing] – in terms of political parties, but also connecting people to being a Black person. I am African. I am the person who actually has something to give and I am giving myself. That's the first part of giving and being – reminding ourselves of being servants, not just to the Father, but to each other. When one sings without really saying 'Let's pray', it sends a message. It reminds people of their groundedness (sic) and where they come from. Literally, it's electric. It is something that makes you want to cry. It makes you want to hug the next person. Obviously, it is sung in context because it is not just a song. It is song about our sense, our identity, our African pride and knowing where we are, where we're coming from. |
| Thula Ungakhali | I'm thinking of one song which gives resilience to us, although it was hypnotizing us to be in a certain state. In IsiZulu the song [means] even if we die now, we will die saying we are not afraid. With that song a policeman would be something that is so tiny in front of you. That's why I say it was hypnotizing us. When you sing that, [it is] like being in a state. Another [song] was saying mama, do not cry. Remember our parents were concerned about us and they were looking at all of the death. When we sing that, we were consoling them irrespective that they were not there. Psychologically those songs were saying what we are doing – it's okay. We have to do it. And [to] our parents, when we get that freedom, there will be more of a celebration than all the tears we are shedding now. Those songs really kept us going – as hypnotic as they were. |

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As articulated by Shosho Loza, the message in the protest songs often encouraged people to work in unison, and there seemed to be a literal translation from the song lyrics to how the participants responded, both physically and psychologically. When the participants responded to the follow-up question of why the song(s) gave them inspiration, their unequivocal answers

expressed feelings of strength, determination, hope and courage from singing the songs together with other students. Three participants also revealed how singing the songs created an altered perception that lent to the sense of unity and empowerment. This powerful experience, as interpreted by the participants, created community and was a collective experience that likely created the foundation for a mindset of agitating toward social change. Similarly, as colonialism invades all facets of society, the perceptions of strength in the face of opposition were also likely formative in developing a decolonial mindset.

**Overview of Findings for Question Two**

In response to the second research question, two major themes emerged. The second research question queries: How does someone who received a colonized apartheid education manage to practice and promote a decolonized education? The first theme of dismantling colonial education gave a glimpse into how participants approached and practiced their work in decolonizing education. The second theme of community empowerment illustrated how the educators envisioned the impact of their work and the outcomes they strived to achieve. Within the broad theme of community empowerment, there were two supportive themes of creating opportunities for others and developing future generations.

**Dismantling Colonial Education**

A criterion for participation in the study was active engagement in decoloniality work, and each of the participants delineated how his or her work challenged the hegemony of a colonized education. While all eight of the participants' endeavors countered Western values and ideologies that pervade education curriculums in South Africa, three participants intentionally centered African culture as a framework for work and perspectives. Four participants, Azania, Somandela Luthuli, Senzeni Na, and Mayibuye Afrika, reported that a research or instructional

focus was gender-based violence, which has become a societal problem in South Africa. Another decolonial issue of shared commonality was mother-tongue literacy, and four participants, Somlandela Luthuli, Senzeni Na, Mayibuye Afrika, and Thula Ungakhali, named this as a concentration area. Ekuseni Ngo was singular in his decolonial focus of sexual identities, but that lens is incorporated in marginalized identities, and the intersection of both likely creates an overlap with other participants' decoloniality interests. The participants all reported interdisciplinary areas of instruction, research, and advocacy for decolonizing education. The eight participants delineate their decoloniality work in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7**

*Challenging Colonial Education*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Thula Ungakhali | I inherited a course from my colleague. It's human behavior about stages of development – Freud, Erikson, (etc.) and that would stigmatize somebody whose development is not going according to the stages as prescribed by the human development theorists. In my curriculum, I've taken all of that out. I don't even talk about stages of development. [We] talk about life periods and life events, which is more Afrocentric. I give them African literature written by African scholars from all over the world. I even make sure that the case studies we use are African centered - even my assessments. |
| Azania | I create opportunities for students to learn about issues of patriarchy and how they can challenge the patriarchal system because South Africa is still patriarchal. But over and above that, we know that gender-based violence cannot be extricated from the system of capitalism because the system breeds individualism. It breeds ownership, and a lot of men think consciously or subconsciously that a woman is their product, their asset. |
| Shosho Loza | In a developmental psychology class, we were being taught moral and ethical reasoning and the stages of moral development as articulated by Lawrence Kohlberg in his work. We had to read his work and it concluded that Black people were morally inferior and that women were inferior and could not reach the highest levels of moral thought. In order to pass, you have to say these things [and] feel humiliated in order to pass the exam. You have to confirm your inferiority, so that was the turning point for |

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|---|---|
| | which I began to critically look at education. My whole upbringing was not part of the university. Everything that you know, it's irrelevant – how I was raised. The sacrifices of women – mothers, grandmothers – everything that I've been taught – everything is irrelevant. I completed my Ph.D. and immediately I started working as a junior lecturer or assistant professor. I started teaching cross-cultural psychology and I saw this psychology is not making sense, because I realized cross-cultural psychology was still the same thing. So what would cultural psychology in my own context mean? For me it meant I had to start working on the development of the curriculum in African psychology. As a result, I started working on the curriculum and introduced [for my university] the very first module in African Psychology. |
| Somlandela Luthuli | I'm promoting what we call mother-tongue based, multilingual education. It's the idea that an education system starts where the child is. Where else to start except with what the child knows best, which is the home language? Because the purpose of education is not simply to consolidate and deepen a person's identity, but it is to stretch people – to introduce them to a wider world, and then you've got to add. You are adding other languages – not to replace the mother tongue, but to give them additional tools so they can engage with the broader world. |
| Mayibuye Afrika | Many of our graduates are unemployed whether they are undergraduates or postgraduates. Some of them are highly qualified. They have Ph.D. degrees, but they're staying at home and not working. Maybe you are in a locality and people there are suffering. There's poverty. There's hunger. There are farmers there who need more knowledge, but they are illiterate. You are the few who are educated within your village. What can you do as students to empower those farmers? I try to take them back to their contextual background and how they can apply the knowledge they have acquired from their university. I try to take them back, so we become relevant to our contextual needs as an African continent. |
| Ekuseni Ngo | When I was teaching, one of the things I used to appreciate was being able to let students understand the interconnection of various forms of identity – race, gender, sexuality, and the works. Our school was amongst the first, if not the first to offer teaching, explicit teaching on sexuality issues in the curriculum and make it compulsory for our teachers before they leave. And I have time and time again had students who come back and say, 'thank you for opening my eyes to something that I never was aware of, and now I live in the following ways'. That's one area that there's clear evidence that has impact in the lives of students we teach. |
| Senzeni Na | What I am doing, it has to be done in all South African universities – not only the bilingual teaching, tutoring or lecturing in [my mother tongue language] or English, but in all other South African (indigenous) official |

