Writing Centre: A space for inclusivity in higher education? A case study of a University of Technology in Durban, South Africa

Ntuthuko Mhlongo[1] Patience Mutsvairigwa[2] Nkosinathi H. Xulu[3] Nondumiso C. Thusi[4] Siyanda Khanyile[5] Nondumiso Shabangu[6]

[1,5]Mangosuthu University of Technology, Durban, South Africa

[2,3,6]Durban University of Technology, Durban, South Africa

[3]University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

mutsva.patience@mut.ac.za

Abstract

Writing Centres (WCs) have become a critical component of HE, especially in their role of building students writing capabilities. Moreover, WCs are ascribed to the purpose of student retention through inclusive teaching practices. Remarkably, there has been a paucity of evidence-informed studies investigating the WC and students' inclusion nexus. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this paper is to evaluate whether the WC's support creates an inclusive and enabling environment for students to succeed at university. The article grounds its analysis on Stentiford and Koutsouris's (2020) notion of inclusion in higher education, which asserts that inclusivity in HE is underpinned by the choice of pedagogies. The paper used a mixed methods approach to collect data from students who had consulted the WC at a selected University of Technology (UoT). Online qualitative surveys from students who had consulted with the WC were used to evaluate whether students perceived the support as inclusive and enabling. The feedback from surveys found that by using inclusive pedagogy, the WC facilitated the inclusion of disadvantaged students. Therefore, the article deduces that the WC plays a crucial role in circumventing the trend of high dropout rates among black previously disadvantaged students at universities. However, WCs are externally funded entities that often lack resources to reach the desired number of students. This paper makes the case that WCs must be integrated into the university so that they can be more effective.

Keywords: Writing Centre, inclusive pedagogy, social inclusion, diversity equity and fairness, disadvantaged students, academic literacies

1. Introduction

Student protests across South African universities are a frequent disruption to the academic year (Mavunga 2019). From these protests, students have raised their apprehensions concerning the inclusivity of the university space. They argue that the university space is contaminated by a culture of exclusion emanating from academic, financial, and other structural arrangements (Hillman 2016). Notably, the pervasive culture of exclusion adversely affects student success at university. The adversarial effect of exclusion is more conspicuous for students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds (Mzwanga 2019). Consequently, to reverse this trend, change in the HE landscapes in South Africa is necessary. Against this backdrop, student support services have had a major role to play in ensuring that students are retained within the university system. WCs function under the umbrella of student support services and are actively involved in the mission of improving university throughput rates by offering academic writing support.

WC practitioners and researchers have postulated that Writing Centres have become hubs for nurturing and enhancing students' academic writing and intellectual capabilities (Sefalane-Nkohla and Mtonjeni 2019; Nicholas 2017; Muna *et al.* 2019). This paper concurs with this fundamental position. As its point of departure, the article focuses on the role that the WC plays in building inclusivity for students within the university space. In the South African context, there is a need to contribute to this type of discourse, firstly, because of the history of racial exclusion in education. Secondly, through protests such as Rhodes Must Fall, students have vented their frustrations on the cultural exclusion in HE. The notion of inclusivity becomes a crucial component of student success particularly for previously disadvantaged students. The article's main objectives are as follows (i) to identify if the WC facilitates an enabling and inclusive space for student success and (ii) to outline potential methods that can be used by WC to create an enabling environment.

2. Contextualizing South African Higher Education

The ushering in of democracy in 1994, underpinned by constitutional principles of justice and equality was a watershed moment for the higher education landscape of South Africa. Preceding the democratic dispensation, exclusion on racial grounds was an orthodox practice. The practice of exclusion was particularly prevalent in the education space. Broadly, exclusion was the dominant principle in education, and was reinforced through discriminatory legislation, namely, the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and the Extension of Higher Education Act of 1959 (DHET 2016). These two policies had far-reaching consequences that limited non-whites from receiving quality education. Globally, access to quality education is perceived as an intricate component of social justice as well as a fundamental human right (Khumalo 2022). Moreover, according to Salmi (2021),

education is an instrument that produces extensive private and social benefits. Therefore, in consideration of the widely accepted assertion that education is a form of social justice, under apartheid, black people were denied access to social justice through discriminatory laws.

