

AFRICENTRIC
CONFERENCE **2023**

"TRANSFORMATION THROUGH UBUNTU" AN AFRICENTRIC PERSPECTIVE



UBUNTU

Thursday, May 25th - Saturday, May 27th
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada

AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

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AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

About the Conference

The Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute (DBDLI) is a unique Non-for-Profit Africentric Institution in Canada engaging Black Communities and Africentric researchers to help develop resources and policies to inform inclusive transformative system changes. The Institute works directly with African Nova Scotian / Canadian organizations, communities, government partners, and educational institutions to identify, develop and implement educational and community capacity enhancement policies, programs and services. DBDLI in collaboration with St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Canada and the University of Venda, South Africa invites scholars, educators, researchers, students, community activists, and advocates for the 2nd Africentric Conference 2023 titled "Transformation through Ubuntu: An Africentric Perspective."

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need to transform our healthcare and other development systems through our understanding of the relational nature of mankind and the interconnectedness among people. As we move to a post-pandemic era, we contend that building these systems would require adopting Ubuntu mindset policies and practices to drive and create inclusive communities and workplaces. Ubuntu, an Africentric philosophy, which means "I am because we are" highlights interdependence and interconnectedness as values central to human existence. In line with the Ubuntu theme, the 2nd Africentric conference seeks to explore and critically examine the concepts of Ubuntu as they relate to Africentric perspectives on education, health, cultural restoration, and system transformation.

The conference aims to engage participants in discussions that center on Africentric knowledge, epistemologies, and ontologies to achieve system transformation that is inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive in the following sub-themes:

- Africentric education
- System transformation
- Africentric cultural restoration
- Africentric innovations, community engagement and advocacy
- Intersectionality and Africentricity
- Africentric evaluation, evidence, and social impact
- Other related themes

AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Welcome Messages

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, I would like to welcome all participants to the Delmore “Buddy” Daye Learning Institute’s TRANSFORMATION THROUGH UBUNTU: AN AFRICENTRIC PERSPECTIVE Conference. The educational philosophy of Ubuntu aims to foster individuals who can find meaning in their lives and contribute to the well-being of others to better society. Ubuntu, an African philosophy, promotes togetherness and collectivism. Like the work we promote within our education system through our Inclusive Education Policy, Ubuntu promotes working for the good of all, not solely the individual. I believe the work that you engage in during this gathering will help to shape our efforts to create a more positive learning environment for all students. I would also like to applaud your focus on transformational change through a collaboration between the Delmore “Buddy” Daye Learning Institute, St. Francis Xavier University, and University of Venda. This is an exciting model that not only demonstrates a partnership between the African Nova Scotian community and local educational institutions, but also with the African Diaspora. I applaud conference organizers and participants for helping us reframe our approach to education using a more holistic lens. I am pleased to add my best wishes for a successful and fruitful conference and my thanks to all organizers. The program is excellent, and the networking opportunities will indeed be outstanding. I look forward to our educational partners sharing the good news and exciting results of the conference in the weeks to come. Thank you again and best wishes for the coming days.

Becky Druhan



Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development



AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

THE TOWN OF
ANTIGONISH

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Céad Mile Fáilte! One hundred thousand welcomes!

On behalf of Antigonish Town and County Council, we would like to welcome you to Antigonish for the Africentric Conference 2023 being held on the beautiful campus of St. Francis Xavier University. It is an honour for our community to host a conference planned in coordination with the Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute and the University of Venda, South Africa.

Over the next few days, we know there will be many thoughtful discussions focused on the Ubuntu theme relating to Africentre education, inclusivity, community engagement, and more. Antigonish is proud to welcome all attendees, no matter if you are participating in person or virtually, for these important conversations. Planning a conference that spans continents is no easy feat. Thank you to the organizers and the various committee members for planning the 2nd Africentre Conference. We hope your time in Antigonish is met with friendly faces and memorable experiences.

Sincerely,

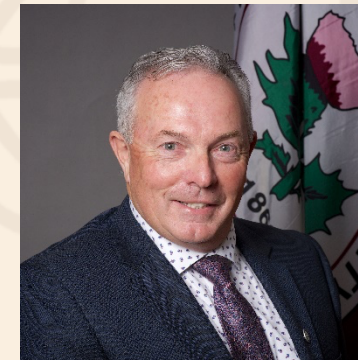
Mayor Laurie Boucher

Town of Antigonish



Warden Owen McCarro

Municipality of the County of Antigonish



AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Agenda

DAY 1: 25th May 2023, Thursday

Time Schedule	Location	Event	Activity				
8:00h - 9:00h	MH JFA	Breakfast & Registration	Meal served in Morrison Hall		Conference Kit Collection from Joyce Family Auditorium		
9:00h - 9:45h	JFA	Pre-Conference	Elders' Circle				
9:45h - 10:00h	JFA	Pre-Conference	Libation Ceremony				
10:00h - 10:15h	JFA	BREAK	Beverages and snacks				
10:15h - 11:00h	BA	Opening Ceremony	Welcome Addresses and Logistics				
11:00h - 12:00h	BA	Opening Keynote	Dr. Bagele Chilisa				
12:00h - 13:00h	MH	LUNCH	Select meals from a variety of stations				
13:00h - 14:00h	MUH	Paper Presentations & Workshops	Session 1 <i>(MUH 2030)</i>	Session 2 <i>(MUH 2032)</i>	Session 3 <i>(MUH 2034)</i>	<u>Workshop 1</u> "Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges: Ubuntu Philosophy in Epilepsy Stigma Reduction" <i>Facilitator: Dr. Lufono Makhado (MUH 3026)</i>	<u>Workshop 2</u> "Nurturing Strong African Fathers/ Father Figures" <i>Facilitator: Lillian (Missy) Searl (MUH 3030)</i>
14:00h - 14:10h	TRANSITION						
14:10h - 15:10h	MUH	Paper Presentations & Workshops	Session 4 <i>(MUH 2030)</i>	Session 5 <i>(MUH 2032)</i>	-		
15:10h - 15:15h	TRANSITION						
15:15h - 16:00h	BA	Special Session	Topic: "Decolonizing and Africentric School Leadership" Dr. Wendy Mackey & Ms. Karen Hudson St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Canada				
16:00h - 16:15h	NETWORKING BREAK		Make a new connection				
16:15h - 16:45h	BA	Featured Speaker	Dr. Késa Munroe-Anderson				
16:45h - 17:00h	BA	Closing Remarks	Next steps and reminders				

BA - Barrick Auditorium, JFA - Joyce Family Auditorium, MH – Morrison Hall, MUH - Mulroney Hall

AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

DAY 2: 26th May 2023, Friday

Time Schedule	Location	Event	Activity					
8:00h - 9:00h	JFA	Breakfast	Meal served in Morrison Hall					
9:00h - 10:00h	JFA	Bridging Keynote	Dr. Molefi Kete Asante					
10:00h - 10:15h	JFA	BREAK	Beverages and snacks will be served					
10:15h - 11:00h	BA	Panel Discussion	Topic: "Engage Scholarship: An Ubuntu Approach Dr. Rachel Lebeso University of Venda, South Africa				Moderator: Dr. Fumulani Mavis Mulaudzi	
11:00h - 11:30h	BA	Featured Speaker	Dr. Fumulani Mavis Mulaudzi					
11:30h - 12:00h	MUH	Concurrent Sessions	Open Session				Conference Tour Departure	
12:00h - 13:00h	JFA	Boxed Lunch & Elders' Circle	Collect a pre-packed lunch prepared from locally sourced produce and goods and listen to stories from an elder.					
13:00h - 14:00h	MUH	Paper Presentations & Workshops	Session 1 (MUH 2030)	Session 2 (MUH 2032)	Session 3 (MUH 2034)	Session 4 (MUH 3022)	Workshop 1 "Celebrating Our Black Heritage" Facilitator: Colleen Belle (ISANS) (MUH 3026)	Workshop 2 Navigating Intersectionality: Exploring the Experiences of the African Nova Scotian & Deaf Community Facilitators: Shirley Hodder and Tracey Gibson (MUH 3030)
14:00h - 14:10h	TRANSITION							
14:10h - 15:10h	MUH	Paper Presentations & Workshops	Session 5 (MUH 2030)	Session 6 (MUH 2032)	Session 7 (MUH 2034)	Session 8 (MUH 3022)		
15:10h - 17:00h	JFA	Film Screening & Closing Remarks	Presented by Eastlink Community TV with host Morgan Jessome, join us for three impactful films and conversations on "Black Films that Teach."					
18:30 Onwards	SCHW 414	BANQUET	Reception dinner					

BA - Barrick Auditorium, JFA - Joyce Family Auditorium, MH – Morrison Hall, MUH - Mulroney Hall, SCHW 414 - McKenna Centre

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DAY 3: 27th May 2023, Saturday

Time Schedule	Location	Event	Activity			
8:30h - 9:00h	JFA	Breakfast	Meal served in Morrison Hall			
9:00h - 10:00h	BA	Culminating Keynote	Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard			
10:00h - 10:15h	JFA	BREAK	Beverages and snacks will be served			
10:15h - 11:15h	BA	Panel Discussion	<i>Panelists</i> Dr. George Sefa Dei Dr. Christel N. Temple Dr. Philip S. S. Howard		Moderator: Dr. Wendy Mackey	
11:15h - 11:45h	BA	Featured Speaker	Dr. Alecia Blackwood			
11:45h - 12:00h	JFA	Book Signing	Join authors Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard and Dr. Alecia Blackwood for the signing of their books which will be on sale at the conference.			
12:00h - 13:00h	MH	LUNCH	Select from a variety of meal stations			
13:00h - 14:0h	MUH	Paper Presentations	Session 1 <i>(MUH 2030)</i>	Session 2 <i>(MUH 2032)</i>	Session 3 <i>(MUH 2034)</i>	Session 4 <i>(MUH 3022)</i>
14:00h - 14:10h	TRANSITION					
14:10h - 14:40h	BA	Special Session	"Ubuntu as an Africentric Tool for Transformation of Educational Systems" The Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute, Canada			
14:40h - 15:00h	BA	Closing Remarks	Vote of Thanks			

BA - Barrick Auditorium, JFA - Joyce Family Auditorium, MH – Morrison Hall, MUH - Mulroney Hall

AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Bagele Chilisa (She/Her)

Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Botswana

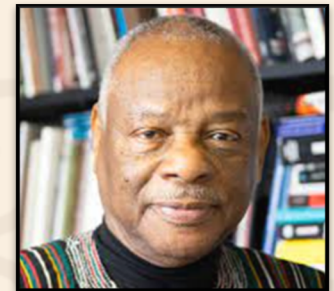
Chilisa is a well-known post-colonial scholar, researcher, author, and educator from Botswana. She has been teaching courses on research design, policy design, and measurement and evaluation for over 30 years and has supervised over 50 Masters and Ph.D. dissertations. She is particularly interested in community-based research and has written extensively on indigenous knowledge, including her book "Indigenous Research Methodologies." She has presented her work on indigenous research methodologies at conferences worldwide and has over 80 publications. In 2019, she was awarded Researcher of the Year and UB Research Team Leadership at the University Research Awards Ceremony and has also been awarded the USA National Institute of Health Research Award for capacity building on HIV/AIDS.



Dr. Molefi Kete Asante (He/Him)

Professor, Department of Africology, Temple University

Molefi Kete Asante is a highly accomplished scholar, educator, and activist in the field of African and African American studies. He is a Professor at Temple University and the President of the Molefi Kete Asante Institute for Afrocentric Studies. Asante has published over 100 books and more than 500 articles, establishing himself as one of the most quoted living African authors. He is widely recognized for his contributions to Afrocentricity, African history, language, and philosophy. Asante has received numerous awards and honors for his scholarship and activism and has consulted with heads of state in Africa. He is the founder of the theory of Afrocentricity and has been involved in various educational initiatives, including creating the first Ph.D. Program in African American Studies at Temple University. Asante's impact extends beyond academia, as he is a poet, novelist, dramatist, and painter. His work has been reviewed and cited in esteemed journals, and he has appeared on television and social media programs worldwide. Asante's writings are in multiple languages, and he has received honorary doctorates from several institutions.