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|---|---|
| | languages. At the university, they're given the opportunity to ask questions, to critique whatever theory, concept, or text, and they will [leave] their classrooms, lecture or theatre hall not having participated because the English language is a barrier for them to raise their hand to ask the lecturer. But through this program of bilingual tutoring, they are free to use either English or [their African language]. The learning takes place in the mind and there is their native language. They think, digest, critique, and analyze things in their native language. And with the understanding that happens in the brain, they are now given the opportunity to speak, [and] use [their African language] in classrooms while they are attending tutorials. |
| Thuma Mina | [An African principle]- it's a way of life, not just a philosophy. It is my everyday attitude towards life, towards creating a community that embraces each other, that is secular and allowing inclusivity and also fair and just. Providing others with that opportunity to be themselves and not knowing and also embracing other ways of knowing – learning from everywhere. When I work at the university, it's not a theory for me. It's my life. I am a psychologist by profession – I am also a teacher. These are the things that really work in many spaces and help us to understand and grow. |

For five of the participants, the practice of decolonized education is to undergird African ideologies and to teach students to be cognizant of and to embrace their own culture. For the three participants, Azania, Shosho Loza, and Thula Ungakhali, there is an explicit rejection of Western-centered constructs within their disciplines, as they cited the destructive and subordinating impact of the foreign ideology. For the other participants, there is a tacit pivot from the imposed cultural values and norms found in the colonial curriculum. In his expression of decoloniality, Azania centered patriarchy within capitalist ideologies, which, as delineated in Chapter Two, is synonymous with colonialism. Thula Ungakhali determined that teachings of traditionally recognized human development theorists are incompatible with Indigenous ways of knowing, and she choose instead to elevate theorists and people within their local contexts. After obtaining a terminal degree, Shosho Loza concluded that his discipline was bereft of ideologies

and voices that reflected his reality. To fill that void, he had to create a field of knowledge based on his own and the broader African experience. Before Ekuseni Ngo became an executive administrator, his decolonial teaching focus was sexual identities, which challenges Judeo-Christian heteronormative ideologies. Subsequently, he leveraged his interest in sexual identities and his administrative influence to create university policy which mandated that all faculty teach at least one module on sexual issues prior to retirement. This, at minimum, ensures that the course is taught from a diversity of epistemologies, and ideally faculty will adopt a broader, more inclusive and informed understanding of sexual identities, and students will gain from that broad spectrum of perspectives. Mayibuye Afrika adopted a teaching philosophy that undermines colonial ideologies that create distinctions and hierarchies between the educated and non-educated. Instead of colonial-capitalist values that promote individualism and competition, Mayibuye Afrika approached decoloniality action by spurring students to use their positions of privilege to assist others in their communities. Her practice of decolonizing education is to instill in her students a sense of responsibility to work toward societal improvement. Somlandela Luthuli and Senzeni Na are both active in elevating indigenous South African languages as primary languages for teaching and learning at every level of education. This counters the colonial ideology that English or European languages are uniquely equipped for STEM subjects, academic pursuits, and higher education. Thuma Mina operationalized decolonial ideologies through teaching (and living) by African principles. A defining feature of colonialism is to gather life, resources, and knowledge from non-Western societies, appropriate them and present them as Western constructs, and in turn devalue, discredit, and undermine the sources. In contrast, the African philosophy that Thuma Mina adheres to recognizes the value in experiences and knowledge from other sources. The philosophy embraces diverse ways of knowing and not

knowing. As illustrated in Table 4.7, the participants approached decoloniality work in a variety of ways, which underscores ubiquity of colonial ideologies in education and greater society, and the necessity for multiple perspectives, voices, and approaches to contribute to decolonization work.

**Community Empowerment**

As educators who espouse a decolonized pedagogy, the participants expressed the desire for their efforts to make a lasting impact. When asked what outcome they would like to see from their work or what evidence they had of their works' impact, all eight participants expressed hope to improve the lives of other Indigenous South Africans, help to reform society, and support their local Indigenous communities. Because the two questions repeatedly elicited the three overlapping themes, the responses are captured as one general theme of Indigenous community upliftment. Ekuseni Ngo spoke with conviction about what motivates his work and what he hopes his legacy will be:

> I feel like I have a responsibility. We have a responsibility as educators, especially in the context where there has been an imperial dominance and a white supremacist disposition that we have to undermine. It's not just about a dimension of race, but it's about structure because structure dictates the functioning of society as a system. The undermining of Black people through centuries of subjugation and discrimination is something that drives almost everything in South Africa – whether it's gender relations, sexual relations, economic. When we create a consciousness amongst our students about these issues, we start to untangle this vicious cycle that continues to keep Black people marginalized and at the periphery of society. For me, it's personal and a commitment – it's everything there is about education. I can't see education outside of this social justice, decolonial, anti-

> racist lens. …When you get to a position of privilege, you open up opportunities for more people like you to be able to get where you are. What you often see is people – the moment they get there, 'I'm special. I'm the only one, so I'm going to close the door'. My approach is, no, I'm not special. I am just like everyone else who's here. I've been given an opportunity. I was privileged to get that opportunity. What can I do to offer this opportunity to another person who can be in a position that I am?

In concord with Ekuseni Ngo, other participants, Mayibuye Afrika, Azania, and Shosho Loza, leveraged their roles as conscientious educators to encourage students to use their knowledge and distinction as college graduates to create opportunities for others within their communities. Senzeni Na, Thuma Mina, and Thula Ungakhali similarly articulated the desire to empower their students and clients to tap into their potential and achieve greater. Table 4.8 displays the participants vignettes on elevating community.

**Table 4.8**

*Community Empowerment*

| Participant | Example Quote |
|---|---|
| Mayibuye Afrika | Whatever I communicate to the students will be what they will be able to source back as responsible citizens because we have so many socio-economic challenges in the country. They must be able to apply their knowledge across many disciplines within the formal [and] informal sector[s] to become responsible citizens and contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country. They can't just relax and say, 'now I'm a qualified graduate. I've got this qualification', and yet they can't plow that back to their context for socioeconomic and sustainable development. We have to become the voices of those mothers, grandmothers who are calling for our assistance. …Our work can be impactful and we might not be realizing the lives that we are touching out there. It must not only be impactful academically. It must also be impactful within our contextual needs, where our communities are struggling and suffering – the places which are remote and difficult to reach – that is where we need to source back. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Azania | [I] make sure I nurture students who will fight the system and that they understand where they come from as people. Some of my graduates were students who graduated within gender studies are now activists involved in fighting gender-based violence in South Africa. When somebody has, for instance, a certificate in education, they shouldn't only learn to use mathematics as a tool or be accountants. The overall education structure has to prepare this person to be part and parcel of the development of society. What inspires me is to have a broader minded student. When they graduate, they are able to interact with their immediate society or community. I think of the gender activists who were my students before. The value of their work in society is amazing – challenging stereotypes about women. |
| Shosho Loza | To me, it's about the next generation. We need to lay a foundation for the next generation to thrive. If [there] were no textbooks about the black experience for them, they need to have textbooks so that they are not starting from scratch. If there's no syllabus, they need to have a syllabus so that they don't start from scratch. Those are some of the things that keep me driving, keep driving me. I'm investing more now in the training of students, particularly doctoral students, to ensure that they can take the baton and run the next part of the race. |
| Senzeni Na | I still want to earn money – to earn a living, but I just wish my students can think the way I do. I wish they can have the kind of knowledge I have. I even have a nickname – they call me an academic preacher because [when] I give them an assignment, I preach about that assignment. Not the content of the assignment, but I preach about why it is important to study; what studying is going to provide to them; what is going to shape their thinking; why they have to read - not read to receive but read to critique. I so wish they can. I so wish they can. |
| Thula Ungakhali | I think indirectly I'm still a freedom fighter. The biggest issue I want to see is identity - African identity because if a person can attain that kind of identity, [he/she] would do things differently. We have a different belief system as Africans. We believe in Ubuntu and respecting a person as a person first. If that can be achieved, I know that my students will respect their clients [and] will take their work seriously. It will come naturally for them wanting to help or being honest and even social justice – all the things we want to see happening. I think it starts with you internally and externally in terms of your own identity as an African person. |
| Thuma Mina | I believe that I can touch someone, whether their heart, whether improve their skill, support them in their endeavors. It inspires me to see others progress – progress with their lives then do better things, maybe even better than me. I like to see people go beyond what I've offered and be something else. I believe the principle of Ubuntu is serve. …Every now |