In a nutshell, the policy of Bantu Education can be understood as legislation that legalized racial profiling in education. This was achieved by the creation of a unique, albeit inferior education curriculum for the native black South African majority (Gallo 2020). Illuminating this injustice is the statistic that outlines that, in 1963, the government was spending R140 for white education and only R12.50 per capita for black education. On the one hand, Bantu Education dealt with infusing apartheid laws into basic education, while on the other hand the Extension of University Education Act 45 of 1959 policy was the blueprint for espousing apartheid laws in HE. Notably, the policy of Extension of University Act principally extended the injustice of basic education by replicating exclusion in basic education at the HE level. This was achieved through legislation that prohibited black people to register and attend well-resourced universities (laga Ramoupi 2022). The trajectory of contemporary scholarship pertaining to education postulates that the effects of these policies have permeated into the current context (Gallo 2020; laga Ramoupi 2022).

2.1 Outlining the problem unpacking the practice of (in)exclusion in HE.

The advent of democracy resulted in significant changes in HE. Notably, the racial segregation of universities that was foregrounded by the Extension of Higher Education Act was ceased. This process was done through the merging of former black universities with those that had been reserved for whites (Motala 2021). Furthermore, at policy level, various legislations were passed to promote transformation and inclusion in HE. However, experiences from students captured in literature reflect that most universities are still far from achieving the goal of inclusivity. Consequently, there is a recognizable requirement to delineate the idea of inclusivity in the context of South African HE. The scholarship on inclusion in HE argues that a definition of inclusivity in HE must take into cognisance the ideas of underrepresented groups in HE (Salmi 2021). Globally, underrepresented groups in HE denotes groups who were previously marginalized in the HE space particularly from an access to HE perspective (Trudgett 2022). The underrepresented category is shaped and constituted of a wide variety of categories that encompass gender, race, first generation students, people living with disabilities and many other similar categories.

In the South African HE context, the category of the underrepresented is shaped by the legacy of apartheid exclusion. Historical exclusion of apartheid sparked a racial dimension that created privileges for the white category of citizens and placed non-whites in a disadvantaged position. Consequently, a term that is used to describe those groups which were previously excluded

by apartheid is 'disadvantaged students'. Furthermore, 'disadvantaged students' is used to denote to a broad class of lower socio-economic status groups. The literature alternatively defines these groups as low-income, non-white, working-class, or first-generation students (Mpungose 2020; Herbaut and Geven 2020). Notably, the scholarship on HE highlights that students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not perform well across all universities (Boughey and McKenna 2021). This trend has been exacerbated by COVID-19 because during remote learning, students from disadvantaged backgrounds were in areas with poor connectivity, thereby affecting the quality to access online classes (Maphalala and Adigun 2021). The reasons why disadvantaged students often struggle in HE are varied and intersectional, yet a salient reason lies in the university space being hostile to the diverse student identities (Nicholas 2019). This mainly manifests through the university's fixation and the perpetuation of one Western epistemology at the expense of other perspectives (Janks 2019).

2.2 Writing Centre in South African Higher education

Writing Centres in South Africa were originally conceptualised by practitioners as student support structures that would have the capacity to build networks of support for students in academic writing (Nicholas 2017). This would promote wider access into the HE spaces. More germane to this paper, WCs were perceived as safe spaces for enhancing student academic writing capabilities in an otherwise culturally hostile university environment (Nicholas 2017). This conceptualisation is important because the higher education space is inherently hostile for people coming outside of the Western culture (Chigudu 2019). Universities are oriented towards affirming one epistemological outlook, which is White and Western, and suppresses other diverse epistemologies (Settles 2021). Moreover, this definition by Nicholas is germane in the South African HE context because it recognized the inherent racial, class and socio-economic categories that create barriers, particularly for the majority of students who are multi-lingual and come from disadvantaged backgrounds (Manjeya 2021). Against this backdrop, WC are spaces that mitigate these barriers by providing one on one academic support which is generally more accommodative for students. This is because WC's move away from the traditional large classroom (which can be intimidating) to one-on-one teaching space which encourages dialogue between students and consultants (Dison and Collett 2019; Archer 2017).