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Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard (She/Her)

Professor Emeritus, School of Social Work, Dalhousie University

Dr. Bernard is a highly regarded social worker, educator, researcher, and community activist who advocates for social change and champions the rights of marginalized populations, particularly African Canadians, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. With extensive experience in mental health at the provincial and municipal levels, as well as a professor at Dalhousie University School of Social Work, she has made significant contributions to higher education, developing new courses and facilitating professional development for educators in anti-racism and social justice. Dr. Bernard has also played a key role in developing and delivering community-based programs focused on Africentricity and anti-oppression. As a founding member of the Association of Black Social Workers and the Africadian Empowerment Academy, she has actively addressed the needs of marginalized citizens, especially those of African descent. Her contributions have been recognized with numerous honors, including the Order of Nova Scotia and the Order of Canada. Appointed as an independent Senator representing Nova Scotia, Dr. Bernard continues to advocate for social justice in the Senate. She is a community engaged scholar who collaborates with community members and allies to lead change through research, publishing, and practice. Additionally, Dr. Bernard treasures her role as a wife, mother, step-mother, and grandmother.



AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Featured Speakers

Dr. Fumulani Mavis Mulaudzi (She/Her)

South African Research Chair in Ubuntu Community Model in Nursing, University of Pretoria

Dr. FM Mulaudzi is a highly accomplished nursing professional with extensive experience and a strong academic background. Currently holding the position of South African Research Chair in Ubuntu Community Model in Nursing, she serves as a Professor of Nursing at the University of Pretoria. Throughout her career, she has held various leadership roles, including Head of the Department of Nursing Science and Chair of the school of healthcare sciences. Prof Mulaudzi has made significant contributions to the field of nursing and has been involved in numerous organizations and committees, such as FUNDISA, the African Regulatory Committee, SIGMA Theta tau, ChiXi at large chapter, and the South African health science deans. She is a co-founder of the Academy of Science Nursing in South Africa and has also served as a member of the CSIR research committee and as Deputy Chair for Bamboo Bridge International. Her research interests encompass human rights and ethics, HIV/AIDS, indigenous knowledge systems, and reproductive health. Prof Mulaudzi is widely recognized for her advocacy of ubuntu philosophy in nursing ethics, and her work has been acknowledged both nationally and internationally, as demonstrated by her keynote speaker engagements at various conferences and her editorial role in the Curationis nursing journal. Furthermore, she was a runner-up for the Distinguished Women in Science award in 2011 for her outstanding contributions to indigenous knowledge system research.



Dr. Késa Munroe-Anderson (She/Her)

Associate Profession, School of Education, Acadia University

Dr. Munroe-Anderson is a community-oriented, social justice educator who uses an Africentric, anti-racist, and Black feminist/Womanist approach to research, teaching and leadership. Her research focuses on the lived experiences of people of African descent in education and society, particularly in relation to spirituality and its impact on student wellbeing and achievement. She champions decolonizing qualitative methods and methodologies that validate the knowledge production and worldviews of historically excluded populations. Her work aims to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in post-secondary, non-profit, community-based, and government organizations. Dr. Munroe-Anderson is married to Rev. Dr. Lennett Anderson, and they have three children.



AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Dr. Alecia Blackwood (She/Her)

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Longwood University

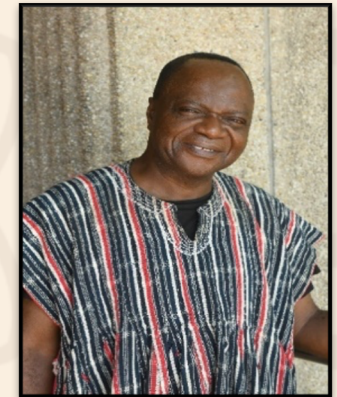
Alecia Blackwood is a highly experienced and passionate master teacher with over 20 years of experience in education. She holds a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Central Florida and has conducted extensive research on various topics, including ubuntu pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, early literacy, and more. As an International Speaker, she has shared her expertise with teachers around the world, including in Africa and the USA. Dr. Blackwood is renowned for her expertise in ubuntu pedagogy and serves as the Executive Director of Afrikan Kulcha School, Inc., a non-profit organization focused on cultural education. She also leads the Sankofa Youth Initiative, a program that takes students to Ethiopia and Ghana for STEAM projects. Additionally, she is a published author and actively contributes to the education field. Despite her busy schedule, Alecia enjoys going on adventures, cooking, and spending time with her family. She currently works as an education consultant and serves as an Assistant Professor at Longwood University.



Dr. George Sefa Dei (He/Him)

Professor, Social Justice Education, OISE, University of Toronto

George Sefa Dei, a Ghanaian-born scholar, is highly regarded as an educator, researcher, and writer in Canada. He is recognized for his expertise in race, anti-racism studies, Black and minority education, African Indigeneity, and anti-colonial thought. Currently serving as a Professor of Social Justice Education and the Director of the Centre for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), Dei has earned a distinguished reputation both nationally and internationally. He has received numerous accolades and honors, including being named a Carnegie African Diasporan Fellow and receiving the title of 'Professor Extraordinarius' from the University of South Africa. Dei is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and has been recognized for his significant contributions to educational research with the Whitworth Award for Educational Research. He has also been honored with various awards, such as the Paulo Freire Democratic Project's 'Social Justice Award' and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators (ONABSE). Additionally, he has been acknowledged as one of the 100 most influential Black Canadians by Silvertrust Media. In 2023, Dei was granted the prestigious President's Impact Award from the University of Toronto for his work in benefiting local communities on a global scale. Furthermore, he holds an Honorary Research Associateship in The Centre of Excellence in Disabilities at the University of South Africa. With an extensive body of work, Dei has authored 44 books and published over 80 refereed journal articles. Notably, he was also bestowed with a traditional chief title, Nana Adusei Sefa Tweneboah, in Ghana.



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Dr. Christel N. Temple (She/Her)

Professor, Africana Studies, University of Pittsburgh

Christel N. Temple is a distinguished professor of Africana Studies at the University of Pittsburgh and the newly appointed Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Black Studies. With a background in History and a Ph.D. in African American Studies, she specializes in Africana Cultural Memory Studies, Comparative Africana Literature, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and Afro-European Studies. Dr. Temple is an accomplished author, having written several award-winning books and numerous articles that explore topics such as Diaspora cultural theory, Africana literary history and criticism, and race and culture in the contemporary world. She has contributed to various scholarly journals and serves as the Series Editor for the Critical Africana Studies book series with Lexington Books. Previously, Dr. Temple held positions as the Chair of the Africana Studies Department and as the Executive Director of the Diopian Institute for Scholarly Advancement.



Dr. Philip S. S. Howard (He/Him)

Associate Professor, Department of Integrated Studies Education, McGill University

Dr. Philip S. S. Howard's scholarship focuses on Black Studies, anticolonial studies, and Critical Race Studies in education. His research explores the pedagogical processes within and beyond schools that perpetuate racial violence, antiblackness, and injustice, particularly in postracialist contexts. He examines how these processes are shaped by the nation state and its institutions. His work also examines strategies of survivance and resistance employed by Black and racialized communities, often outside the state and its institutions. His recent research projects include the study of contemporary blackface in Canada, school to university transitions for Black students, and Black people's agency in educational contexts in Toronto, Halifax, and Montreal. Alongside his scholarly achievements, Dr. Howard is recognized as an engaged and innovative educator with extensive experience in elementary, secondary, and tertiary education. He has received prestigious teaching awards, including McGill University's Carrie M. Derick Teaching Award for Graduate Supervision and Teaching in 2021 and the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools' Graduate Faculty Teaching Award in 2022.



AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Conference Workshops

Day 1

Workshop 1: "Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges: Ubuntu Philosophy in Epilepsy Stigma Reduction"

Facilitator: Dr. Lufuno Makhado

Description: Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that affects millions of people worldwide, yet it is still largely misunderstood and stigmatized. Stigma and discrimination can significantly impact the lives of people with epilepsy, leading to reduced access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in applying Ubuntu philosophy to promote empathy and inclusion within diverse communities. Ubuntu, a Bantu word that means "I am because we are," emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all people and encourages a collective approach to problem-solving.

This workshop will explore the application of Ubuntu philosophy in the context of epilepsy stigma reduction. Through a combination of presentations, interactive exercises, and group discussions, participants will have the opportunity to learn about the principles of Ubuntu philosophy and how they can be applied in practice. The workshop will also highlight examples of successful interventions that have utilized Ubuntu philosophy to promote inclusion and reduce stigma in epilepsy communities. Participants will leave the workshop with a better understanding of the challenges faced by people with epilepsy and practical strategies for promoting empathy, reducing stigma, and building stronger, more inclusive communities. The workshop is intended for healthcare professionals, researchers, advocates, and anyone interested in promoting social justice and equity for people with epilepsy.

Workshop 2: "Nurturing Strong African Fathers/ Father Figures: Culturally Specific Parenting Program"

Facilitator: Lillian (Missy) Searl

Description: Parenting plays a crucial role in supporting a child's emotional, physical, and educational development as well as the well-being of the family unit. However, there is a lack of culturally specific parenting programs that address the realities faced by Black/African descent families. To address this gap, the NSANSF parenting program was developed for African Nova Scotian/Black parents and caregivers. Grounded in research on African American children and parenting, the program acknowledges the unique experiences of African Nova Scotians. NSANSF provides an Africentric parenting education environment that reinforces cultural pride and integrates Africentric teachings, disrupting Eurocentric parenting programs that marginalize people of color.

In 2022, the program expanded to include a father/father figure component, recognizing the growing body of evidence supporting the importance of fatherhood engagement. NSANSF aims to engage African Nova Scotian/Black fathers, as their involvement contributes to children's behavior, social-emotional development, and academic outcomes. Moving forward, the Father Edition of NSANSF will actively engage with ANS communities, taking into account the cultural, racial, and historical factors that impact ANS/Black fathers. By building capacity, preserving culture in the curriculum, and celebrating family units, NSANSF seeks to be a part of all ANS communities.



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Day 2

Workshop 1: “Celebrating Our Black Heritage”

Facilitator: Colleen Belle

Description: Attending this workshop offers participants the opportunity to develop a profound understanding of the history and challenges faced by historic Black communities, an increased awareness of the specific obstacles encountered by Black immigrants, a chance to celebrate and take pride in their Black heritage, and a platform to connect with Black individuals from diverse backgrounds. The aim of the workshop is to strengthen the connection between Black immigrants and the African Nova Scotian communities in the province. Facilitated by individuals who have personal experiences within Black communities, the workshop is tailored specifically for Black audiences, creating an engaging and thoughtful setting.

The workshop's primary objective is to raise awareness about the history and challenges confronted by historic Black communities, as well as the specific difficulties faced by Black immigrants. Through open discussions and acknowledgement of these experiences, participants have the opportunity to celebrate and deepen their sense of pride in their Black heritage. Furthermore, the workshop aims to foster connections among individuals of African descent from diverse backgrounds. It provides a safe and accountable space for dialogue and exploration, allowing newcomers to understand their own experiences in the context of the lived history of African Nova Scotian communities. By recognizing the struggles and achievements of the ancestors who were forcibly settled in Nova Scotia, the workshop highlights their contributions and paves the way for current trailblazers of the African diaspora.

Workshop 2: Navigating Intersectionality: Exploring the Experiences of the African Nova Scotian & Deaf Community

Facilitators: Shirley Hodder and Tracey Gibson

Description: This workshop delves into the experiences and complexities of the African Nova Scotian (ANS) and Deaf communities, exploring the intersectionality of race, community, and cultural identity in relation to Deafness. Led by Tracey Gibson and Shirley Hodder, esteemed members of the ANS Deaf community from Gibson Woods, this transformative event serves as a platform for insightful discussions, immersive learning, and the mastery of Maritime Sign Language (MSL) and American Sign Language (ASL). By immersing ourselves in the cultural heritage and narratives of the Gibson family, we aim to shed light on the challenges and triumphs that arise from their multifaceted identities. The presenters will skillfully intertwine their personal experiences, offering an authentic and deeply personal account of their journey through societal systems. By sharing their narratives, participants will gain profound insights into the challenges and triumphs inherent in simultaneously belonging to the ANS and Deaf communities. Through these heartfelt stories, our workshop aims to nurture empathy, understanding, and heightened awareness of the specific issues faced by Black, Deaf individuals at the intersection of these diverse identities. Through dynamic and interactive activities, participants will have the opportunity to learn and practice essential MSL and ASL phrases, fostering a profound understanding of the shared experiences and cultural vibrancy within the Deaf and ANS communities. The presenters, drawing from their own experiences, will skillfully facilitate discussions that explore the intricate complexities encountered at the convergence of race, Deafness, and cultural identity. Together, we will examine the impact of systemic racism, magnifying the barriers experienced by ANS Deaf individuals and their families. Moreover, we will address the challenges associated with audism and limited access to resources, aiming to cultivate empathy and raise awareness among all participants.

AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Elders' Circle

The Elders' Circle holds immense significance within various Indigenous communities, including those of African descent. Composed of esteemed community members, the Elders' Circle possesses extensive knowledge and expertise in traditional practices, cultural values, and community history. This intergenerational space serves as a platform for Elders' to empower and share their knowledge and experiences with the younger generation, fostering a sense of cultural pride and understanding.

One notable initiative is the inclusion of Elders in the Africentric Conference, which acts as a bridge to address the intergenerational knowledge gap. By participating in this conference, attendees have the opportunity to learn from Elders about various aspects of community life, including ceremonies, language revitalization, healing practices, and land and resource management. The presence of Elders provides invaluable insight into the rich traditions and wisdom of African diasporic communities worldwide.

Over the past 2 years, an Elders Circle serves as a valuable resource for youth within the community, offering guidance and mentorship on a range of matters, such as education, career development, and personal growth. As an integral part of MSVU (Mount Saint Vincent University), it facilitates connections between students and Elders from the African Nova Scotian community, as well as Black students. Through these connections, the Elders' Circle contributes significantly to the preservation of cultural continuity and resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

Overall, the Elders' Circle plays a vital role in nurturing cultural heritage, fostering intergenerational learning, and promoting the overall well-being of the community. Their wisdom and guidance help shape the future leaders of African descent, ensuring the preservation and continuation of their rich cultural traditions for generations to come.

Conference Tour

AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE TOUR

SPONSORED BY: PRESIDENT'S ACTION COMMITTEE ON ANTI-RACISM (PACAR)

MAY 26TH, 2023
11:30AM TO 4:30PM



MEET & GREET
COMMUNITY
PRESENTATION

COMMUNITY
PRESENTATION
LINCOLNVILLE

COMMUNITY
PRESENTATION
SUNNYVILLE

COMMUNITIES

TRACADIE
LINCOLNVILLE
SUNNYVILLE

DETAILS

- Bus leaving StFX University 11:30AM
- Arriving at Tracadie Church Noon
- Bus leaving Tracadie Church 1:30PM
- Arriving at Lincolnville Community Hall 1:45PM
- Bus leaving Lincolnville Community Hall 2:45PM
- Arriving at Chedabucto Education Centre 3:15PM
- Bus leaving Chedabucto Education centre 3:45PM
- Arriving at Sunnyville church 4PM
- Bus leaving for StFX 4:30PM

"If you want to go quickly go alone. If you want to go far go together."

-AFRICAN PROVERB

DELMORE "BUDDY"
DAYE LEARNING
INSTITUTE

HISTORICAL AFRICAN NOVA
SCOTIAN COMMUNITIES

SAINT FRANCIS
XAVIER UNIVERSITY



AFRICENTRIC CONFERENCE 2023

Paper Presentation Schedule

DAY 1

DATE	ROOM	SESSION	TIME	PAPERS
DAY 1 25th May, Thursday	MUH 2030	Session 1	13:00h - 13:20h	Experiences of High School Learners Regarding Ubuntu Boot Camp Education and Training in the selected Municipality of Limpopo Province, South Africa <i>R.T. Lebese, S.E. Tshivhase, N.S. Mashau, L. Makhado and F.M. Mulaudzi</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	“It takes a village to raise a child”: Views of Secondary School learners regarding Ubuntu philosophy and its application in South Africa <i>N.S. Mashau, L. Makhado, R.T. Lebese, S.E. Tshivhase, M.T. Mulaudzi, K. Netshisaulu and F.M. Mulaudzi</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	The African Pedagogue through an Ubuntu lens: fostering academic excellence for Black students in South African Higher Education <i>Mashudu E. Muthivhi</i>
DAY 1 25th May, Thursday	MUH 2030	Session 4	14:10h - 14:30h	Cultural Responsiveness in Science Education: A Case for Learning from the Jamaican National Standards Curriculum for Nova Scotian Students of African Descent <i>Eddia Solas</i>
			14:30h - 14:50h	Ubuntu, the Africentric Way for Leading and Managing People and Organizations <i>Raavee Kadam and George Frempong</i>
			14:50h - 15:10h	Ubuntu-Based Conscientized Praxis for Agentic Learning <i>Selvi Roy</i>
DAY 1 25th May, Thursday	MUH 2032	Session 2	13:00h - 13:20h	Health Transformation Through Ubuntu <i>Fantanesh Attomsa</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	East Preston Co Design Meal Class Project: Learnings and Opportunities <i>Mueni Mutinda and Asif Imran Khan</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	Africentric Play-Based Learning <i>Jones Awe and Kudzi Marufu</i>

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DAY 1 25th May, Thursday	MUH 2032	Session 5	14:10h - 14:30h The Strength of Mother-Centredness: Understanding Africentric Feminist Motherhood through Ousmane Sembène's Faat Kiné and Mooladé <i>Maki Motapanyane</i>
			14:30h - 14:50h Feminism in Africa: in the Lens of Igbo Proverbs and Culture <i>Oge Chukwudozie</i>
			14:50h - 15:10h From a minority racial to a non-racial paradise – A myth or reality <i>Gregory Houston, Modimowabarwa Kanyane and Yul Derek Davids</i>
DAY 1 25th May, Thursday	2034	Session 3	13:00h - 13:20h Afrocentric Approaches to Peace <i>Késa Munroe-Anderson, Buhle Dlamini, Randy Headley and Catherine Baillie Abidi</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h Inclusive Transformation through Ubuntu: An Africentric Collaboration to Promote Economic Prosperity and Well-being <i>George Frempong, Nyasha P. Mandeya, Heidi Weigand and David Kerr</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h Belonging As a Healthcare Provider of African Descent <i>Nathalee P. Ewers, Rafeeda Khashmelmous and Barbara-Ann Hamilton-Hinch</i>

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DAY 2

DATE	ROOM	SESSION	TIME	PAPERS
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 2030	Session 1	13:00h - 13:20h	It takes a village: Exploring Parental Early Literacy Support Using Africentric Approaches Among Nova Scotians of African descent <i>Sylvia Chanda Kalindi, Susan Brigham and George Frempong</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	The Africentric Recognition of Prior Learning Project <i>Rajeane Willis</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	The United Nations People of African Descent Decade and the recommendation for Afrocentric Education in Canada: An exploration of an Afrocentricity paradigm for social work education and practice <i>Valerie Ouedraogo</i>
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 2030	Session 5	14:10h - 14:30h	Culturally Responsive Education: Building African centred perspectives in STEM Education <i>Awoyiga, Afolake</i>
			14:30h - 14:50h	Creating a secure and collaborative digital learning environment: A user-centred approach in the early stages of designing an Africentric e-Learning system <i>Gerry Chan, Olatunji Mumini Omisore, Bilikis Banire, Oladapo Oyeboode, George Frempong, Kay-Ann Scott, Jones Awe, Raavee Kadam and Rita Orji</i>
			14:50h - 15:10h	A Panoramic view of Sociocultural Sensitivity in Emerging Digital Technologies: Implications for the Development of an Africentric E-Learning System <i>Gerry Chan, Bilikis Banire, Olatunji Mumini Omisore, Oladapo Oyeboode, George Frempong, and Rita Orji</i>
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 2032	Session 2	13:00h - 13:20h	Reimagining Community Engagement the Ubuntu Way <i>Mapfumo Chidzonga</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	Inclusion the Natural Way <i>Barry Braun</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	Discovering Your Superpower - How discovering your gift at an early age can help break the school-to-prison pipeline for minority children <i>Darlene Evans</i>

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DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 2032	Session 6	14:10h - 14:30h An appraisal of the literature of customary marriages and epistemological access in South African Higher Education Institutions viewed through the lens of Margaret Archer’s sociological concepts of structure, culture and agency <i>Mpho Bapela</i>
			14:30h - 14:50h Years Spent in Canada Moderates Relationship between Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptoms and Cognitive and Emotional Processes <i>Noémie Bergeron-Germain, Nicholas Hickens, Christine Lackner</i>
			14:50h - 15:10h Enhancing community empowerment and transformation through African cultural wealth: The case of Ubuntu inspired consciousness <i>J.R. Phori, M.P. Mokone and N.D. Mokone</i>
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 2034	Session 3	13:00h - 13:20h Violence in South African Schools: Can the African philosophy of Ubuntu be used as a mechanism or tool for its diminution or eradication? <i>Isabel Moodley</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h Harnessing Ubuntu Principles for Transformative Student Unrest Management in Nigerian Higher Institutions <i>Oluwasola Sasere, Sekitla Daniel Makhasane</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h Rethinking the approach of addressing peer bullying in South African Schools: a quest for the application of ubuntu leadership <i>S.D. Makhasane and A.A. Onaolapo</i>
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 2034	Session 7	14:10h - 14:30h The Impact of the Pafuri Triangle Agreement on Sustainable Livelihoods of the Makuleke Community, Limpopo Province, South Africa <i>E.B. Bvuma</i>
			14:30h - 14:50h The absence of Ubuntu in South Africa’s Socio-Economic Discourse: Imagining Ubuntu in economic transformation policy text <i>Mofihli Teleki</i>
			14:50h - 15:10h Advancing Ubuntu to Mitigate Human Security Risk Factors on African International Mobile Students in South African Higher Education Institutions <i>Masila J. Masipa and Nontlanhla Ntakana</i>
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 3022	Session 4	13:00h - 13:20h Seasonal Availability and Consumption of Indigenous Foods in the rural area of Limpopo Province <i>L.F. Mushaphi, G.M. Mudau, N.I. Mabasa and S.E. Tshidzumba</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h Do midwives integrate Ubuntu philosophy when providing care during labour in Capricorn district South Africa: An observational study <i>Sonto Maputle</i>

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			13:40h -	Perceived needs of family members caring for MHCUs in Vhembe District Limpopo Province
			14:00h	<i>T.E. Mbedzi, A.E. an der Wath, M.M. Moagi</i>
DAY 2 26th May, Friday	MUH 3022	Session 8	14:10h -	Demystifying the call: Ancestral healers
			14:30h	<i>Zintle Mbili and Connie Israel</i>
			14:30h -	Cutting Edges: An Afrocentric Restoration and Restitution of Cultural Practices through Ubuntu
			14:50h	<i>Dalifa Ngobese</i>

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DAY 3

DATE	ROOM	SESSION	TIME	PAPERS
DAY 3 27th May, Saturday	MUH 2030	Session 1	13:00h - 13:20h	Exploring Pedagogical Practices that Best Support the Academic Success of Black Students in Rural Nova Scotia <i>Shawna-Kay Lawrence</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	Ubuntu as a Guiding Principle of Change for Student Support in Higher Education <i>Josslyn Gabriel</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	EDI in Higher Education - Applying an Intersectionality Framework using a Data-Driven Approach <i>Raavee Kadam, George Frempong, Joyline Makani and Pawan Lingras</i>
DAY 3 27th May, Saturday	MUH 2032	Session 2	13:00h - 13:20h	Growing from the roots: Building an Africentric Bachelor of Social Work Cohort <i>Grant Winnie, Thomas Bernard Wanda, Symonds Bria and Brown Marion</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	Social impact, and evaluative bricolage of the Afri-scholarship of community engagement in higher education <i>Vhonani Netshandama</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	Efficacy of endogenous parenting practices in contemporary under-resourced communities: A nexus of IKS and Social Work perspective <i>Mukushi Adam. T., Makhubele Jabulani. C. and Mabvurira Vincent</i>
DAY 3 27th May, Saturday	MUH 2034	Session 3	13:00h - 13:20h	Investigation of the effects of Alcohol abuse on teenage mothers' health in Mavambe Village in Collins Chabane Municipality in Vhembe District, Limpopo province <i>Thizwilondi Josephine Mudau</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	Integration of Ubuntu philosophy in maternity care as perceived by pregnant women, in Limpopo province, South Africa <i>S.A. Mulondo and M.S. Maputle</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	Within & Among: Healing Systemic Trauma <i>Monique Barling-Maxwell</i>
DAY 3 27th May, Saturday	MUH 3022	Session 4	13:00h - 13:20h	A Conceptual Framework to Enhance Education on life skills related to epilepsy in Primary schools <i>Thendo Gertie Makhado, Rachel Tsakani Lebese and Mariah Sonto Maputle</i>
			13:20h - 13:40h	Support needs of general nurses working in psychiatric wards in Limpopo Province, South Africa <i>M.E. Rangwaneni</i>
			13:40h - 14:00h	Myths and misconceptions about food restriction during pregnancy amongst elderly women in rural villages in Limpopo Province, South Africa <i>Harvey Sekwaleng Malapane, Mukhethwa Khorommbi, Anzani Mugware, and Tshifhiwa Cytheia Mandiwana</i>

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Abstracts

Title: Investigation of the effects of Alcohol abuse on teenage mothers' health in Mavambe Village in Collins Chabane Municipality in Vhembe District, Limpopo province

Author: Mudau Thizwilondi Josephine; University of Venda, South Africa

Alcohol abuse amongst teenage mothers is a problem worldwide and locally, affecting lives immensely, and bringing lasting negative effects. This assumption is not unique in Mavambe area in Limpopo province of South Africa, and no previous research has been done on this subject in the area. Thus, this study is necessitated, which aims to assess the effects of alcohol abuse on teenage mothers' health in Mavambe village, Vhembe district of Limpopo province. A qualitative approach using exploratory research design will be used in this study. Purposive sampling was used to attain a participant that will be used. A total sample of 10 teenage mothers aged 16-19 years was selected in this study. Data will be collected using One-to-one unstructured interviews, and thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data.