> and then I see a child. I also do a learning clinic and see a child being able to read and write, and every time I say, 'I've been paid in full. I do not need any more. My debt has been settled'. When I see those, I remember why I continue to work. Sometimes it digs a very deep hole in my pockets, but it's worth it. It's worth it because this human being – you do not know where he or she will end up.

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Both Thula Ungakhali and Thuma Mina credited the African ontology of Ubuntu as an intrinsic force that guides their work and their lives, and they touted its ability to do the same for others. The one participant, Somlandela Luthuli, who did not explicitly state that empowering others was an ultimate goal, instead gave an example of the impact of his work with a math and literacy intervention program in ten rural schools which were initially academically low-achieving schools. The significant academic gains that the students and teachers have made in the 15-year program were testimony to his impactful work in underserved and under-resourced communities and to his attempt to create opportunities for the advancement of others.

**Conclusion**

The study participants' knowledge of what constitutes a colonized education and its deleterious effects came, at least in part, through their own schooling experiences under Bantu Education. Resistance to Bantu Education took shape in multiple ways, and those subversive actions were done at great risk and cost. Collectively singing songs in protest or to build morale created a cohesion and determination amongst the members of the group, which motivated them to press on. The theme of migration, movement, and disrupted education further revealed the destructive effects of Bantu Education and apartheid policies on the lives of Indigenous South Africans. The themes of challenging colonial education and community empowerment illustrate how the participants, equipped with the knowledge and experience of what constitutes a

debilitating education, envision and practice education that counters colonized education. The next chapter will further explore, expound upon, and synthesize the prevalent themes.

# Chapter 5: Discussion

## Introduction

To revisit the problem that this research attempts to address, while the apartheid government and Bantu Education were officially eliminated nearly 30 years ago, through imposed globalization demands and standards, education in South Africa has maintained its colonial underpinnings. The Western foundations of globalization standard curriculums and policies have disadvantaged the vast majority of Indigenous South African learners. These disadvantages have translated into diminished academic performance, substandard academic proficiencies, and low matriculation or graduation rates at the secondary level. Current and prevalent societal afflictions such as limited job opportunities, high employment rates, poverty, high illiteracy rates, and increased rates of crime, and poor health outcomes can largely be attributed to the undesirable educational outcomes (Ndimande, 2013; Timmis & Muhuro, 2019; Uleanya et al., 2019).

The following phenomenological questions motivate this study:

1) How does someone acquire a decolonized education, in spite of receiving an education that was designed to diminish achievement?
2) How does someone who received an apartheid-era colonial education manage to practice and promote a decolonized education?

**Summary of Research Findings**

The findings of the research revealed that the majority of the participants were conscious of the inferior quality of elementary and secondary education that they received, and the dissatisfaction with their education is echoed in recent calls to decolonize the curriculum through protest movements such as #Feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall (Stuurman, 2018; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). Summarily, nearly three decades after the end of apartheid the harmful effects of Bantu Education policies, repackaged colonial education curriculums continue to impact future generations of learners. The research question of how people who were recipients of Bantu Education manage to practice and teach a decolonized education resulted in central themes that underscore their willingness to make deep personal sacrifices and their commitment to elevate others in their communities. The phenomenological method design entails developing a culminating experience or invariant structure that broadly defines each participants' lived experience of the phenomenon. The study revealed the invariant structure of community regeneration.

As demonstrated in the findings section, the participant interviews revealed the themes of migration/movement/disrupted education and the unifying power of songs were significant and ancillary outcomes of protest efforts. In the analysis of the participants' experiences, several theoretical lenses were applied to distill the data – postcolonial theory, an Indigenous research paradigm, and the ontological lens of Ubuntu. The discussion expands on the major themes of a migration/movement/disrupted education, the unifying power of protest songs, and community empowerment. The scope of the research adheres to postcolonial theory in education that elevates local knowledges and perspectives over dominant Western ideologies and centers marginalized groups such as Indigenous populations (Rodrigues et al., 2019). Data analysis

yielded themes which are consistent with an Indigenous research framework that dictate that research outcomes should counter deficit-thinking and pathology ideologies of the historically colonized, and reconstruct a body of knowledge that offers hope, transformation, and social change (Chilisa, 2020; Smith, 2012). As the discussion section elucidates, the participants' experiences of migration/movement/disrupted education, unifying protest songs, and community empowerment were efforts to counter the dehumanizing effects of apartheid and Bantu Education. The application of an Ubuntu philosophy and ontological lens introduces a relational framework to examine their experiences by how they were influenced and how they influenced others, their connection to people they interact with, their communities, nation, greater humanity, their environment, the living and non-living (Chilisa, 2020). Lastly, in consistency with the phenomenological method, the essence or invariant structures of the participants' experiences emerged and culminated as the representative experience of community regeneration.

**Phenomenological Invariant Structure: Community Regeneration**

The practice of community regeneration encapsulates the participants' experiences well for several reasons. The participants took part in student efforts to develop, support, and heal the Indigenous Black community during the violence and destructiveness of the apartheid era. As adults and through their professions, they continue the work of developing, supporting, and preparing their students and others in the community for future Indigenous community engagement and advancement. The work of regeneration recognizes that the endeavor is not something new – a thriving society and community cohesion once existed. Faust et al. (2021), posits that Indigenous methods of community building are as old as antiquity and are not comparable to newer Western models of community. According to Indigenous scholars, community regeneration can be articulated as "trying to reclaim the way of our ancestors, our

creation stories, so that future generations will know who they are, where they come from, and where it is they are to go" (Faust et al., 2021, p.3174). An act of regeneration is to encourage or strengthen something that was weakened back to its former vigorous condition. The term regeneration further applies to the development of new generations of youth – the benefactors of a decolonized education and those who will carry the torch forward. Decolonial scholar, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2014) concurs that African futures are advanced by the present generation who reimagine and reinvent their epistemologies and ontologies in nonconformity to Western-centered, capitalist, coloniality ideals and ideologies. In his words,

> …the present generation must mobilise itself and confront present structural and agential sources of social injustices, asymmetrical power structures, patriarchal ideologies, logics of capitalist exploitation, resilient imperial/colonial reason, and racist articulations and practices. What is underscored is that the African future will be a product of struggles for a decolonised new world system and de-imperialised global order (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014, p.186).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2014) juxtaposes the destructive forces of coloniality with the agency of unified action, and he concludes that Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing are critical to creating African futures.