WCs in South Africa have faced a litany of challenges. Two challenges project themselves as constantly recurring in the literature. The first challenge is that WC's are externally funded and that initiates a series of unintended consequences (Archer 2010). One of the unintended consequences is that WCs are perceived as add-on or support staff to mainstream learning, which places WCs at the periphery of the university's main business (Disson and Collect 2019). In the

university space where hierarchies tend to flourish, the 'support services' label sidelines the staff of WC and the center's role as a whole (Makhanya and Qwabe 2021). Moreover, WCs are ostensibly perceived as exclusively offering remedial support to students (Archer 2010). From this devalued misinterpretation, WCs are seen as fix it shops that exist for the purpose of correcting grammatical errors (Sefalane Nkohla and Mthonjeni 2019).

The recent scholarship on the WC has made the case that the role of WC is not restricted to remedial support. The scholarship postulates that WCs play a multi-faceted role in supporting students, which entails assisting students who predominantly are not English First Language but are English Second Language (ESL) speakers to engage and understand the discourse within their discipline (Manjeya 2021; Archer 2019). Moreover, ESL students often struggle to read, understand, and write in English at an academic level which sparks emotions of alienation and inadequacy (Ocasio 2019) that frustrate students further. Thus, the role of WC is imperative because in the South African context ESL students at university constitute the majority of students in HE (Janks 2019).

2.3 The Writing Centre at MUT

The WC at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) belongs to the Teaching and Learning Development Centre (TLDC) (Qwabe and Makhanya 2021). The TLDC has four main goals which are outlined in the TLDC strategic plan as follows: goal one aims to enhance teaching and learning with technology; goal number two is the review of curriculum and transformation; goal number three entails the development of academics with teaching and learning pedagogies; and lastly goal four deals with student support (Teaching and learning strategy 2020). Under the umbrella of TLDC, the MUT WC outlines its own mission as "continuing to develop a strong academic and research writing culture at MUT" (Writing Centre Operational Plan 2019). The execution of this mission is foregrounded by the academic literacy model as the main guiding pedagogy. Academic literacies model approaches writing as a social practice that challenges dominant ideologies (Maringe and Osman 2016). Additionally, it is postulated that the academic literacies model validates diverse epistemologies and identities without sacrificing academic rigor (Lam 2023). The choice for this pedagogy for the WC at MUT is grounded in the approach being sensitive to diverse identities, particularly the identities of black disadvantaged students who struggle to transition into the university's Western dominant culture. The majority of students at MUT are black and come from disadvantaged backgrounds (MUT Strategic Plan 2019). Moreover, the approach departs from traditional support strategies that identify students as having deficits that need to be corrected so that they can assimilate into the university space (Trigos-Carrillo 2019).

In managing its booking and reports, the MUT WC uses the Writing Centre Online software (WC Online). Through the use of WC Online, students can book appointments on their phones without having to physically avail themselves at the WC. The online booking system enables the WC to play a significant role in achieving the first goal of the strategic plan which advocates for the use of technology to enhance learning. Additionally, the delivery of consultations is conducted via the WC's three main modalities and students have the leverage of selecting the modality most convenient for them. The first modality, namely face-to-face, is the most common one, where students come physically to the WC and engage with the WC assistant. The second modality is e-tutoring where the student sends their assignment to the WC and comments and suggestions are made on the document and it is sent back to the student. Lastly, the third modality is online consultation where the student engages the WC assistant on either MS Teams, WC Online or Zoom platform. Literature discussing support services has argued that the use of technology such as e-tutoring and online consultations increases access and inclusion into the WC space because students can access writing support without having to come physically (Dison and Collet 2019). However, it is important to note that MUT WC prudently blends the traditional physical mode of delivery and the nascent online modalities to ensure that no students are left behind.