Title: Experiences of High School Learners Regarding Ubuntu Boot Camp Education and Training in the selected Municipality of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Authors: R.T. Lebese, S.E. Tshivhase, N.S. Mashau, L. Makhado, F.M. Mulaudzi; University of Venda, South Africa

Ubuntu is an ancient concept and a way of life among most African cultures. It describes the fundamental principles of living for African communities and is rooted in the values of reciprocal sharing. Ubuntu encompasses the whole community in contrast to the western ideology of individualism. Hence the need to sustain and transmit these values from one generation to the next. The study focused on exploring the experiences of high school learners regarding Ubuntu education and training in South Africa. The study was conducted in Sikhunyani and Machema high schools in the Greater Giyani Municipality of the Limpopo Province. A qualitative research approach and an exploratory, descriptive design were applied. A purposive sampling method was used to identify fifteen learners from Machema and Sikhunyane high schools for the Boot camp. Focus group discussions were conducted as a data collection method among the grade 10 and 11 learners. Trustworthiness and ethical consideration were ensured. The findings from the study revealed that learners shared different experiences during the boot camp. One of the experiences shared by the learners is the knowledge gained on applying the concept of the theology of the body to Ubuntu values. Internalization of Ubuntu values forms an essential landmark in the individual's life, significantly young people growing up within African communities rooted in African culture. This study's findings will help educate young people about Ubuntu's philosophies and encourage them to disseminate information regarding Ubuntu within their respective schools and communities.

Title: Seasonal Availability and Consumption of Indigenous Foods in the rural area of Limpopo Province

Authors: L.F. Mushaphi, G.M. Mudau, N.I. Mabasa, S.E. Tshidzumba; University of Venda, South Africa

Indigenous foods are essential to the diet and culture of rural communities in South Africa. However, various factors, including seasonality, influence their availability and consumption. This study aimed to investigate the seasonal availability and consumption of indigenous foods in the rural area of Limpopo Province, South Africa. A cross-sectional study was conducted in four villages. Data was collected through structured interviews with 214 randomly selected households. The target population was females aged 18 years and above responsible for meal preparation. All participants signed a consent form after obtaining Ethical clearance. The results showed that the consumption and availability of indigenous foods varied by

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season. Wild fruits, vegetables, and grains were the most consumed and available indigenous foods during the rainy season, while legumes and tubers were more available and consumed during the dry and winter seasons. All the participants consumed indigenous foods. Participants consume indigenous foods such as vegetables, fruit, edible insects, traditional mixed dishes, and beverages. These findings highlight the importance of understanding indigenous foods' seasonal availability and consumption patterns in developing strategies to promote their consumption and sustainable food system.

Title: The Impact of the Pafuri Triangle Agreement on Sustainable Livelihoods of the Makuleke Community, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Author: E.B. Bvuma; University of Venda, South Africa

In 1998, thanks to the Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, the Makuleke community won back The Pafuri Triangle after protracted and complex negotiations with the South African National Parks (SANParks) in the South African Land Claims Court. A globally celebrated agreement called the Pafuri Triangle agreement was signed with SANParks whereby the community and SANParks would co-manage the land and thereby derive economic benefits from it, instead of returning to resettle there. It is 19 years (2020) now since the Makuleke community entered a co-management venture with the SANParks. This study explored the impact of the Pafuri Triangle agreement on sustainable livelihoods of the Makuleke community. The study is qualitative in nature. It sought to find out how the Makuleke people have been impacted upon by the implementation of the co-management agreement. Data was collected using face to face in-depth interviews. The study used purposively sampled Makuleke households as well as various implementing officials. The study was primarily guided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) framework to development, as advocated by the Department for International Development (DFID). SLA is an offshoot of the Human Development Theory. SLA seeks to enhance progress in poverty elimination through understanding people's strengths, vulnerability, and livelihood strategies. The study revealed that the impact of the implementation of the Makuleke co-management agreement was below expectations due to a plethora of challenges.

Title: From a minority racial to a non-racial paradise – A myth or reality

Authors: Gregory Houston, Modimowabarwa Kanyane, Yul Derek Davids; Human Sciences Research Council, University of Venda, South Africa

Apartheid presented to the world, a model for social organisation in which the different South African race groups – whites, black Africans, Indians and so-called 'coloureds' – would exercise their political rights in separate institutions and geographic spaces, experience social life separately in racially-defined spaces, be educated in separate institutions, engage in certain economic activities in racially-defined areas, etc. The apartheid racial project was a model that succeeded in the establishment of a paradise for one race group with white privileges in a society with several race groups. As such, from 1948, the white minority racial paradise prevailed as a reality at the expense of the black majority who suffered extreme exploitation and deprivation for over four decades. The anti-apartheid struggle, however, envisaged a model of a post-apartheid society in complete contrast with apartheid, one that promised paradise in a non-racial society. Regrettably, after nearly three decades of democracy, that non-racial paradise with all its privileges such as economic freedom, equal education and quality health among others has not yet been achieved. Consequently, it is necessary to pose the contentious research question of whether achieving a non-racial society in South Africa is still possible. This article is based on key issues raised at the Dialogue on Race and Racism and concluded that non-racial paradise is possible but recognises that it requires time and effort to reach that paradise with a clear conscience and decolonised mindset underpinned by the ubuntu philosophy – a sense of being humane, caring for one another and social cohesion as well as economic emancipation.

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Title: Belonging as a Healthcare Provider of African Descent

Authors: Nathalee P. Ewers, Rafeeda Khashmelmous and Barbara-Ann Hamilton-Hinch; Dalhousie University, Canada

The purpose of this study was to investigate barriers and precipitants to increasing enrolment and success of people of African descent in health professions. We conducted semi-structured interviews exploring participants' experiences, both encouraging and discouraging, in their pursuit of a health profession as a person of African descent. We thematically analyzed transcribed interviews using constructivist grounded theory. Our study population was 23 people who self-identified as being of African descent who resided or grew up in Nova Scotia, Canada; who were working in or pursuing a health profession; and who had participated in culturally-specific mentorship programming. Thematic coding revealed 4 major themes. The theme of "stand on my shoulders" spoke to the importance of mentorship within the Black community. "Growing through pain" spoke to resilience amidst race-related challenges. "Never the student; ever the teacher" showed the repeated need to educate on issues of race or diversity. The final theme, "change," highlighted next steps, including the need for improvement in curricula, for development of Black faculty and for initiatives that offer support. We found that mentorship, particularly within the community, was instrumental to promoting feelings of belonging. However, participants described the need for resilience in the face of discrimination during training and in practice in health care professions. Rather than focusing on their education, many had to educate those around them. Increased representation, support programs and updated curricula are needed to promote change. Our findings have the potential to contribute to a deeper understanding of the needs of individuals of African descent in/pursuing health professions, and ultimately guide curricula and training by implementing data-driven interventions to ameliorate these experiences.

Title: Integration of Ubuntu philosophy in maternity care as perceived by pregnant women, in Limpopo province, South Africa

Authors: S.A. Mulondo, M.S. Maputle; University of Venda, South Africa

In South Africa, maternity care services are rendered freely by competent midwives at Primary health care facilities, district hospitals and tertiary hospitals for best maternal and neonatal health outcome. Midwives should embrace Ubuntu philosophy in maternity services to promote utilization of antenatal care, labor, and postpartum care. Pregnant women expect to be treated with respect, love, dignity, and mutual caring. The aim of the study is to explore and describe how pregnant women perceived experiences of ubuntu towards maternity services. A qualitative, exploratory descriptive design was used. The study was conducted in the six community health care centers that were purposively selected in Limpopo province. Purposive and convenient sampling method were used to select participants. Data were generated from thirty pregnant women using an individual interviews. Trustworthiness and ethical standards were considered. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed lack of integration of ubuntu philosophy in maternity care as manifested by verbal abuse, poor communication and sociocultural discrimination leading to late presentation at antenatal care services and use of traditional remedies to facilitate labor. Midwives are encouraged to integrate and practice the philosophy and values of ubuntu in maternity services to motivate pregnant women to utilize maternity services effectively and efficiently for best pregnancy outcome. Midwifery curriculum should be reviewed to integrate the values of ubuntu philosophy for student midwives to apply knowledge and skills during midwifery clinical learning.

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Title: Health Transformation Through Ubuntu: Access to high quality health care and education is critical in ensuring happy, healthy communities.

Author: Fantanesh Attomsa; Blue Nile Massage and Wellness, Canada

Studies have shown that marginalized communities, particularly Black communities, have been historically and intentionally excluded from accessing both life-saving and basic care. Without having these needs met, these communities have shown increased incidences of preventable, manageable diseases, including high pressure, heart disease, obesity, poor mental health, and poor physical health -all while contributing to the systemic cycles of poor socio-economic health. Our current healthcare crisis has put a significant strain on our provincial healthcare system. A shortage of doctors, long wait times to be seen by specialists, and even the recent deaths of patients in our local ER waiting rooms, have made most Black community members fearful to seek help to care for their health. Additionally, the distrust between Black communities and the healthcare system due to continuous discrimination leaves our already marginalized groups feeling even more excluded from accessing care. A recent article from the Commonwealth Fund highlights how black people are less likely to receive proper pain management while in care, are more likely to be labeled as non-compliant, and how Black women were 4 to 5 times more likely to die during childbirth than white women. Further feedback from local community members further revealed distrust in our healthcare professionals and systems, experiences of discrimination, distrust in prescriptions and medications, feelings of hopelessness due to extensively long healthcare wait times, misunderstandings of homecare instructions, as well as little to no access to services and surrounding prevention and maintenance of health. The findings pointed to the need for representation from Black healthcare professionals to deliver culturally competent, simple, and practical self-care education, to support preventative health and encourage the maintenance of good health. It also pointed to the importance of access to services and education within their communities that are culturally appropriate and represent the wants and needs of black persons. The goal of Blue Nile Massage & Wellness' 'Healthy & Wealthy' Community Wellness Program is to make wellness more accessible to our Black communities through increasing their access to high quality health care and education. The program provides Afrocentric health and wellness education to our communities through a mix of visual and hands-on learning. The program aims to elevate the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional health of our Black communities through culturally competent health education by going back to our historical and traditional practices; including how to manage common physical ailments at home, exposure to different holistic health practices, warning signs for serious conditions, community and social health, mental health care practices and more. Additionally, the program exposes our communities to local black healthcare professionals while making healthcare resources and services more accessible. A common saying in our African Nova Scotian Communities is "For Us, By Us", and that is exactly what this program is intended for. The goal is to empower our communities to take control of their health by offering access to high quality, Afrocentric care and education, and truly allowing for global transformation of health through Ubuntu.

Title: Exploring Pedagogical Practices that Best Support the Academic Success of Black Students in Rural Nova Scotia

Author: Shawna-Kay Lawrence; Chignecto-Central Regional Centre for Education, Canada

As a Black educator whose time in school was spent with Black teachers and students in Jamaica, I understand that skin colour is not an indicator of intelligence and academic abilities. My experiences living and teaching in rural Nova Scotia have opened my eyes to the different realities that Black students face. Education in Nova Scotia for Black students has strived to reflect cultural equity and educational reform that reflects their experiences, beliefs and values. However, barriers in education have hindered the success of Black students in Nova Scotia. The purpose of my study is to explore pedagogical practices that best support the academic success of Black students in rural Nova Scotia. My primary research question is: What pedagogical practices would be successful for Black students living in rural Nova Scotia? The literature in my study explores the



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influence of race, culture and cultural identity on students' learning. I continue with the history of education in Jamaican schools, the history of education for Black students in Nova Scotia and their perspective on education. To conclude, I look at enhancing the success of Black students through critical pedagogy and culturally relevant pedagogy. Critical theory is the framework for my qualitative study as I explore pedagogical practices that best support the academic success of Black students. Through critical qualitative inquiry, I hope to learn more about the experiences of Black students and hear their perspectives to critique prevailing issues in education. Using different data collection methods will help me ensure that the research findings are robust, rich, comprehensive, and well-developed. A critical analysis will allow me to compare the findings of my study with the existing literature to determine practices that best support the needs of the Black students at the particular high school in rural Nova Scotia.