For application of Indigenous decolonial theory into practice, community investment, development, and uplift are integral (Chilia, 2020; Smith, 2012). In Indigenous practices, the language of community investment may be expressed as community social justice, relinking back to community, intergenerational community, and Indigenous futures (Lue et al., 2022) According to Indigenous decolonial scholars/practitioners, community investment in action might entail "looking forward to the next generations in our communities[,] linking my research

to honor the ancestors[,] thinking forward to the future generations… what can I do to make education better for future generations?" (Lue et al, 2022, p.180). Another scholar/practitioner delineates that community investment consists of training future generations to become the leadership within the community (Lue et al., 2022), and to "immerse them in in Indigenous knowledge commitment" so they will adopt positions of leadership in Indigenous communities (Lue et al., 2022, p.180). The study participants, as agitators in anti-apartheid student movements and as decoloniality educators have and continue to contribute towards societal advancement for Black South Africans particularly, and for the entire nation collectively. Thus, the personal experiences and the decolonial work of the participants are aptly captured and expressed through the concept of community regeneration.

**Resistance to Bantu Education**

The foundational seeds for decolonizing education were planted early in seven of the participants, either by their own practices or by educators who challenged the prescribed curricula. One participant described acts of critically questioning the course content. Another participant and his peers read and discussed material that would challenge the apartheid structure, challenge Bantu Education, and challenge them intellectually. Two participants recounted teachers who were also mentors that devoted time and energy to teach students outside of classroom instructional time. Five participants recalled having teachers who would subvert the curriculum and teach material that countered Bantu Education content. These oppositional acts were practiced by means of student reading circles of banned literature, after hours instructional time, through content analysis, and teaching alternative content. Scholars that practice a decolonized education emphasize the necessity for subversion, among other approaches, within

educational institutions (Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020). Indigenous decolonial scholar, Yang avers:

> I think that at a minimum these institutions can be subverted – at a minimum. I do not think our goal is to infiltrate and subvert. However, that is the minimum work we do. I think it is worth doing, but there is so much more work that we can do (Lue et al., 2022, p.174).

Additionally, scholars point out that the distinction between school and the exercise of education, which cannot be restricted to a physical location, such as a school or classroom (Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020). Alternatively, decolonial education often takes place in the context of community, and it meets the needs of the community in practicality, relevance, and salience of content (Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020). The participants' memories of how they and others challenged Bantu Education were early exercises in creating an Indigenous decolonized education. If Bantu Education was an apparatus to subjugate the majority Indigenous population and maintain minority white dominance, it instead became a catalyst to dismantle apartheid rule and spark decolonized education action.

The participants' acts to find alternate methods and sources of education underscore their desire for an education and a dedication to learning. Persistence, grit, and determination are commonly heralded as qualities of students who succeed and excel despite daunting obstacles (McGee & Pearman, 2015). Under threat of legal restrictions and punishment, the participants not only found ways to learn a decolonized education, but they also mastered the prescribed Bantu Education curricula enough to pass matriculation exams and graduate. This point cannot be understated. Justification for the African slave trade, imperial rule and colonial installations, and extraction of the continents' resources are promoted (even today) through centuries old

stereotypes and characterizations of disempowered and dependent Indigenous African Peoples (Rodney, 1972). This research debunks those historical colonial stereotypes and clearly portrays a politically oppressed, yet empowered generation of students who found agency in defining and carving out an education for themselves.

**Resistance to Bantu Education and the Migration Effect**

As recounted by participants, while protest movements gave voice and agency to the marginalized majority of Indigenous Black South Africans, the apartheid government responded with intensified oppression and violence. During those times, the police and military presence and the government instigated political fighting made certain areas within the Black townships dangerous places to live. For this reason, the participants gave personal accounts of their own migration or the mass migration of other Indigenous South Africans to safer, more stable areas. It is salient to note, however, that Blacks migrated at significant risk, as there were laws that regulated the movement of Indigenous Black Africans within the country (Reed, 2013; Savage, 1986). Pass Laws were created to control and restrict the movement of Indigenous South Africans for the primary purpose of excluding them from working and residing in the central metropolitan areas, while also allowing a select number of Indigenous Blacks within the areas to meet the demand for cheap labor (Savage, 1986). Like Bantu Education, Pass Laws were an apparatus of the apartheid government to maintain White dominance and social stratification (Savage, 1986). Indigenous South Africans were mandated to carry identity passes that regulated travel between urban and rural areas, and failure to produce the pass on demand within a restricted area could result in arrest or prosecution (Savage, 1986). The penalties from prosecution ranged from fines to forced removal, which amounted to a loss of residence and/or employment. Although Pass Laws were repealed in 1986 (Reed, 2012), in the latter years of their

enactment (1980-1984) there were approximately one million prosecutions for pass law violations (Savage, 1986). In spite of the perilous risk, life history data from the year 2000 indicates that migration for Black South Africans increased in the last half of the twentieth century in defiance of Pass Laws (Reed, 2013). Moreover, the timing of the high periods of migration can be tied to certain historical events, such as the 1976 Soweto protests (Reed, 2013).

Extant literature (Stuurman, 2018) is concordant with the participants' accounts of the political climate during the epoch of student protests. The 1976 student uprisings were the catalyst to a reinvigorated movement of anti-government protests; however, they were met with a brutal response from the apartheid regime (Reed, 2013; Stuurman, 2018). The Soweto massacre, where the police shot and killed 195 and injured 410 school children, was evidence of the government response (Stuurman, 2018). The 1976 Soweto protests were student demonstrations against Bantu Education and apartheid rule, and seven of the eight participants attended school during this period. One participant reported relocating specifically in response to the 1976 Soweto protests. Three participants attended upper primary (middle school) or high school during this period, and one of the three participants actively migrated when he became a member of the anti-apartheid resistance forces, as it was customary for guerilla fighters to organize in neighboring countries (McFadden, 1990). Another one of the three participants recalled that thousands of people migrated from Gauteng province (where Soweto is located) to other provinces. The participant who moved in response to the 1976 Soweto uprising migrated during the time of Pass Laws enforcement. Although she made no reference to the laws, her family relocated at great risk of punishment, as the thousands of families from Gauteng province similarly did (Reed, 2013).