2.4 Guiding Theories

The process of building inclusion is a tool for building a sense of belonging. Notably, social inclusion can be built by resisting the dominance of one culture over another in everyday life (Sharp *et al.* 2020). This definition is germane in HE where the Western culture tends to dominate and exclude other cultures. In Higher Education, inclusion is a broad topic constituting of a variety of paradigms. Therefore, there have been a variety of theoretical lenses that have been utilized to study the subject. Extensive literature argues that inclusion can be achieved by selecting inclusive pedagogies that are sensitive to diversity (Golbach *et al.* 2022; Stentiford and Koutsouris 2021). This assertion primarily makes the appeal that the choice of pedagogy must make a conscious shift from teaching in ways that affirm the Western knowledge paradigm and cultures as the only acceptable paradigm at university (Arday *et al.* 2021). From this perspective, the theory of inclusion that foregrounds this paper is outlined by Stentiford and Koutsouris (2021). These scholars argue that inclusion in HE is underpinned by the principles of social justice that promote diversity, fairness, and equity. In the South African context, where the legacy of exclusion still permeates HE, this approach of teaching with pedagogies that recognize diversity is important. Moreover, this approach is also used with the guiding pedagogy of academic literacies which is utilized by WC assistants and practitioners working in the MUT WC.

3. Methodology

A single case study approach was used to establish whether the WC at MUT provided an enabling environment for students. Gatekeepers' letters were used to grant access onto the research cite. The single case study method was selected because it is particularly useful for describing and diagnosing processes through observation of contextual influences (Peimani and Kamalipour 2021). Thus, for a study that endeavored to identify whether the process of WC consultations at MUT were creating an enabling space, the case study method was particularly suitable. For the research methodology the study used the mixed methods approach. However, the explanatory nature of the study required the paper to put more emphasis on the qualitative component. The mixed method approach combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches. The combination of these two approaches facilitates for a more comprehensive synthesis of evidence than using a single approach (Stern 2021). The quantitative component of the study looked at the figures and demographics of the students who had booked appointments with the WC. These were accessed from the online booking system that students use when booking an appointment at the WC. For the qualitative component, the study then conducted voluntary online surveys on a total of 76 students who had consulted the WC to elicit more in-depth responses from the students.
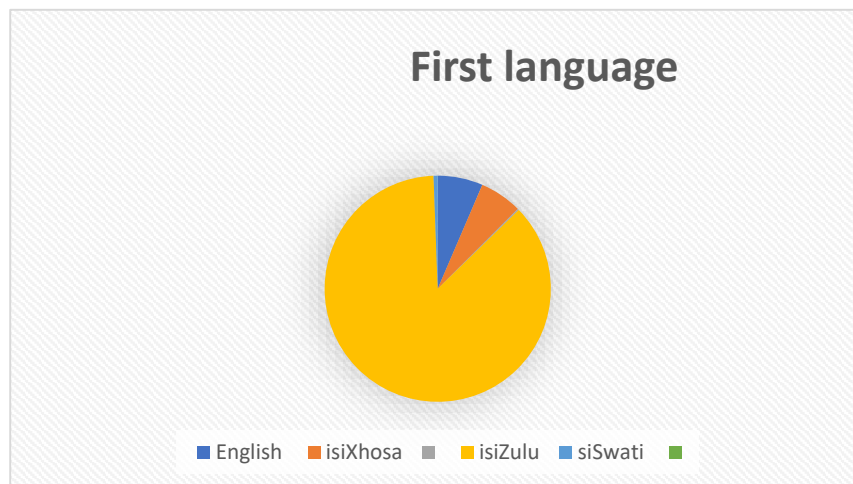
4. Findings and analysis