Title: An appraisal of the literature of customary marriages and epistemological access in South African Higher Education Institutions viewed through the lens of Margaret Archer's sociological concepts of structure, culture and agency

Author: Mpho Bapela; University of Mpumalanga, South Africa

Before the periods of colonialism, apartheid and democracy, customary marriages were regulated by customs and practices under living customary law. The introduction of official customary law disturbed these customs and practices. Thus, changed how customary marriages are known and understood by people of South Africa who subscribe to living customary law. The existence of official customary law impacted on the literature of customary marriages that is disseminated by the South African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). These institutions disseminate customary marriages literature that is centred on official customary law. This led to the peripheralisation, subjugation and marginalisation of the literature of customary marriages as practiced by most South African people (living customary law). Unavoidably, this raises a concern in HEIs pertaining to the epistemological access to the literature of customary marriages, particularly, the one that is centred on living customary law. This calls for a need to appraise the literature of customary marriages and epistemological access in South African HEIs. Therefore, this paper shall use Margaret Archer's sociological concepts of structure, culture, and agency for the much-needed appraisal. This paper shall highlight the structural and cultural conditioning, and the role that HEIs agents can play in ensuring epistemological access to the literature of customary marriages that is centred on living customary law.

Title: Do midwives integrate UBUNTU philosophy when providing care during labor in Capricorn district South Africa: An observational study

Author: Sonto Maputle; University of Venda, South Africa

A study of women's experiences of childbirth and of attending midwives during childbirth was undertaken in a tertiary hospital, in the Capricorn district of Limpopo Province. The purpose of the study was to observe how mothers perceive the care received during childbirth and how the midwives integrate ubuntu philosophy when providing care during labour. A qualitative, participant observation design was used. Twenty-four mothers and 12 midwives were purposively sampled and observed during labour. The criteria for sampling was the mother must be in active labour through delivery. The midwives must be monitoring woman during labour. Data collection methods included participant observation, visual analogue scale (VAS), unstructured conversations and field notes. Observations were made from the beginning of active labour (3cm dilatation) until the end of the third stage of labour. Data analysis was done quantitatively and presented by frequency distribution. Limited Ubuntu principles were integrated during the provision of midwifery care. This was observed through communication, interactions, and activities; Informational support, limited as only 4% attended childbirth classes. Emotional support, 0% encouraged or allowed the partners' presence or integration of cultural preferences and only 4% showed respect to mothers. Regarding physical comforting measures when mothers are responding to pain, the use of Visual analog scale (VAS of 100 mml tool) to mother and midwife at 3cm, 4-7cm and 8-10cm. Mothers plotted VAS of 6-9 throughout labour, while midwives 2-4, but all

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plotted 9.5 at the end of labour. Supportive care activities during labour included provision of physical care (25%), and elimination needs (100%). There are limited integration of Ubuntu principles and cultural practices when providing midwifery care. To deliver efficient and woman-centered type of care, midwives need to integrate ubuntu philosophy in provision of care.

Title: A Conceptual Framework to Enhance Education on life skills related to epilepsy in Primary schools.

Author: Thendo Gertie Makhado, Rachel Tsakani Lebeso, Mariah Sonto Maputle; University of Venda, South Africa

Epilepsy is a disorder that affects the nervous system that impacts individuals across all age groups and can have significant social and psychological impacts on individuals and their families. Providing education on epilepsy can help decrease stigma and unfavorable attitudes toward individuals who live with epilepsy and teach individuals how to manage seizures effectively. This article proposes a conceptual framework to enhance epilepsy life skills education in primary schools based on the three-legged stool model and Dickoff et al.'s practice-oriented theory. This conceptual framework is also aiming to instill Ubuntu philosophical values and attitudes towards epilepsy. The study used an exploratory-descriptive design and a qualitative multi-methods paradigm to gather data from teachers, life skills educational advisors, and learners. The data were analyzed using ATLAS TI and the notice-collect-think approach. The findings from the study were used to develop the conceptual framework, which aims to enhance awareness and comprehension of epilepsy among learners and the community at large. The conceptual framework underscores the significance of involving teachers and life skills educational advisors and utilizing diverse teaching approaches to ensure efficacy. This article contributes to epilepsy education and highlights the importance of providing life skills education in primary schools.

Title: Violence in South African Schools: Can the African philosophy of ubuntu be used as a mechanism or tool for its diminution or eradication?

Author: Isabel Moodley; University of Venda, South Africa

Violence in schools is not unique to South Africa and occurs all over the world. In 2017, UNESCO reported that 246 million children globally are affected by school violence annually. In South Africa, school violence is escalating at an alarming rate despite the establishment of various initiatives like the National School Safety Framework by the government. Within the first four months of South Africa's 2023 academic year, several incidences of school violence have already transpired and been chronicled in the media. Some of those startling headlines read as follows: 'Brutal school violence ends in stabbing', 'School violence: Funeral of Butterworth school pupil', 'Grade 10 Brakpan pupil stabbed to death in after school brawl over pepper spray incident', 'Probe launched after video captures violent attack of Krugersdorp school girl', and 'Geluksdal Secondary School learner stabbed to death'. From the above, we can conclude that the school violence conundrum in South Africa is in dire need of exigent measures for its diminution and eventual elimination. In this paper, we propose that the African philosophy of ubuntu can provide the stimulus for achieving that vital and laudable imperative. Ubuntu generally means humanity but does not mean humanity 'as a quality of character inhering in only some individuals, but as the vital force we share and participate in through the interplay which takes place when people come into contact or live together' (Bennett, 2018: 33). Ubuntu infers a 'collective personhood' (Masina, 2000: 170) and is founded on a robust awareness of 'interconnectedness in a community of fellow human beings' (Forster, 2007: 60). In addition to its communal characteristics, ubuntu also embraces a host of salient tenets including justice, respect for human dignity, compassion, responsibility, equality, collectiveness, relatedness, reciprocity, love, helpfulness, caring, dependability, sharing, trust, integrity, unselfishness and social change requisite for the instatement of ubuntu in the social order. In this paper, we argue that the installation of policies and frameworks albeit valuable, are insufficient to minimise the acute school violence problem in South Africa. For school violence to be alleviated and eventually stamped out, communities, in collaboration with parents and educators must play their crucial role. In this paper, we outline that imperative duty and highlight some of the initiatives that can be implemented at grassroots level. We also

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recommend the inculcation of the imperative ubuntu attributes identified above into the school curriculum to assuage school violence and present certain supplementary proposals for managing school violence in South Africa.

Title: The Strength of Mother-Centredness: Understanding Africentric Feminist Motherhood through Ousmane Sembène's *Faat Kiné* and *Mooladé*.

Author: Maki Motapanyane; Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

This paper presents an analysis of Africentric feminist motherhood, examining two films by Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembène (1923-2007): *Faat Kiné* (2000) and *Mooladé* (2004). In discussing these films, I explore the internal contestations, rootedness, and commitment to the cosmology of ubuntu that characterizes Africentric motherhood. Through an analysis of the lessons that these films offer, the paper highlights the significant strength of our communities, which arises precisely because of the mother-centeredness of our cultural cosmology. In doing so, the paper provides a critical understanding of the complex and dynamic nature of motherhood in the Africentric context, offering insights into contemporary considerations and challenges. The concept of Africentric feminist motherhood has been a central theme in African feminist discourse, highlighting the importance of motherhood in African societies. Africentric feminist motherhood is rooted in the cosmology of ubuntu, which emphasizes interconnectedness, community, and mutual responsibility. This paper argues that the Africentric approach to motherhood is not only an essential aspect of African cultures but also a source of resilience and strength in the face of adversity. The films *Faat Kiné* and *Mooladé* offer valuable insights into the complexities and challenges of Africentric motherhood. *Faat Kiné* tells the story of a successful "sole" parenting mother who faces opposition from some members of her community due to the ways that her independence and success break with some social and cultural norms. On the other hand, *Mooladé* explores the struggles of a group of young girls and a community mother who resist female genital cutting, and the push back they face from family and community. Through an analysis of these films, this paper shows how Africentric motherhood is often fraught with internal contestations, as mothers navigate a complex set of values and considerations in their quest to nurture children and contribute to their communities. Despite these challenges, Africentric motherhood remains deeply rooted in the cosmology of ubuntu. This paper shows how Africentric mothers draw strength and resilience from their connection to their communities, emphasizing the importance of mutual responsibility and support. I argue that the mother-centeredness of our cultural cosmology is a source of significant strength in our communities, promoting social cohesion and contributing to the well-being of individuals and communities. In examining the lessons offered by *Faat Kiné* and *Mooladé*, the paper sheds light on contemporary considerations and challenges facing Africentric mothers and communities, ultimately showing that an understanding of Africentric feminist motherhood is crucial to sustained collective wellbeing and to advancing our understanding of gender, culture, and community from our own culturally informed epistemic frameworks.

Title: Reimagining Community Engagement the Ubuntu Way

Author: Mapfumo A Chidzonga; Dalhousie University, Canada

This research examines the need for a framework of principles, strategies, and approaches to community engagement that is rooted in an Afrocentric philosophy of Ubuntu. It argues that such a framework has the capacity to foster culturally relevant, respectful, and responsive programs and practices that generate the relational and reciprocal relationship dynamics necessary for building trust and mutual capacities with communities of African descent. It provides a valuable contribution to the global community engagement field, demonstrating how an Afrocentric approach can help to mitigate the limitations of the current Eurocentric, top-down methods characterized by exclusion and marginalization, tokenism, an over-reliance on decontextualized, one-size-fits-all methods, harmful transactional and extractive relationships, and an overall lack of organizational accountability.

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This research demonstrates that an Ubuntu-infused approach to community engagement can radically recentre the 'community' in community engagement processes and outcomes by establishing engagement thinking and practices that are equitable and inclusive, anti-racist and meaningful, thereby enhancing the quality, responsiveness, and outcomes of services to communities of African descent while also strengthening and sustaining connections to these communities. Engagement the Ubuntu way offers a framework for equitable collaboration, which includes co-design, co-creation, and co-ownership of ideas, data, publications, credit and benefit from work with communities. Community engagement reimagined the Ubuntu way seeks to actively ignite, amplify, and leverage community assets and honor agencies so as to realize their right to self-determination and resilience, to define their aspirations and the challenges they face, to set the priorities that will allow them to thrive, and to define success on their own terms. The research also serves as an important reminder that engaging communities requires intentional interactions between government organizations and communities which pay particular attention to unique historical, cultural, and social contexts while acknowledging and addressing the power dynamics and inequities at play.

Title: Inclusion the Natural Way

Author: Barry Braun; Happy Community Project, Canada

When we label marginalized groups, we identify them as marginalized in the public eye and they become part of the community story as 'them'. What if we could find a way to include people of difference without labels or placing special attention on them?

Windsor West Hants Nova Scotia has one of the oldest communities of African descent in Nova Scotia – 3 Mile Plains. Before the Happy Community Project was implemented in Windsor West Hants, it was rare to see someone of African descent at public events in Windsor. After the Happy Community Project was implemented, it was normal to see African Nova Scotians at public events.

Humans behave according to the stories they hold close. The story in Windsor Nova Scotia used to be "We are so divisive; nothing ever happens here. If someone has an idea, we fight about it until the idea dies. Nothing ever happens here." The story today is very different. "Look at how much is happening here, look how we take care of each other, what a great place to live."

Happy Community Project has developed an expertise for shifting the community story from divisive to socially connected, belonging and caring. Our presentation will focus on how Windsor became an inclusive community without using the words diversity or inclusion. We will explain how the Happy Community Project process brings people of difference together without noting their differences and with building on their commonalities.