During the period of 1976 to 1985, the life history data indicates a rise in migration amongst Indigenous South Africans while Pass Laws were still enacted, and that migration trend greatly increased once the laws were eradicated in 1986 (Reed, 2013). In addition to the prior four participants, the three other participants who relocated, likely moved after the repeal of Pass Laws. Therefore, while they relocated without the threat of arrest and prosecution for movement, the two participants recalled that they were motivated by unsafe conditions due to violence within their neighborhoods. As evidenced in the Findings section, five participants experienced relocation or migration during periods of heightened political unrest, which is consistent with literature on migration trends of Indigenous South Africans. While the extant research draws the connection between the 1976 Soweto student uprising and a sharp increase in migration (Reed, 2013), the literature fails to include the impacts on migration from subsequent protest eras. According to four study participants, the late 1980s to early 1990s were very intense years of student anti-government protests, and the existing literature confirms a significant rise in Indigenous South African movement and relocation during those years. The life history data bears out an increase in migration by 71 percent between mid-1987 and late 1990 (Reed, 2013). In fact, with the findings of this study, one can draw connections between the students protests, a militant government response, and migration trends. The interaction of the three factors is evidenced in the historical record of the apartheid government expelling 737 people from major urban areas in 1977 (after the 1976 Soweto protests) for the documented reason of being “idle and undesirable” (Savage, 1986, p.187). In latter years, this action was revealed to be a response to political unrest used against Indigenous African dissidents (Savage, 1986). Summarily, the themes of resistance and protest against Bantu Education and migration, movement, and relocation are deeply intertwined and interdependent. The participants attested to recognition that

Bantu Education was oppressive and vastly inferior, and that knowledge spurred opposition and demands for reform through organized protests and boycotts. The apartheid government responded with brutal force by either becoming more repressive or engineering political warfare within Black communities. At times, relocation and migration were initiated through forced removals and expulsions by the apartheid regime (Reed, 2013; Savage, 1986); however, they were predominantly acts of agency by Indigenous Blacks (Reed, 2013). With the constant threat of deadly police, military, or neighborhood violence, multitudes of Indigenous South Africans, in disregard to Pass Laws when enacted and in years after, relocated and migrated for the safety of their families and ultimately, for survival.

**The Unifying Power of Protest Songs**

All eight participants recounted that songs were the primary expressions of protest during student demonstrations, and six participants testified to their empowering effect of evoking strength, unity, and determination when sung in protest efforts. Songs are an expression of life, and as long as people have existed, songs have been vehicles to tell stories and convey emotions (Makina, 2009). Protest songs can particularly encapsulate difficult to articulate feelings of pain, shock, and sadness that result from war and oppression. According to Makina (2009), communities express their problems, hopes, and fears through song, and thus consolidate group interest. The protest song is a temporal commentary on what is currently taking place in society (Makina, 2009). If songs are an "artistic outpouring of the heart" (Makina, 2009, p.222), in times of grave injustice and political turmoil, protest songs allow for communication of this and release of tension (Makina, 2009). Makina (2009) further avers that this release of tension and repressed emotion is vital because this allows people to remain humane. In Makina's (2009, p.222) words, by singing protest songs:

> …the community discusses its experience with itself, commenting for its own entertainment and enlightenment upon the world in which it finds itself – the physical, political, aesthetic, and moral world – all communicated as a dialogue within the community – a dialogue with its traditions, its present, and its future. Through song, artists have questioned authority and the status quo… The protest song becomes the vehicle for the expression and manifestation of what is going wrong in society… a means of communication and an aid to collective action. This makes the protest song a form of social commentary that is profoundly relevant.

The six participants recalled songs that were sung during their organized demonstrations as having various meanings, purposes, and having various effects upon the singers. Two participants remembered singing songs that were historically sung for battles and in preparation for warfare, and one participant interpreted the purpose of the songs as a way to gain a psychological victory by becoming intimidating and thus, intimidating the opponent. The other participant similarly saw the songs as vehicles to instill courage in the midst of a fight, and the fight may have been to remain persistent in spite of the odds. Both participants attested to the effectiveness and power of the songs by providing determination and a sense of fearlessness. Two other participants recollected songs that expressed defiance against daunting opposition while also recognizing the students' vulnerability and danger that they faced by protesting. The songs express the complexity of the turmoil, both inner and outer, and the songs' ability to accurately capture the emotions and tensions of the student protests are testament to the social commentary, social relevance, and cathartic power of protest songs. Preeminent African-American scholar and early twentieth century civil rights activist, W. E. B. DuBois (1903, p.122) poetically articulated the hope that undergirds the songs:

> Through all the sorrow of the Sorrow Songs there breathes a hope – a faith in the ultimate justice of things. …Minor cadences of despair often change to triumph and calm confidence. …[an] assurance of boundless justice in some fair world beyond.

Thula Ungakhali translated the lyrics of a popular song that gave voice to the consciousness of sacrifice and threat of tragedy, but also the hope that their actions would ultimately bring about lasting change. Senzeni Na recalled that singing one song in the midst of confrontation would elicit an outpouring of emotion and tears. Liberation theologist James Cone (1992) avers that songs such as spirituals and the blues were vital for African-American survival, and applied to the South African context, the power of protest songs was crucial in the struggle for Black survival – Black music was essential for identity and survival. The songs allowed for an expression of feeling and way to renew their spirits in the sounds of Black humanity (Cone, 1992). Cone (1992, p.29) posits that these songs are "about Black souls, stretching out into the outskirts of God's eternity and affirming that divine reality which lets you know that you are a human being – no matter what White people say". The songs illustrate the repressive political climate and the perils of challenging the government structure. While the students lent their voices to the songs, the songs were reminders of their purpose and ultimate goal in the struggle for human rights, for dignity, for humanity.

The two participants, Shosho Loza and Thuma Mina, recalled songs that expressed messages of unity, inspiration, and working together. Shosho Loza noted that the songs are still relevant and sung by youth today in their struggle for a decolonized education. Both participants alluded to a certain spirituality that the songs evoked. Some songs were a prayer, and according to the participants, there was a powerful emotional response when the songs were sung in groups. Thuma Mina further delineated that there is a self-affirming message and a message of

united African identity. Although not a protest song, similar to protest songs, the lyrics remind the group of their common humanity, identity, purpose, and higher calling of sacrifice and service to one another. The six participants recount that the songs sung in groups produced a dynamic unifying force and emotional energy that gave them the resolve to work together and remain strong in spite of threatening challenges. Additionally, three participants described the effect of their singing in unison as an altered state of consciousness. Both Somlandela Luthuli and Thula Ungakhali portrayed the experience as trance-like state that provided a sense of solidarity and invincibility. Shosho Loza recalled that the emotional energy stimulated the group to act in unison in defiance of the state opposition. The phenomenon expressed by the three participants suggests some occurrence of transcendent spirituality. Merwe and Morelli (2022, p.2) posit that music created through group effort, can create a "unitive experience" that make the group members "feel connected with something beyond and outside the self – the wider community of human beings". Music theorists concur that music attends to "our basic human needs for recognition of persons, identity, relationship, community, and transcendence" (Merwe & Morelli, 2022, p.1), and creating music through singing protest songs in organized groups establishes social cohesion. According to Merwe and Morelli (2022), the synchrony of shared oipulse and rhythm contributes to the connectiveness of music. As previously stated, protest songs create community, and communities establish conditions that reduce inequalities, disparities, conflict, exclusion, and distrust to improve the living conditions for all community members (Merwe & Morelli, 2022). There is a restorative nature to unified singing and communal music-making that develops social cohesion (Merwe & Morelli, 2022). Thus, ironically, in the midst of violent, tumultuous times and through the protest songs, the student

demonstrators were actively creating and restoring community, both literally and figuratively for themselves and their Indigenous communities.