Figure 1. First Language Demographic breakdown

The language demographic breakdown of students who had consulted with the WC showed that an overwhelming majority of students are primarily ESL. This is significant because literature has outlined that the majority of students who struggle with writing at university are ESL (Janks 2019). Additionally, there is strong argument that language is more than simply a means of communication, but rather it is has its own epistemology underpinned by a different system of values (Siregar, 2021). Thus, one of the writing challenges that ESL students encounter is comprehension of assignments designed under the English framework of knowledge. In this regard having WC assistants who use pedagogies that embrace diversity contributes to reconcile the different systems of knowledge that the student has from their mother tongue, to the one used mostly at university. Consequently, the WC consultation creates a safe space for students to understand their assignment and write with comprehension at academic level. This is also buttressed by the positive feedback of students who filled out the Likert scale below:
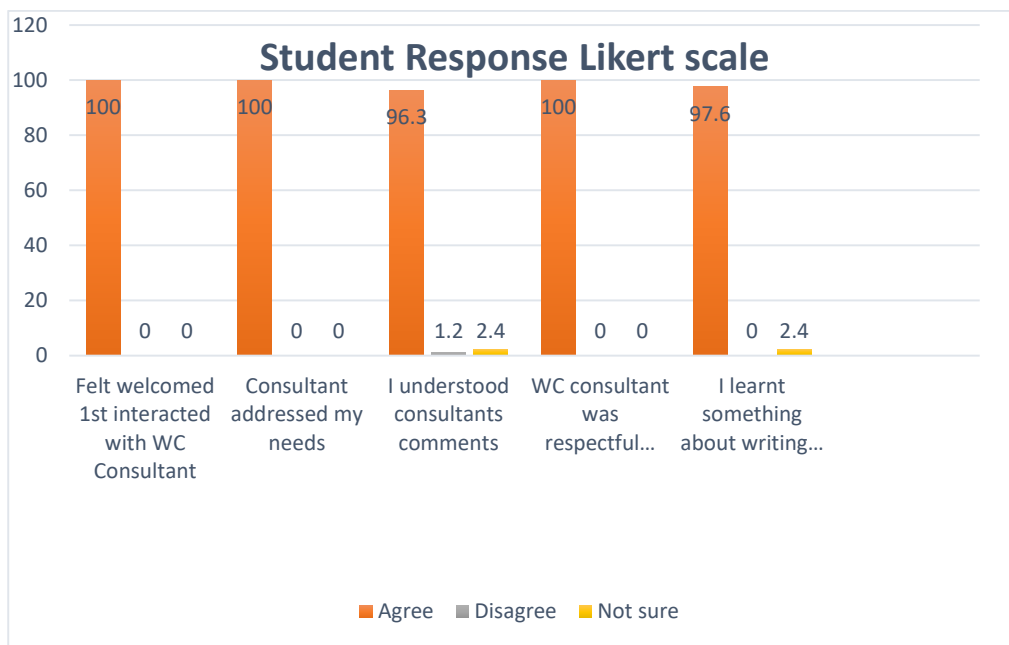

Figure 2. Likert Scale

A Likert scale provides a convenient instrument for measuring the relationship between different constructs (Jeb and Tay 2021). A three-point Likert scale was used to measure the perceptions of students after consulting with the WC on aspects relating to whether they perceived the space as receptive, to questions probing the impact of the consultation on their writing capabilities. Notably, the response of students was immensely positive. The total number of students registered at MUT

is about 14500 (MUT Institutional Audit 2022) and only 2423 students are registered for the WC. Additionally, most students who come to the WC are encouraged by their lectures or workshop that give them an idea of what to expect in the consultation. This justifies the high percentage of positive responses across the questions.

Table 1. Themes emerging from the qualitative study

Emerging Themes	Brief Discussion
Positive Feedback and Satisfaction	The overall theme of the transcript is positive feedback and satisfaction expressed by the students who visited the WC. They are pleased with the assistance they received and appreciate the helpfulness of the consultants.
Appreciation for Consultants	The students consistently express their gratitude towards the consultants at the WC. They mention the WC assistants' kindness, patience, and helpfulness in addressing their needs, which made their experience pleasant.
Welcoming and Respectful Environment	Another recurring trend is the students' acknowledgment of the welcoming and respectful atmosphere at the WC. They feel comfortable seeking help and appreciate the respectful treatment they receive.
Effectiveness of the Writing Centre	Students find the WCs' service to be beneficial and effective in improving their assignments and understanding various concepts related to writing.
Importance of Patience and Kindness	Many students specifically mention the importance of patience and kindness displayed by the consultants. These qualities made the students feel at ease and encouraged them to seek further help.

Impact of Consultants' Teaching	The consultants' teaching methods are highly valued, as they are credited with helping the students understand specific topics and improve their writing skills.
Recommendation to Others	Several students express their willingness to recommend the WC to others, showcasing their positive experience and belief in the WC's capabilities.
Request for Extended Time	One recurring request is for extended consultation time, indicating that some students feel they could benefit from more time with the consultants.
Acknowledgment of Professionalism	Students appreciate the consultants' professionalism and passion for their work, which contributed to the positive experiences.