The Happy Community Project has had projects in Windsor NS, Ellershouse NS, Stewiacke NS, Sackville NS, Halifax NS, Kolkata India and Kabale Uganda. We are currently helping Glace Bay become a happier community and expect to be helping several communities in Ontario and Texas in the coming months. The common theme of Happy Community Project is: change the community story from divisive to integrated, from marginalized to inclusive. Enable the community to create their story the 'natural way' that is in the direction of socially connected across differences, belonging and caring for each other.

Title: Harnessing Ubuntu Principles for Transformative Student Unrest Management in Nigerian Higher Institutions

Authors: Oluwasola Babatunde Sasere, Sekitla Daniel Makhasane; University of Free State, South Africa

The menace of students' unrest constitutes a barrier in effective management of higher institutions in Africa with various attendant consequences; among which are, destruction of school properties, prolonged academic calendar and increased propensity to commit crime among undergraduates while out of school. The management of higher institutions' efforts to curb student unrest seems fruitless since such unrest often occur. There is apparent need to rethink management approaches to student unrest. To this effect, this paper explores an Afrocentric approach by adopting Ubuntu

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principles as a framework for transformative student unrest management in African higher institutions, focusing on Nigeria. Conceptual Analysis (CA) was adopted as a method to explicate the nuanced relationship between Ubuntu principles and students unrest management. The paper provides an overview of the history of students' unrest in Africa and Nigeria particularly. It also examines the existing strategies for managing students' unrest and their success rate. An attempt was made to decipher the professionalization of student unionism in Africa. Varying scholarly perspectives on students' unrest and their implications were explored. The roles of Governments at various levels as major financier of public higher institutions were also brought to bear. The impacts of student unrest on students, institutions reputations, and national development were also explored. Grounded in Ubuntu's principles of community building, mutual respect, and collaboration; the article focuses on finding solutions that are in the best interests of all parties involved by prioritising relationships and interconnectedness of stakeholders over individual interests. Hence, the article proposes a model for transformative student unrest management in Nigerian higher institutions. Recommendations were made based on this explication.

Title: Cutting Edges: An Afrocentric Restoration and Restitution of Cultural Practices through Ubuntu

Author: Dalifa Ngobese; University of Mpumalanga, South Africa

The challenges faced by the Africans in restoring cultural practices and African value systems provide an opportunity to explore *ubuntu* and other related knowledge systems as a point of reference in pursuing and promoting self-determination, community participation, and resilience. In this paper, I wish to critically construct Ubuntu and its potential to restore cultural practices and value systems. This paper aimed to trace the gradual degradation of humanity, African values, and morality. It also explores the concept of Ubuntu in the restoration of cultural practices as it encapsulates moral norms and virtues such as kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, and respect for others. The theory of Afrocentricity will be explored in this paper as a critical and reflexive response to the production and reproduction of knowledge that absolutely privileges African peoples, cultures, thoughts, and experiences. The paper suggests that the ringfence intervention should be explored in supporting and promoting research and community participation and empowerment from the periphery into the center of discourse and research agenda. These principles of ubuntu pave the way for engagement, critical reflections, fresh reviews, and debates on the usage and promotion of Indigenous knowledge systems. Finally, the paper suggests that African traditions and morals, ethics, and social values have a blended learning responsibility in the restoration of cultural practices and African value systems through *ubuntu*.

Title: "It takes a village to raise a child": Views of Secondary School learners regarding Ubuntu philosophy and its application in South Africa

Authors: N.S. Mashau, L. Makhado, R.T. Lebese, S.E. Tshivhase, M.T. Mulaudzi, K. Netshisaulu, F.M. Mulaudzi; University of Venda, South Africa

Ubuntu is an African philosophy that embraces an African proverb '*It takes a village to raise a child*,' which simply means that it is everybody's responsibility to protect and guide children to grow in a moral, safe, and healthy environment until adulthood. The study explored the views of secondary school learners regarding the *Ubuntu* proverb '*It takes a village to raise a child*' in the rural communities of South Africa. A qualitative, exploratory-descriptive research design was used. Grade 10 and 11 secondary school learners aged 15-22 years were purposively recruited for the study from the two secondary schools in the Mopani district. Five Focus Group Discussions comprising 5-8 participants were conducted using the local language. The sample size of 40 participants was determined by data saturation during the Focus Group Discussions. The findings revealed that secondary school learners understand the meaning of the proverb "*It takes a village to raise a child*" and its application. However, they are

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confused by the behaviour of some adults who fail to apply *Ubuntu* values when raising children. There is a need for a community collaborative effort to revive the values of *Ubuntu* to ensure a moral, safe, and healthy society.

Title: Within & Among: Healing Systemic Trauma

Author: Monique Barling-Maxwell

On average, during my 20-year career in South Africa & North America, I've seen at least 1 Youth of Color killed every year. The latest tragedies, met with continued roadblocks of bureaucracy, made me question even moreso; why despite how tirelessly everyone is working, are we seeing rising rates of poverty, inequality, mental health, abuse, violence, especially among youth? What are we missing, considering the impact & lessons from Covid? Are we moving into or caught in between this paradigm shift? Dr. Gabor Mate's role in shaping our understanding of trauma is crucial and builds towards the notion of 'systemic trauma', essentially the missing link. These are wounds from the pervasive impact of failed states or systems, structural violence & systemic racism on individuals, families & communities. This includes the interactions of these systems and their influences, compounded by a divided, toxic culture, with engrained social constructs, enhanced by a digital modernized society. With advances in neuroscience, trauma & concepts like social-emotional wellness, the integration of this knowledge in our practice is imperative. This calls for a revisionist approach to expand on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, through a lens of systemic trauma. This enables people to begin healing through what Amartya Sen calls Development as Freedom, the ability to tap into one's capabilities translating into human capital, resulting in a high Social Return on Investment. To be one within allows one to connect among, relationally & societally. In the West, the concept of individualization is another place we can learn from the Continent to achieve Ubuntu. Ultimately, it challenges us to heal & reconstruct how we work from within, together, with funders, data, board structures, policies, curriculum, and even the oppressor. This proposed theory of change invites a continued in-depth exploration & fundamental shift to upgrade, inform & move Community Development into a revised 'Trauma Informed Community Revitalization'.

Title: Years Spent in Canada Moderates Relationship between Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptoms and Cognitive and Emotional Processes

Authors: Noémie Bergeron-Germain, Nicholas Hickens, Christine Lackner; Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

Racial trauma can be triggered by real or perceived discriminatory encounters. Impairments to executive functions (EF) have been consistently associated with traditional stress and this study investigates EF's relationship with racial stress (RS) symptoms. We examine whether relationships are moderated by measures of ethnic identity, racial socialization, and time spent in Canada (TSC). Sixty-one BIPOC participants (ages 18–62; 41 female; 48 non-native Canadians) completed online measures of race-based stress symptoms (RBTSSS), ethnic identity (MEIM-R), EF (BRIEF-A: BRI, MI, and GEC), and provided demographic data. Higher levels of RS were associated with poorer EF regardless of ethnic identity strength. Higher total symptoms were associated with more difficulties controlling behaviour and emotions (BRI), more difficulties problem-solving (MI), and worse overall EF (GEC), all zero-order $r_s(60) > .29$, all $p_s \leq .02$. Racial socialization, particularly the confidence instilled by caregivers to handle discriminatory encounters, was associated with fewer EF difficulties (MI and GEC), all $r_s(60) > .29$, $p_s \leq .02$. Ethnic identity strength did not moderate the association between RS and EF. TSC significantly moderated the association between racial stress and EF such that those who spent a lesser amount of their lives in Canada had a low or null association between RS and EF, but those who spent a large amount of their lives in Canada showed a strong association between higher RS and worse EF. This moderating relationship was especially prevalent for symptoms of physiological arousal, avoidance, and anger as they related to subscales of the BRI (inhibit, shift, and emotional control) and overall GEC scores.

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Thus, BIPOC individuals experience high levels of race-based stress likely leading to executive dysfunction in similar ways to traditional stress. Specific aspects of the psychological impact of racial discrimination on EF are moderated by TSC, and perhaps by related environmental variables (e.g., minority status, discrimination).

Title: The absence of Ubuntu in South Africa's Socio-Economic Discourse: Imagining Ubuntu in economic transformation policy text
Author: Mofihli Teleki; Stellenbosch University

Ubuntu is a cultural concept that was used in South Africa's transition from the apartheid regime to a democratic dispensation in the mid 1990's. It was used in the process of healing, reconciliation, restoration and it also appeared in the interim Constitution of 1993. The nuances of Ubuntu in South Africa also gave way to first generation rights which are by nature political and social in nature. With the passage of time, elements of Ubuntu were discernible in particular sections of the Constitution which refer to equality and thus inspired certain institutions that protect democracy. In spite of this, Ubuntu remains absent in the economic policy regime of the current democratic dispensation. The latter has now become important due to the lack of economic transformation where structural features of the economy which are racial in nature are still prevalent. The article being explored herein seeks to imagine how Ubuntu can be used in economic policy text in order to conscientize the South African society about the need to build an economy that includes the majority of citizens in its activities, for posterity and sustainability.

Title: Social impact, and evaluative bricolage of the Afri-scholarship of community engagement in higher education
Author: Vhonani Olive Netshandama; University of Venda, South Africa

Bricolage is a "local, contextual, and sudden process, which cannot be thought of outside the specific situation where it appears". Making do with "whatever is at hand" Common themes across multiple definitions of bricolage are 1) active problem-solving and/or opportunity-seeking; 2) reliance on pre-existing elements at hand; and 3) resource recombination for novel uses. Whilst we are barely embracing the idea of evaluative thinking in higher education community engagement space, I wish to initiate a discussion about how an evaluative bricolage of the scholarship of community engagement may shape higher education performance. I will discuss the concepts and the antecedencies to hopefully generate possible co-generative Afri-centric co-designs of indicators of the scholarship of community engagement impact and relevance. Bricolage is a 'propensity to rely on resources at hand in accomplishing critical tasks and/or in accomplishing goals. I will put it that the impact of the scholarship of community engagement will be elevated if we embrace the diverse and somewhat messy evaluative bricolage. The process, I argue will be adaptive. I will identify further the various forms of bricolage used by engaged scholars and possibilities for normalising the knowledge ecologies as transformative learning organisations.

Title: *The United Nations People of African Descent Decade* and the recommendation for Afrocentric Education in Canada: An exploration of an Afrocentricity paradigm for social work education and practice.
Author: Somnoma Valerie Ouedraogo; Grant MacEwan University

Our paper presentation draws from a current research project that is in alignment with the United Nations (UN) International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD), and the recommendation 94 (e) in the report of the Working Group of Experts on PAD who visited Canada from October 17 to 21, 2016 articulating the need for Afrocentric education in Canada. The study covers three provinces in Canada: Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Ontario. The paper will briefly introduce the three key themes of the UN IDPAD, present our study which we

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launched in July 2022, and based on the firsthand result of our scoping literature review discuss successes related to the inclusion of Afrocentricity in social work discipline to engage with systemic transformation. We will use following of our research questions to guide our presentation: In what ways can Afrocentricity paradigm inform/advance social work education and practice to render social work organizations and services to PAD centered on equity and anti-Black racism?

Title: East Preston Co-Design Meal Class Project: Learnings and Opportunities

Author: Mueni Mutinda and Asif Imran Khan; Feed Nova Scotia, Canada

This project set out to pilot the extent to which a community-led initiative through the East Preston Resource Center, with support from Feed Nova Scotia, could positively impact the food security of predominantly low-income Black Nova Scotians in East Preston. Specifically, this meant identifying the prospects of collective cooking classes as a dignified, acceptable way of providing food support and reviewing outcomes for future scale-up, particularly for the marginalized Black communities who are three times more likely to be food insecure than the white communities in Canada. Over the March to June period in 2022, seven cooking classes reached a minimum of 70 community participants, and more through the prepared meal hampers that were shared with participants' households, and others in the community. The learnings of the project were captured through post-class attendance surveys with the participants, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and participatory observations of Feed Nova Scotia staff. The findings of the co-designed meal class project demonstrate and reinforce participants' experience of the project's ability to embody Ubuntu through community cooking classes, by ensuring affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate recipes for participants to enjoy and share. It provided an alternative system to conventional food bank services for the community by enabling participants to gather to prepare and share time and meal preparation in the same space, thus building social networks, and restoring dignity and mental well-being. The participants' active involvement and procurement of food reduced and even removed real and perceived stigma, and generated a positive communal experience, which further reinforced community engagement, cooperation, and bonding. There is both evidence and opportunity for Feed Nova Scotia to learn from this collaboration, and to deepen future engagement that fosters community-owned, community-led processes toward systemic transformation to equitable food access and availability.