**Challenging Colonial Education**

As this research is a study in decolonization and of people who expressly practice and promote decolonized education, an anticipated theme was the participants' approach to practicing a decolonized education. Although their approaches varied widely, by definition and design of decolonial education, their work challenged traditional teachings in their disciplines. Two of the participants had research interests that by design were antithetical to colonial education, i.e. gender studies and sexual identities. Five participants developed curriculum and taught course content that countered canonical theories and ideologies within their disciplines. All eight of the participants are university faculty and/or administrators, and prized benefits of higher education pedagogy are freedom of expression and the breadth and depth of fields of study. Nevertheless, all eight participants underscored the necessity of and their own practices of challenging colonial education at their institutions. Higher education institutions are often thought of as bastions of colonialism in their extraction of Indigenous knowledges and experiences of marginalized populations, and subsequent repackaging as research interpreted through Western lenses by Western authors (Batz, 2019; Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020). Eurocentric, Western-situated research informs the advancement of disciplines, creation of education materials, and dictates course content (Smith, 2012), and for this reason many Indigenous decolonization educators augment course material and restructure the courses with a decoloniality focus (Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020) as all eight participants attested to doing. As one African scholar claimed:

> …formal teaching had to include conscientization. It was not enough to teach a course based on a fixed set of learning outcomes; I had to go further and develop alternative course outlines that were not driven by the course, but on what course content students needed to interact with – in a more engaged way. It meant negotiating being the teacher in a classroom and being in solidarity in these alternative spaces of learning -not linked to degrees and assessment, but on centering, 'how do we know what we know?' (Okech, 2020, p.321).

Decolonizing education for the eight participants entailed deconstructing traditional curriculums to include the languages, ways of knowing and being, critical pedagogies, and local resource management that situated Indigenous South African students within their communities, nation, broader African diaspora, and world. The participants recognized the foundational importance of establishing an education where students are able to see their own existence within their educational experience. The participants create a pedagogy in which their students and themselves are not mere recipients nor external to the process of knowledge-making, but they are co-creators in the development and advancement of Indigenous knowledges.

**Community Empowerment**

All eight participants espoused the importance of community empowerment, whether by fostering a sense of social responsibility within their students or providing the resources for the investment in future generations. Four participants stressed their expectation that graduates carry the torch and create opportunities for others in their communities. The remaining four participants spoke to instilling the knowledge and values necessary for the students to thrive and in turn, be of service to others. The drive to develop and strengthen community is an inherent characteristic of decolonization work (Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020; Smith 2012). However,

decolonial scholars express conflict between university operations and decoloniality work by contrast of academia versus action (Batz, 2019; Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020). Academia demands scholarship, and while the research may have a decolonization focus, the reach and impact of the research are limited or negated because it is created with language or housed in places that are inaccessible to the communities it is meant to serve. Additionally, while university faculty appointments factor community service into performance evaluation and promotion metrics, higher priority and recognition are given to research, publication, and grant funding endeavors. One decolonial scholar noted that in tertiary education, the perception exists that knowledge constructed in non-academic spaces is not professionally advantageous (Okech, 2022). This distinction between scholarly and non-scholarly work creates an artificial divide between faculty who act and ones who theorize (Okech, 2020). Smith (2012) and Okech (2020) concur that critical pedagogies and decolonial work require eschewing individual research pursuits and workloads as a means of academic advancement, as this practice undergirds the academic culture of extraction and exploitation. Four of the study participants recalled encountering dismissive attitudes or resistance towards their decolonization research or instructional foci from faculty colleagues or administrators. Many decolonial scholars aver that there is an inherent tension between academia and decolonization work (Lue et al., 2022; Okech, 2020; Smith, 2012); however, as some cogently conclude, education is not restricted to the confines of the institution, and decolonial academics position their work to exceed the bounds of the university (Lue et al., 2022). In fact, some participants recalled former elementary and secondary school teachers that subverted the prescribed curriculum and provided an education outside of the traditional school boundaries. Perhaps this experience was foundational in developing the decolonial education activists. In spite of the demands of academia, all eight

participants were united in their efforts for local community development and to instill a sense of responsibility in their students to give back to the community, which is a defining feature of decolonial work.

A common thread that ties the former decolonial actions and present decolonial actions is self-sacrifice and commitment to service. Participation in student protest movements was done at risk of a brutal police or military response, and as witnessed by the participants, many of their peers did not survive that era. The commitment to sacrifice was articulated in the words of a popular protest song, which promised that the sacrifices made then would make way for a better future for all. As professionals, there is level of sacrifice that the participants commit to when dedicating time and energy to projects that are not highly regarded within academia. Moreover, the participants encourage their students to make sacrifices, create opportunities, and build community for others, thereby investing in the next generation of decolonial activists. The dedication to sacrifice and service are core concepts of the African ontology of Ubuntu (Radebe, 2022), as interpreted by one participant. The Ubuntu worldview valorizes relationships (Chilisa, 2020), and it teaches that “people have a moral obligation to enhance each other’s welfare” (Radebe, 2022, p.58). A translation of the essence of the Ubuntu philosophy, “I am because we are", can be understood as valuing the interdependence of life and being and placing greater priority of the group or community over the individual (Chilisa, 2020). Thus, the participants’ approach to decolonizing education is an extension of and an expression of the guiding African ontology of Ubuntu.

Actions of agency and resistance, such as student protests against Bantu Education, the development of decolonized education under oppressive conditions, and unlawful migration and relocation for self-preservation and safety are consistent with the postcolonial theoretical

framework (Lunga, 2008). Further, establishing courses, curricula, and programs that promote decolonized education that similarly align with postcolonial theory objectives of deconstructing colonial knowledge systems and providing celebratory counternarratives.

## Implications

Efforts to decolonize education by Indigenous Black South Africans have occurred over decades and through various means, and insight into how recipients of Bantu Education engage and contribute to decolonized education offers implications for understanding foundations and furthering decolonial education efforts. Because the apartheid government restricted research and censored data on Indigenous Black populations, a void exists in literature that centers the lives and experiences of Black South Africans who lived through the apartheid era (Reed, 2013). This study offers insight into the experiences of the injustice and violence of Bantu Education and the myriad ways that students and educators confronted it. In addition, with the maintenance and perpetuation of colonial policies and ideologies throughout all South African institutions of education, this research illuminates how decolonial educators approach and promote their craft.