The table summarises the main themes that emerged from the qualitative questions posed to students. Two main themes were identified by the researchers, and they were: theme 1, creation of a safe and enabling space for dialogue and theme 2, building students writing capabilities. From these two main themes various sub themes emerged and were listed on the table.

5. Discussion

The reflections of students who had consulted with the WC reflected that the WC created a welcoming space that encouraged academic dialogue through which students writing capabilities were improved. The notion of a welcoming space is key because the scholarship on disadvantaged students has postulated that the university space is a hostile experience. The position of the researchers is that through the use of inclusive pedagogies such as the academic literacies model, WC assistants were able to make students feel appreciated. This is consistent with the theory of creating inclusion through the choice of pedadogies outlined by Stentiford, and Koutsouris (2021). Therefore, the creation of welcoming spaces that changes the hostility associated with the university spaces is necessary.

5.1 Theme 1 creation of a safe and enabling space for dialogue

In addition to being trained in writing scholarship, WC assistants and practitioners at the MUT WC are constantly conscientised on social realities of South Africa. The writing assistance at the WC constitutes of students who came from similar backgrounds to the cohort of students at MUT. Thus, the WC assistants understand the lived experiences of disadvantaged students. Lastly the utilisation of the academic literacies model used by the assistants in the WC contributes to the overall creation of inclusivity. By not focusing on the students' deficits and viewing writing as a social practice that challenges dominant epistemologies, WC assistants are encouraged to be cognisant of other world views that students can identify with. Thus, the students expressed gratitude towards the assistants at the WC. They mentioned the assistants' kindness, patience, and helpfulness in addressing their needs, which made their experience pleasant. For instance, students responded by using positive words relating to the consultation

"The assistant was welcoming and very polite; she really helped me a lot".

"It was a great session; there was respect, kindness and understanding".

"The assistant that helped us was really kind and open. She addressed our every need and explained where we didn't understand at all. Overall, she really helped us a great deal."

The words expressed by students shows that they perceived the WC to be an enabling space because of the culture of inclusivity that has been created by the WC assistants. These findings are consistent with another study on WC conducted by Clarence (2018) that found that trained WC assistants had the capacity to create more participatory and inclusive spaces for learning. The findings are also consistent with the notion of WCs being spaces that are non-threatening and non-judgemental that underprepared non-traditional students desire (Rambiritch and Carstens 2021). Therefore, the creation of a non-threatening space where previously disadvantaged students can engage in learning at university level can be viewed as the first step towards building inclusion within the university space.

5.2 Theme 2 Building student writing capabilities

Once the correct environment for learning is created the practical component of building students writing capabilities must take place. This element came out as theme 2 which demonstrated that students agreed that there was an improvement in their writing capabilities after the consultation. Written assignments constitute an overwhelming proportion of university assessments, therefore, when students cannot write at university level they are effectively excluded from the university.

Having created the space for dialogue, WC assistants can use the training they attained to advise students on the writing component of their work. Relating to their writing capabilities, students expressed the following sentiments:

"Everything went smoothly. The assistant helped me so much with my assignment and she made me understand more what the assignment is about."

"The assistant made my work easy to understand and was well guided about how to do it, which was very helpful to me so that I could write my scientific report."

"The information was very helpful, and it will help in future".

The students' responses allude to how the WC assistant was able to firstly make them understand what was required in the assignment so that they can write in a way that is that provides an academic response to the assignment question. This largely adds to the argument posited by writers such as Archer that WCs are not limited to remedial work. Rather, WCs provide a comprehensive style of support that has an impact on a multitude of aspects. This type of holistic support assists in building a more inclusive space.

6. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that WCs play an important role in assisting students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds to integrate into the university space through using pedagogies that embrace diversity. However, the stigma that the WC experiences as result of being viewed as a remedial space and being externally funded limits the reach in terms of numbers of students it assists. Therefore, WCs should be incorporated into the university so that they can be more efficient in assisting students. This study was not without its limitations, mainly that most of the consultations with students visiting the MUT WC are on a voluntary basis, which could have contributed to the high rate of positive responses received from the participants. Recently, however, the MUT WC has started embarking on compulsory consultations with a punitive measure from the lecturers on students who do not show evidence of having consulted with the WC for their assignments. Compulsory because of the punitive measure there might be more students who are critical of the WC. However, at the time of writing this paper compulsory consultations had not yet been initiated.