Title: Afrocentric Approaches to Peace

Author: Késa Munroe-Anderson, Buhle Dlamini, Randy Headley, Catherine Baillie Abidi;

The Afrocentric Approaches of Peace series was designed as an opportunity for members of African Nova Scotian communities to come together to acknowledge, discuss, and celebrate Afrocentric approaches to peace building. Working collaboratively with several communities, regional academic institutions, and non-profits serving youth in Nova Scotia and in several African countries, these sessions aimed to raise awareness of Afrocentric approaches to peace building; centre youth and Elders' in community dialogues; and create dialogue towards peace building. The series of events included two community dialogues –in Upper Hammonds Plains and New Glasgow - as well as a youth-centered workshop at Mount Saint Vincent University. The series of events also included the participation of two members of the Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security International Youth Advisory who joined from Cameroon and Kenya. This presentation will highlight Ubuntu-inspired peace and social justice advocacy occurring in African Nova Scotian communities and the opportunities to honour, celebrate, and expand this important work.



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Title: Feminism in Africa: in the Lens of Igbo Proverbs and Culture

Author: Oge Chukwudozie; Saint Mary's University, Canada

The predominant paradigm of feminist theory has been shaped largely by Europe-American experiences. African feminism and feminists have a unique ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology that is different from their Western counterparts. Understanding and applying these unique experiences will ensure that feminist paradigms are designed to suit the African culture rather than as is handed down by Euro-American culture. The analyzed Igbo proverbs show a society where both community members are cherished contributors for the different roles they play for the benefit of the community. The proverbs just as African feminism promotes sisterhood, community-centeredness and interest in collective outcomes and group achievement. Women are recognized as an essential part of the Igbo society in their many roles, including those of wives and daughters, where one role doesn't obliterate the other. Therefore, to engender transformation, African feminists should invoke the core values of our society bringing in our unique ontology, and methodology, which is different from our Western counterparts. Understanding and applying these unique experiences will ensure that feminist paradigms are designed to suit the African culture rather than as is handed down by Euro-American culture.

Title: Growing from the roots: Building an Africentric Bachelor of Social Work Cohort

Author: Grant, Winnie; Thomas Bernard, Wanda; Symonds, Bria; Brown, Marion; Dalhousie University, Canada

The Africentric BSW Cohort has grown from government listening to the needs of their staff and the African Nova Scotian community, including conversations at the 40th anniversary conference of the Association of Black Social Workers and recommendations from the Because We Matter Healing sessions to have a dedicated pathway for people of African ancestry to engage in social work education. The planning committee is an expansive team including partners in Departments of Health & Wellness, Community Services, and Advanced Education; Association of Black Social Workers; Delmore Buddy Day Learning Institute; Dalhousie University Transition Year Program, Pathways to Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians, and School of Social Work; the African Nova Scotian Decade for People of African Descent Coalition; *African Nova Scotian Justice Institute*; and the Nova Scotia College of Social Workers. A significant source of the strength of this initiative has been this interracial, multidisciplinary team, collectively committed to this outcome. In this presentation we review the decades of evidence at the School of Social Work, Dalhousie, and Nova Scotia that substantiate the need for this cohort an expression of reparations for the multiple systems that have failed African Nova Scotian students and students of African ancestry. We are led by the conviction that this cohort is a capacity contribution to social work education and practice which will bring an abundance of wisdom and expertise and advance creative, innovative teaching and learning. We will detail the building blocks of this initiative, which include community investment in the process, relational connection and partnerships among community, university, and government, and commitment to Africentric principles throughout the admissions process, the curriculum, pedagogy, and delivery.

Title: Enhancing Community Empowerment And Transformation Through African Cultural Wealth: The Case Of Ubuntu Inspired Consciousness.

Author: J.R. Phori, M.P. Mokone, N.D. Mokone; University of Venda, South Africa

This academic prose chronicles and argues for the importance of indigenous African knowledge wealth in the context of Western epistemologies celebrated over time to date. The paper further demonstrates the role of Ubuntu as an Afrocentric philosophy to advance the ideals of social justice for humanity and collaborative unity in a democratic space. Ubuntu/Botho/Humanity as an African philosophy has the following hallmarks: caring,



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harmony, respect, compassion with empathy; respect for cultural wealth through diversity, and collaborative righteousness. The paper adopts the Critical Emancipatory Theory (CER) as a theoretical lens with the following features: collaborative participation; quest for the negation dominance based on race; colour; culture; and embellishes moral righteousness and celebration of ethical conduct as a social being. The paper champions Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a methodological approach to collaboratively engage community members in the generation of data. PAR resonates well with both the collaborative and emancipatory philosophy. PAR holds the following features: demystify theoretical and illusionary sentiments; allows organic participation in research; values personal reflection in critical debates. Data analysis is according to the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) sponsored by van Dijk. The preliminary discussion findings validate the following outcomes: Collaborative unity in societies; the need for lift one another as we rise; shared problem skills; acceptance of human cultural wealth philosophy; and diversities; development of critical skills for survival; inviting mutual dependence; and open shared dialogic conversations.

Title: Rethinking the approach of addressing peer bullying in South African Schools: a quest for the application of ubuntu leadership

Author: S.D. Makhasane, A.A. Onalapo.; University of Free State, South Africa

Bullying is one of the common forms of violence among learners in many countries. It is a multifaceted and a global concern. The international agencies such as UNESCO and WHO have documented incidents of bullying in multiple countries. In South Africa, the Department of basic education, schools, researchers, and media report on cases of bullying in schools frequently. These cases include the traditional forms of bullying and cyberbullying. Despite initiatives undertaken by the Department of basic education and school management teams in addressing bullying, the incidents of bullying continue to be reported in South African schools. There remain questions about the effectiveness of approaches used to address bullying. In this paper, we propose the application of ubuntu in addressing peer bullying in South African schools. In the main we highlight the debates about peer bullying. Thereafter, we discuss ubuntu leadership theoretical framework. From there, we dwell on the application of ubuntu leadership theory in addressing bullying among learners. We consequently conclude that ubuntu provides theoretical principles that school leaders may use to address bullying in the African context where learners are socialised into the values of such principles. This paper addresses the issue of bullying among learners in South African schools and explores the potential of applying the concept of Ubuntu to address this problem. Bullying is a global concern, and despite efforts by the Department of basic education, incidents continue to occur. The paper discusses the debates surrounding peer bullying and introduces the Ubuntu leadership theoretical framework. It highlights how Ubuntu principles can be applied to address bullying among learners, emphasizing the importance of socializing learners into these values. Ultimately, the paper concludes that Ubuntu provides a theoretical foundation for school leaders to combat bullying in the African context.

Title: Creating a secure and collaborative digital learning environment: A user-centred approach in the early stages of designing an Africentric e-Learning system

Author: Gerry Chan, Olatunji Mumini Omisore, Bilikis Banire, Oladapo Oyebode, George Frempong, Kay-Ann Scott, Jones Awe, Raavee Kadam, Rita Orji; Dalhousie University, Canada

Personalised education systems that consider socio-cultural practices and adapt learning styles can make learning more appropriate and effective for diverse students. This has led to a new wave of personalised learning strategies that focus on individualised development of learning capabilities and knowledge acquisition skills necessary to become effective social critics and improve learning outcomes. The objective of this work is to create

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a secure and collaborative digital learning environment for the African Nova-Scotian school community. In this presentation, we describe an iterative and incremental co-design process that is ongoing between members of different stakeholders in the African Nova-Scotian school community. The content and pedagogical approaches are linked to local resources and integrated with social and cultural elements consistent with African worldviews. We present initial sketches and wireframes showcasing a web-based e-learning system that is socioculturally sensitive and designed to meet the needs of an African audience. The designs are based on best practices, models, frameworks, and theories (e.g., non-zero-sum) from existing literature, as well as guidance from experts familiar with African culture and specialised in interaction design. Learning system consists of motivational and gamified elements (e.g., points, leaderboards, and badges) to promote collaborative learning and engagement. So far, wireframes have been created to illustrate the user and the system flow. For the purposes of creating an AI-driven adaptive and socio-culturally sensitive system, multiple wireframes showing the same feature using different layouts have been created. This serves to examine user preferences when user behaviours are tracked during user evaluation and is the first step towards developing an AI-driven adaptive and socioculturally-sensitive e-Learning system that uses machine learning models to control smart content delivery, learning adaptation, and user engagement.

Title: A Panoramic view of Sociocultural Sensitivity in Emerging Digital Technologies: Implications for the Development of an Africentric E-Learning System

Author: Gerry Chan, Bilikis Banire, Olatunji Mumini Omisore, Oladapo Oyebode, George Frempong, and Rita Orji; Dalhousie University, Canada

Emerging digital technologies are increasingly integrating human values, cultural elements, and beliefs to facilitate contemporary societal transformations. This paper presents a comprehensive systematic review of the current state of incorporating individual and community-level values and beliefs into various interactive computerised technologies, emphasising sociocultural sensitivity. Analysing 293 articles published between 2012 and 2023, we identify prevalent sociocultural aspects utilised in designing interactive technologies, spanning robot sensing systems, augmented reality, mobile, and communication technologies. The application domains cover digital health, digital games, well-being, sociocultural pedagogy, and education. Specifically, traditional educational approaches often fail to take into account the cultural backgrounds and social contexts of students, leading to disengagement and poor academic outcomes. Hence, we highlight trends, challenges, opportunities, and provide recommendations for future research to enhance the development of socioculturally sensitive technologies in education. Based on our review, one of the gaps we identified is the limited literature on designing interactive computer technologies sensitive to Africentric culture – where the community and peer interactions play critical roles in the learning processes. Thus, there is a need for research to investigate and design Africentric interactive systems sensitive to African cultures across domains including education and health. The major with online education is the potential to reduce the number of both student-student and student-teacher interactions, which in turn can decrease the level of engagement and motivation. Thus, finding various ways to keep students engaged and help students learn better has become the focus in much academic research. One particular area of motivational interest is how online education can be designed to personalise based on the learner’s cultural beliefs and preferences to offer a better learning experience. We expect our findings to contribute to the design and implementation of a personalised Africentric e-learning system that will improve student engagement.

Title: It takes a village: Exploring Parental Early Literacy Support Using Africentric Approaches Among Nova Scotians of African descent.

Author: Sylvia Chanda Kalindi, Susan Brigham, George Frempong; Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

Several stakeholders have continued to advocate for the use of Africentric approaches in the education system to address the persistent achievement gap between Nova Scotian learners of African descent and their peers (BLACK, 1994; Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2017; Jean-Pierre et al., 2021; Parris

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& Brigham, 2010). The African proverb 'It takes a village' highlights the need to involve extended and nuclear family members, including community members, in training children to have values and skills upheld by the family, community and society. However, the value of the proverb among Nova Scotians of African descent is currently unclear. This study is an exploration into the early literacy scaffolding strategies used by Nova Scotian parents as well as community members of African descent to support children's early literacy development. The study has two major components. Firstly, we involve a household survey to explore the opportunities and challenges in engaging Nova Scotian parents and community members of African descent in their early learners' literacy development. We are particularly interested in exploring Africentric approaches that could be employed to support early literacy development and other related factors such as oral language. Secondly, we engage the community through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD), discussing how the survey findings should inform a framework and strategies to address the challenges. Using IBM SPSS 26.0 software and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008) to analyse the survey and FGD findings respectively, the study demonstrated how frequently participants scaffolded emergent literacy using different strategies as well as a wide range of Africentric approaches. The importance of 'It takes a village' proverb in enhancing literacy development has also been established.

Title: Culturally Responsive Education: Building African centred perspectives in STEM Education.

Authors: Awoyiga, Afolake; Dalhousie University, Canada

Generation 1 Leadership Initiative (G1LI) is a community based not-for-profit organization established in 2016. It was created to provide meaningful opportunities for youth of African descent to achieve their full potentials through equitable access to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Despite longstanding efforts to increase diversity in STEM disciplines, youth of African descent remain underrepresented in STEM education and careers. G1LI's mission is to disrupt this systemic exclusion by providing educational workshops, resources, networks and tools for youth of African descent. G1LI draws on African centred principles in facilitating community-based youth engagement, strengthening youth support networks and advocating for broader systems change. Significant strengths of this initiative have been our understanding of the lived socio-cultural realities of families of African descent and our ability to connect families and community to the education of their children. Another strength is ensuring that education remains culturally relevant and the ability to integrate African centred approaches that focus on building self-esteem, character, leadership development, cultural pride, achievement orientation and academic excellence through a focus on STEM. Most pressing challenges, from our health to the economy, to the environment, require potent solutions rooted in STEM-based skills, literacy, and education. In the presentation, we would review the evidence that substantiate the need for an African centred perspective in STEM education. We would review why it is important to centre the knowledge and creative initiatives of people of African descent. Furthermore, we would detail the building blocks of this initiative, which include the African centred concept of community, interconnectedness, collective responsibility, collective identity, affective knowledge, integration of cultural concepts, relational connection and partnerships among community, educational agencies including DBDLI, universities, government, and commitment to African centred principles through our programming, pedagogy, and delivery.