### *Historical Experiences of Indigenous South Africans and Bantu Education*

Prior research has attributed the efficacy of student protests against Bantu Education as instrumental to the collapse of the apartheid regime (Ndimande, 2013; Tygensen, 1991). Results of this research are consistent with that theory; however, this study reveals the ingenuity, courage, and determination that students and educators exhibited to defy the colonial curricula and alternatively receive/teach a decolonized education. The research refutes Western ideologies of African acquiescence and pushes back on colonial histories of silencing and invisibility of Indigenous Africans within their own lands. The findings reframe the history to reveal students and educators who created an education to include their own Indigenous voices and realities. The

research also provides an intimate view of the lives of student protestors, and it shares the sacrifices, anguish, pain, and loss that accompanied the anti-government efforts. As recounted by the study participants, for many Indigenous South African youth, there was high attrition and loss of educational opportunities resulting from school disruptions during the protest eras. This loss contributed to higher unemployment, lower-level job attainment, and a lower quality of living, which has eroded the social fabric of neighborhoods (Tygensen, 1991; Uleanya et al., 2019). There was a consequential human cost in lost lives, as witnessed by the participants, yet due to the apartheid restriction on data collection on Black South Africans (Reed, 2013), the number of children and adults killed can only be estimated, and the exact toll remains unknown.

The phenomenon of migration trends by Indigenous Blacks draws connections between the tumultuous years of student protest movements, a repressive and violent government response, and an increase in relocation and migration nationwide. This revelation suggests that during times of political upheaval, Black South Africans exercised agency that apartheid policies were meant to deny. Consistent with the motivators that undergirded the student protest movements, migration was an act of survival - a demand for a better existence and for conditions that supported quality of life. The unifying, transcendent effect that student protestors and activists experienced from singing protest songs amongst the group provides perspective on how the protestors remained united and cohesive in the face of life-threatening circumstances. While the power and impact of the student protest movements on South African history are recognized (Ndimande, 2013; Tygensen, 1991), the research illuminates the voices and experiences of those who engaged in the protests, the inspirational power of the protest songs, the strength protestors drew from the songs, and how they created supportive networks and community during that violent era.

### *Practicing and Promoting Indigenous Decolonized Education*

In decolonized education theory, the reach and pervasiveness of colonial-based education exists at all levels of schooling and throughout many educational institutions worldwide (Lue et al., 2022). This study supports decolonized education theory through the participants' accounts of their educational experiences. The diversity of disciplines that participants practiced and their endeavors to decolonize their academic areas further underscored the ubiquity of colonial-based education. This study illuminates the colonial underpinnings and ideologies within academic disciplines and practices in South African tertiary education, and it details the participants unique interpretations and approaches to decolonizing education in their fields. Defining features of Indigenous decolonial education are the elevation of community-driven research and projects as well as investment in future generations for Indigenous futures. The results of this research are consistent with salient attributes of Indigenous decolonial education, and it further defines the contours of how Indigenous decolonizing education is practiced in different contexts. This research contributes to the current body of knowledge by including Indigenous South African voices and perspectives and by undergirding existing research.

## Implications for Future Research

Decolonized education challenges the traditional methods and ideologies of formal, institutional education (Lue et al., 2022), and decolonial education work is often done within community and for community advancement (Lue et al., 2022; Smith, 2012). Additionally, prior to formal, institution education, indigenous education was a community-based effort, and multiple members of the community adopted the role of educator (Makalela, 2018; Mampane et al., 2018; Shizha, 2010; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). Therefore, decolonial education work need not be done by an educator, per se. To situate the study within indigenous ways of knowing and

traditional practices, future research might include recruiting storytellers, local public servants, community elders, and spiritual leaders. This approach would counter colonial ideologies and practices of education removed from local contexts. It would challenge concepts of the proprietors of knowledge and the distinctions that Western education makes between who is educated and non-educated in a society. Further, this research approach would be consistent with a more inclusive, community-sourced and community reinvested education.

Future research might also examine the generational impact on decolonized education protests. The Soweto student protests of 1976, the student protest movement of the late 1980's, and the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall protests of 2014 – 2017 were instrumental in bringing about political change and/or an examination of the educational system (Ndimande, 2013; Zimu-Biyela, 2019). The impact of Indigenous Black student protests in South African society has become a research focus of interest and has gained traction; however, the concentration of the research has been predominantly on post-apartheid student protests. A study that spans several generations of student protestors, what the outcomes of their efforts were, and how they have progressed could build upon this research and add the dimension of a generational perspective.

**Limitations**

One limitation of the study was that participants had either a lack of general knowledge of an answer or the inability to recall one answer. The question queried into the number of peers that passed matriculation exams and graduated high school along with the participants (see Appendix B). While the purpose of the question was to gain an understanding of pass rates, and an exact number of graduating students was not expected, participants at times could not answer the question, likely due to the inability to remember. Some participants attributed relocation as

the reason they were unable to answer the question, and other participants could only give a general estimate. This information would provide insight into how many students were successful in overcoming in spite of Bantu Education. Another limitation of the study was difficulty in securing study participants. Moreover, even though 18 people agreed to participate, eight agreed to the consent documents and moved forward with the interview process. In retrospect, people who initially agreed may have reconsidered after reviewing the protocols because of the sensitive political nature of the questions and/or the painful memories and emotions the questions might elicit.

One limiting factor in recruiting participants was the difficulty in listening to and processing the interview content. Because phenomenological methodology calls for a sizeable number of participants, I had aimed to have a larger sample; however disturbing content in the interviews became cause to revise the number of interviewees. Almost all of the participants recounted stories of death, violence, and harm that other people, their peers, and at times they, themselves witnessed or suffered. I experienced symptoms of secondary trauma stress as I reviewed, transcribed, and coded the interviews, and for that reason it was necessary to limit the number of people that were enlisted to participate.

While the fact that the research and researcher were removed from the locale of the study could possibly diminish rapport with participants, this did not seem to happen. In fact, the participants were conversant, and I had moments of laughter and thoughtful reflection with each of them. The participants' interviews were candid, heartfelt, and moving. Additionally, for the limitation stated above, the limited number of participants did not adversely affect the study. The participants' narratives complemented and supported one another's, and the data produced rich themes that led to saturation.

## Conclusion

As long as colonialism and colonial education have existed, alternate knowledge, ways of knowing, and ways of being have previously existed and continue to exist to question, critique, and refute colonial ideologies (Maldonado-Torres, 2011). This study undergirds the counternarrative of an unrelenting demand for a decolonized education by students educated during apartheid era Bantu Education, and by educators who practice and promote a decolonized education in post-apartheid era South Africa. Under a repressive apartheid government, Indigenous South African students agitated for educational policy reform and overall political change. Students, at times with the support of teachers, managed to defy government restrictions and gain an education that was more reflective of their needs and realities. Even while struggling for a more equitable and contextually relevant education, some students passed matriculation exams despite Bantu Education. The students' actions not only expressed agency, but an unwavering commitment to education itself. The student protests proved to be significant beyond the end of Bantu Education, as they were instrumental in bringing the end to the minority rule apartheid government.