Bibliography

1) Arday, J., Zoe Belluigi, D. and Thomas, D., 2021. Attempting to break the chain: reimaging inclusive pedagogy and decolonising the curriculum within the academy. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *53*(3), pp.298-313.

2) Archer, A., 2010. Challenges and potentials for writing centres in South African tertiary institutions. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *24*(4), pp.495-510.

3) Archer, A., 2017. Using multimodal pedagogies in writing centres to improve student writing. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus*, *53*, pp.1-12.

4) Boughey, C. and McKenna, S., 2021. *Understanding higher education: Alternative perspectives* (p. 172). African Minds.

5) Chigudu, S., 2020. Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford: a critical testimony. *Critical African Studies*, *12*(3), pp.302-312.

6) Chowdhury, R., 2021. From black pain to Rhodes must fall: A rejectionist perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *170*(2), pp.287-311.

7) Clarence, S., 2018. Towards inclusive, participatory peer tutor development in Higher Education. *Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning (CriSTaL)*, *6*(1), pp.58-74.

8) Dison, A. and Collett, K.S., 2019. Decentering and recentering the writing centre using online feedback: Towards a collaborative model of integrating academic literacies development. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus*, *2019*(57), pp.79-98.

9) Department of Higher Education., 2016. Policy framework for the realisation of social inclusion in the post -school education and training system

10) Gallo, M.A., 2020. Bantu education, and its living educational and socioeconomic legacy in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa.

11) Goldbach, A., Hauser, M., Schuppener, S., Leonhardt, N., van Ledden, H. and Bergelt, D., 2022. Social responsibility in the context of inclusive higher education development– experiences and insights from the perspective of participatory teaching. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, *23*(4), pp.799-814.

12) Khumalo, S.S., 2022. Critical analysis of Bantu Education Act of 1953 and implications on COVID-19 pandemic in black schools: A social justice perspective. *Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)*, *3*(2), pp.260-271.

13) Herbaut, E. and Geven, K., 2020. What works to reduce inequalities in higher education? A systematic review of the (quasi-) experimental literature on outreach and financial aid. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, *65*, p.100442.

14) Hillman, A.L. and Ursprung, H.W., 2016. Academic exclusion: Some experiences. *Public Choice*, *167*, pp.1-20.

15) Houston, G., 2022. Racial Privilege in Apartheid South Africa. In *Paradise Lost* (pp. 35-72). Brill.

16) laga Ramoupi, N.L., 2022. Racism in Higher Education: Privileges and Exclusions at Universities in South Africa. In *Paradise Lost* (pp. 123-145). Brill.

17) Janks, H., 2019. The decolonization of higher education in South Africa: Luke's writing as gift. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *49*(2), pp.230-241.

18) Jebb, A.T., Ng, V. and Tay, L., 2021. A review of key Likert scale development advances: 1995–2019. *Frontiers in psychology*, *12*, p.637547.

19) Lam, C., 2023. Expansive Framing for Student Belonging: Resituating Academic Literacies in Theories of Learning and Transfer. *Journal of the Student Personnel Association at Indiana University*, pp.13-24.

20) Lea, M.R. and Street, B.V., 2006. The" academic literacies" model: Theory and applications. *Theory into practice*, *45*(4), pp.368-377.

21) Lorenzetti, D.L., Shipton, L., Nowell, L., Jacobsen, M., Lorenzetti, L., Clancy, T. and Paolucci, E.O., 2019. A systematic review of graduate student peer mentorship in academia. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *27*(5), pp.549-576.

22) Makhanya, F., Qwabe, L. and Bryant, K. 2021. Characterising collaboration: Reflecting on a partnership between academic support staff and lecturers to help university students learn how to write for the discipline of chemistry. Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 18(7), 41-55. https://doi.org/ 10.53761/1.18.7.04

23) Mangosuthu University of Technology., 2020. Strategic plan 2020-2025. Umlazi Township, Mangosuthu University of Technology.

24) Manjeya, N.C., 2021. The role of a Writing Centre in a South African university of technology (UOT). *The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning*, *16*(2), pp.148-162.