A decolonized education as practiced by university faculty operates similarly to the alternative, subversive education that countered Bantu Education. At the tertiary level, a decolonized education repeats iterative themes of rejection of Western-centered colonial ideologies, diversion from canonical theories and content, and offers teaching that is representative of local contexts and populations. The decolonial educators, through a diversity of disciplines and methods, continue to challenge the prescribed teaching and practices and conversely introduce knowledge and ways of knowing that elevate alternative, African-based ideologies for the development of Indigenous communities and the advancement of Indigenous

futures. Moreover, the decolonial educators, with acute awareness of the past and present destructiveness of coloniality, impress upon their students to empower others in the Indigenous communities and continue the struggle for a decolonized education.

# Appendix A

## Subject Informed Consent

### Introduction and Background Information

You are invited to participate in a research study. The study is being conducted by Dr. Grant Smith and Ms. Gayle Bartilow. The study is sponsored by the Department of Education, Bellarmine University. The study will take place virtually and in South Africa at various South African universities, offices, homes, or community centers. Approximately 22 subjects will be invited to participate. Your participation in this study will last for approximately two months.

### Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to uncover the sources and expressions of decolonized education practice by indigenous South Africans who were educated under the apartheid era government. The goal of Bantu Education was to under-develop indigenous South Africans to prevent them from entering the skilled labor workforce, and so native South Africans were subject to colonized schooling. The study questions if / how the participants were exposed to or learned decolonized education in spite of their apartheid era education. Additionally, the study examines how the participants practice and / or promote a decolonized education.

### Procedures

In this study, you will be invited to take part in an interview where you will be asked to share memories of your education during the period of the apartheid system. The interview will be recorded for the purpose of transcription and analysis of content.

1. For the first set of question(s) about your memories of apartheid education, you may answer the question(s) in the form of a narrative or story, if you choose.
2. Second, you will also be invited to share an art form that expresses your experience of protesting apartheid education, such as a song, poem, chant, phrase, expression, or dance. You will be asked to explain the meaning and relevance of the art form that you have chosen.
3. Finally, you will be invited to share an artifact that represents your practice in decolonized education. It can be anything that you use in your practice or something that inspires you for your practice, for example a syllabus, curriculum, or cultural symbol. You will be asked to explain the meaning and relevance of the artifact that you have chosen.

The initial interview will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. You will receive the transcript of your first interview session, you will have the chance to respond to or clarify the recorded information from the first session. Additional interview sessions will last approximately 30 minutes. Please know that you may decline to answer questions that make you feel uncomfortable or put you at risk for prosecution.

### Potential Risks

There are risks associated with interviews which are re-triggering of stress due to sensitive subject nature, emotional reaction from memories of harms, discomfort from discussion of painful situations. In the event of this, I will pause the interview to check-in with participants. I

will invite participants to pause, take a break, and if necessary, engage in stress-reducing activities such as breathing exercises. If answering any of the questions becomes too difficult, participants can elect to skip the question, postpone the interview, or end the interview. Participation in the study is completely voluntary.

**Benefits**

The possible benefits of this study include a greater understanding and appreciation for the practice of decolonized education. The study may also further promote decolonization in education practices and conversely, work to deconstruct colonial education. The data collected in this study may not benefit you directly. However, the information learned from this research may be helpful to others in the future.

**Confidentiality**

Although absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, confidentiality will be protected to the extent permitted by law. The study sponsor or the Institutional Review Board may inspect your research records. With your consent, your identity as a subject in this research and the information you provide may be released and published.

Potential Future Research Statement

Identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information for this research and after such removal, the information could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent procedures.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw your consent at any time without penalty or losing benefit to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Your Rights as a Research Subject and Contact Persons**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Institutional Review Board Office at 502.272.8032. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions, in confidence, with a member of the Board. This is an independent committee composed of members of the University community and lay members of the community not connected with this institution. The Board has reviewed this study.

You acknowledge that all your present questions have been answered in language you can understand. If you have any questions about the study, please contact: Dr. Grant Smith gsmith2@bellarmine.edu 1(502) 272-7921; or Ms. Gayle Bartilow gbartilow01@bellarmine.edu 1(859) 368-9293

**Consent**

You have discussed the above information and hereby consent to voluntarily participate in this study. You have been given a copy of this consent form.

_____ _____

Signature of Subject or Legal Representative Date Signed

| | |
|---|---|
| _____ | _____ |
| Signature of Investigator | Date Signed |
| _____ | _____ |
| Signature of Person Explaining Consent if other than Investigator | Date Signed |

## Appendix B

Interview Questions

Part I

Participant Questions – Life Story Prompt / Semi-structured interview:

1. What was the last year you attended school for basic education (R-12)?
    a. Which grade did you complete?
    b. Was that during the era of the apartheid government?
    c. Approximately how many others completed grade _____ with you?

2. What is a specific memory that you have of your education? (Participant can answer by giving an anecdote or life-storytelling)
    a. Why is this memorable to you?
    b. How does this memory affect how you view your education?

3. What do you recall of efforts to resist or protest Bantu Education / apartheid era education?
    a. Did you participate in any of these, and if so, how?
    b. How much support did the efforts have?

4. What was the outcome of the (your) resistance efforts?
    a. If the resistance was effective (or not), when did you see results?
    b. How do you feel about the (your) resistance efforts now?

Part II

Arts / Performance-Based Inquiry – Please share an art form that expresses your experience of protesting apartheid education, such as a song, poem, chant, phrase, expression, or dance.

1. Please share a form of protest expression that you were inspired by (at this time or after the interview, participants may provide video / audio recordings).

    a. Please provide some context for the expression. What is the meaning of this expression? (If necessary, participant can give a translation and/or transcription of the work.)
    b. How does it speak to you?
    c. Why did it give you inspiration?

2. What were some other ways that opposition to colonial education (Bantu Education) was expressed?
    a. How did these forms of opposition speak to you?
    b. Was any form of opposition more effective than others? If so, explain why.

3. Do you still find this expression of protest inspiring? Please explain.
    a. Does it have the same meaning to you as it did in the past?
    b. Would this expressive work be relevant today? Please explain.

Part III

Decolonized Education Artifact – Please share an artifact that represents your practice in decolonized education. It can be anything that you use in your practice or something that inspires you for your practice, for example a syllabus, curriculum, or cultural symbol.

1. Please share something that represents your work in decolonization in education.
    a. Explain what this is.
    b. Please explain its significance to you.
    c. How does this help you to promote a decolonized education?

2. How do you view your work in response to apartheid education or colonial education?
    a. How does your work counter colonized or apartheid education?

3. Who or what do you credit for your own decolonized mindset?
    a. How did you gain or acquire a decolonized way of thinking?
    b. How do you maintain your way of thinking?

4. What inspires you to do your work?
    a. Who or what influenced you to do your work in decoloniality?
    b. What are other sources of inspiration?

5. What are challenges to doing your work?
    a. What is difficult about doing the decoloniality work?
    b. How do you address or counter the challenges?

6. What results do you want to see from your work?
    a. What do you hope will result from your efforts?

7. What evidence do you have of your work's value or effectiveness?
    a. Can you give an example of an outcome of your work?
    b. What did this outcome tell you?

8. Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your work in decolonization?

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