25) Maphalala, M.C. and Adigun, O.T., 2021. Academics' Experience of Implementing E-Learning in a South African Higher Education Institution. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *10*(1), pp.1-13.

26) Maringe, F. and Osman, R., 2016. Transforming the post-school sector in South Africa: Limits of a skills-driven agenda. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *30*(5), pp.120-140.

27) Marshall, T., Keville, S., Cain, A. and Adler, J.R., 2022. Facilitating reflection: A review and synthesis of the factors enabling effective facilitation of reflective practice. *Reflective Practice*, *23*(4), pp.483-496.

28) Mavunga, G., 2019. # FeesMustFall protests in South Africa: A critical realist analysis of selected newspaper articles. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*, *7*(1), pp.81-99.

29) Motala, S., Sayed, Y. and de Kock, T., 2021. Epistemic decolonisation in reconstituting higher education pedagogy in South Africa: the student perspective. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *26*(7-8), pp.1002-1018.

30) Mpungose, C.B., 2020. Emergent transition from face-to-face to online learning in a South African University in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, *7*(1), pp.1-9.

31) Muna, N., Hoosen, T.G., Moxley, K. and Van Pletzen, E., 2019. Establishing a Health Sciences writing centre in the changing landscape of South African Higher Education. *Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning*, *7*(1), pp.19-41.

32) Mzangwa, S.T., 2019. The effects of higher education policy on transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Cogent Education*, *6*(1), p.1592737

33) Nichols, P., 2017. 'Hopeful'directions for writing centres in South Africa: From safe spaces to transitional sites of articulating practice. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus*, *53*(1), pp.182-194.

34) Ocasio, A.A., 2019. *The Pedagogy of Failing Forward and Emancipatory Rhetoric in Nonfiction Literature, Freshman Composition, and Writing Center Theory* (Doctoral dissertation, Saint Louis University).

35) Peimani, N. and Kamalipour, H., 2021. Online education and the COVID-19 outbreak: A case study of online teaching during lockdown. *Education Sciences*, *11*(2), p.72.

36) Rambiritch, A. and Carstens, A., 2021. Positive politeness in writing-centre consultations with an emphasis on praise. *Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Southern Africa*, *52*(2), pp.72-95.

37) Salmi, J. and D'Addio, A., 2021. Policies for achieving inclusion in higher education. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, *5*(1), pp.47-72.

38) Sefalane-Nkohla, P. and Mtonjeni, T., 2019. "We are not a 'fix-it shop'": The writing centre as a uniquely configured learning space. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus*, *57*(1), pp.1-23.

39) Settles, I.H., Jones, M.K., Buchanan, N.T. and Dotson, K., 2021. Epistemic exclusion: Scholar (ly) devaluation that marginalizes faculty of color. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *14*(4), p.493.

40) Sharp, J., Pollock, V. and Paddison, R., 2020. Just art for a just city: Public art and social inclusion in urban regeneration. In *Culture-Led Urban Regeneration* (pp. 156-178). Routledge.

41) Siregar, I., 2021. Epistemological Challenges Against Sociolinguistics. *International Journal of Linguistics Studies*, *1*(2), pp.37-42.

42) Stern, C., Lizarondo, L., Carrier, J., Godfrey, C., Rieger, K., Salmond, S., Apostolo, J., Kirkpatrick, P. and Loveday, H., 2021. Methodological guidance for the conduct of mixed methods systematic reviews. *JBI Evidence Implementation*, *19*(2), pp.120-129.

43) Stentiford, L. and Koutsouris, G., 2021. What are inclusive pedagogies in higher education? A systematic scoping review. *Studies in Higher Education*, *46*(11), pp.2245-226

44) Teaching and learning strategy., 2020. Umlazi Township, Mangosuthu University of Technology.

45) Trigos-Carrillo, L., 2019. A critical sociocultural perspective on academic literacies in latin america. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, *24*(1), pp.13-26.

46) Trudgett, M., Page, S. and Coates, S.K., 2022. Peak bodies: Indigenous representation in the Australian higher education sector. *Australian Journal of Education*, *66*(1), pp.40-56.

47) Vivian, B. and Fourie, R., 2016. Non-curricular postgraduate writing interventions at South African universities. *Journal for Language Teaching*, *50*(1), pp.145-165.