Title: Discovering Your Superpower - How discovering your gift at an early age can help break the school-to-prison pipeline for minority children

Authors: Darlene Evans; D Evans Consulting, Inc.

We all have a superpower; this is that unique gift which gives us an unfair advantage over others. It could be athletic, academic or social-economic, either way this gift or as I like to call it, SUPERPOWER, is the key to discovering a young person's key to success as an adult in an effort to prevent the school-to-prison pipeline. The prison system is built waiting for our students. Discovering your gift and given the tools to market that gift, will allow our young people the wealth and the lifestyle that they choose while avoiding the prison system.



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As a community, we can help to dismantle the problem, shine the spotlight on our young boys and girls and prepare them to become entrepreneurs or work in corporate making 6 figures.

Title: Cultural Responsiveness in Science Education: A Case for Learning from the Jamaican National Standards Curriculum for Nova Scotian Students of African Descent

Author: Eddia Solas; Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

This paper examines the Jamaican National Standards Curriculum (NSC) in science as a potential model for developing culturally relevant pedagogies for Black students in Nova Scotia. The underachievement of Black students in Canadian schools has been a persistent concern in provinces such as Ontario and Nova Scotia, and many argue that the curriculum and pedagogical approaches are not culturally responsive to the needs and experiences of these students. This has resulted in a call from the Black communities in these provinces for the an education system which meets the needs of their children. One of the problems identified in addressing the problem is a shortage of models for educators of what these pedagogies should look like for students of African heritage. Drawing on a review of existing literature, this paper will explore the historical and cultural contexts that shape the Jamaican school curriculum in science and provide an analysis of the extent to which the Jamaican NSC aligns with culturally responsive pedagogies. It will also identify key principles that could inform the development of similar approaches for Black students in Nova Scotia and the rest of Canada. The paper will explore any emphasis on experiential learning, student-centered approaches, and the integration of local knowledge, which could be adapted and incorporated into Nova Scotian science education to better reflect the cultural contexts and experiences of students of African heritage. The paper will conclude with a call to action for educators and policymakers to consider the potential of the Jamaican school curriculum as a model for developing culturally relevant pedagogies in Nova Scotia. By embracing and valuing diverse cultural perspectives, Nova Scotian schools can create more inclusive and equitable learning environments that support the success and well-being of all students, including those from African Nova Scotian communities.

Title: The Africentric Recognition of Prior Learning Project

Author: Rajean Willis; Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, Canada

The Africentric Recognition of Prior Learning Project was conducted with members of the community of African descent in Nova Scotia. This project was created to determine what a framework would look like that would support learners and labourers of African descent in skill recognition. It was found that an Africentric Framework for Recognition of Prior Learning would centre the person undertaking the process in their journey including skill bank assessment, peer/communal support, and the implementation of maintaining wellness, for example. Considering intergenerational trauma, participants in this project were able to name and work through racially motivated traumas experienced in their lives through the community engagement process.

Title: Ubuntu-Based Conscientized Praxis for Agentic Learning

Author: Selvi Roy; University of Prince Edward Island, Canada

The COVID-19 pandemic has acutely amplified learning and engagement-related challenges. Part of the post-pandemic recovery framework will need to consciously re-strategize and incorporate enhanced student engagement models necessary to help educational organizations and workplaces attain optimal educational, social, and economic outcomes. At the school level, student engagement is associated with enhanced

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learning outcomes, higher graduation rates, and low dropout rates. Beyond school, it is also linked with the quality of everyday life, social and emotional wellbeing, and economic prosperity. However, while the advantages of promoting student engagement meet with a ready agreement, the best practices for achieving engagement continue to be debated. Traditionally, teachers have been expected to embody the role of the know-it-all-sage. Additionally, parents have been called upon to support students' learning. However, students are rarely viewed as being pivotal in advancing their own and each other's education. The African philosophy of Ubuntu presents a wisdom mindset of connectedness and offers a practical empowerment-oriented pedagogical paradigm. Synchronistically, the Freirean concepts of conscientization and praxis, and the Bourdieusian frameworks of social and cultural capital emphasize the significance of Ubuntu in mediating learning. Further, recent research presents the unmistakably important role of peers in advancing student engagement and learning. While definitions of student engagement vary, there is agreement that it is a multidimensional construct. Several scholars have postulated student engagement as encompassing the cognitive, behavioural, and affective dimensions. Though important, these understandings limit the scope of peer involvement. Students' agentic engagement is an emergent dimension characterized by volition, perseverance, and collaboration with peers, and correlates positively with the other three dimensions. In this paper, the author presents the staged process of agentic engagement that incrementally prioritizes students' stakeholderhood in their learning as they advance from being recipients of knowledge to becoming partners and owners.

Title: EDI in Higher Education: Applying an Intersectionality Framework using a Data-Driven Approach

Authors: Raavee Kadam, George Frempong, Joyline Makani, Pawan Lingras; Saint Mary's University, Canada

UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development aims to create sustainable and inclusive education systems where learners from all backgrounds can excel. To achieve this objective, we argue for strong partnerships amongst various stakeholders that provide an opportunity to assess the schooling systems and identify areas for improvement that enable closing the achievement gap amongst African Nova Scotian students. The Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute in collaboration with the Department of Education and Early Childhood, Nova Scotia envisions designing a data-driven intersectionality approach to examine the equity, diversity and inclusion landscape within the education system. Coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality refers to the "simultaneous experience of social categories such as race, gender, class, and nationality and highlights the ways in which social categories interact to create systems of privilege, power, discrimination, and oppression". We examine how an intersection of multiple student identities such as their race, class, gender and ability can account for multiple sites of marginalization and impact their educational experiences. The study makes use of multilevel modelling and machine learning algorithms to analyze student data and provide insights for policy design and implementation. We contend that evidence-driven EDI policies will help us design sustainable systems that lessen the disparities existing among students and help us achieve educational equity.

Title: Ubuntu, the Africentric Way for Leading and Managing People and Organizations

Author: Raavee Kadam, George Frempong; Saint Mary's University, Canada

The Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education called for bold, decisive, and transformative action by post-secondary institutions to combat anti-Black racism and foster Black inclusion in higher education. Amongst other action items, the charter emphasized "decentering epistemic Eurocentrism" and "acknowledging the role that institutions of higher education have played in constructing the bodies of knowledge about historically excluded groups and acknowledging the ethical responsibility to give voice to alternative ways of knowing while supporting community capacity building" (Inter-Institutional Advisory Committee, 2021). The persistent calls for indigenizing the academy and decolonizing business schools necessitate a paradigm shift that legitimizes other knowledge systems and multiple ways of

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knowing, doing and being, beyond the dominant Western thought. Our work introduces the Indigenous African concept of Ubuntu (I am because we are) and argues that Ubuntu, as a management and leadership philosophy, can be adopted within the praxis of management education to train future managers and leaders to cultivate people-centred mindsets. We provide an overview of the Ubuntu philosophy, its application within management scholarship and discuss strategies for adopting Ubuntu within the management classroom. Our work focuses on how Ubuntu can be used to inform transformative pedagogical practices relevant to scholars, practitioners and students in the management learning field.

Title: Advancing Ubuntu to Mitigate Human Security Risk Factors on African International Mobile Students in South African Higher Education Institutions.

Author: Masila J. Masipa, Nontlanhla Ntakana; University of Venda, South Africa

There are human security-related challenges throughout the world. No country is immune from these kinds of challenges, and they cover socio-political, economic, health, and environmental areas. South African Constitution through its Bill of Rights tackles the human security challenges for all who live in South Africa. Irrespective of this South Africa like other countries, has human security challenges, that in most cases are reflected through violent political protests, crime, xenophobia, unemployment, inequality, poverty, drug addiction, and human trafficking. International Mobile students in South African Higher education in addition to the challenges they have, come head-on with socio-political security challenges in South Africa. The Ubuntu application is common in most African countries and tribes. It offers a sense of solidarity, togetherness, compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity, and mutuality to bring about freedom from fear, wants, and indignity. This paper seeks to argue that ubuntu provides a solution to mitigate socio-political challenges faced by internationally mobile students. The paper will use Afrocentric theory and Maslow's theory of needs, and methodically employ qualitative document analysis. The paper will recommend Ubuntu as the fabric of African society to achieve togetherness to form part of teaching and learning in South African institutions of Higher Learning to give internationalisation an Afrocentric context.

Title: Demystifying the call: Ancestral healers

Authors: Zintle Mbili and Connie Israel; Mangosuthu University of Technology, South Africa

With the recent up-surge of so-called ancestral callings, in South Africa numerous individuals have fallen victim at the hands of mere crooks masquerading as healers. It is thus critical that before attempting to find ways of dealing with ancestral callings at South African schools, that we gain a clear and full understanding of the 'mission'. This will ensure that our youth do not fall prey to those who think that ancestors are lucrative business. This paper is in three parts. Firstly, it presents a brief narrative of the general challenges faced by individuals called to be healers. Secondly, the key challenges experienced by one of the authors as 'iThwasa' (Initiate Sangoma) at various places over a period of two decades, are described. Thirdly, the paper focuses on knowledge gaps that allow for the array of manipulations to occur in this arena. In particular, the presentation zones in on crucial incidents and how they were approached and engaged with, for the Initiate Sangoma to be able to re-align with her original identity, true purpose and gift. Given the role of dreams and night visions, the paper then explores the significance of dreams as a pedagogical and a diagnostic tool, as well as a linguistic exercise. The paper recommends the guarding and holistic interrogation of dreams as critical catalysts in an attempt to provide youth with a more holistic and personal understanding of the ancestral call process. In the form of 'first-person' narration, the qualitative research method of 'testimony' is used to reflect critically, in the case of the Initiate Sangoma, on her personal experience, and her eventual alignment with herself and her gift. Testimony was chosen because it provides an epistemic lens to support an analytical inquiry into experiences and the intellectual understanding of self and community.

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Title: The African Pedagogue through an Ubuntu lens: fostering academic excellence for Black students in South African Higher Education
Author: Mashudu E. Muthivhi; University of Venda, South Africa

Western knowledge systems' prevalence in the South African higher education landscape remains counterproductive to the conception and validation of a true African epistemic identity. A rigid conceptual and socio-political foundation is firmly rooted in South African higher education owing to colonial and apartheid-era pedagogies. Recognising society's pain and discontent needs a reconsideration of Western ideologies and pedagogies that are distant, sterile, and detached from the sensibilities of a Black student's lived world. To avoid creating a false dichotomy that excludes African philosophical ideas and to instead develop a more inclusive philosophical dialogue. It is crucial for African pedagogues to re-assess their methodologies in order to solve difficulties that undermine Ubuntu in academic practice. To restore dignity to Black students, academia in South African should be more inclusive and egalitarian for learners, allowing them to contribute positively to their communities. For Black academic excellence to prevail, critical pedagogical methods should be explored to successfully develop an Ubuntu based curricula that is inclusive of varied cultural arrays. Distinguishing and resolving power systems that perpetuate disparities in the education sector is part of this. It opposes prevailing narratives centred on Western epistemologies and instead encourages the investigation of various knowledge systems. Using this approach allows for students to develop the aptitudes needed to critically engage with the world around them and eventually become active agents of change. Through a qualitative research approach, the study's primary objective is to investigate the role of an Ubuntu-oriented education that is anchored in an Afrocentric methodology. This study emphasises an inclusive learning environment that caters for Black students' distinct cultural, linguistic, and historical settings. This may not only serve to further a feeling of community but improve pupils' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Title: Inclusive Transformation through Ubuntu: An Africentric Collaboration to Promote Economic Prosperity and Well-being
Author: George Frempong; Nyasha P. Mandeya; Heidi Weigand; And David Kerr; Dalhousie University, Canada

This paper examines the role of the Africentric Ubuntu philosophy in fostering an inclusive and transformative approach to economic development within the Black Nova Scotian (BNS) community. The study explores how the Ubuntu mindset can guide collaborative efforts toward shared prosperity and well-being by focusing on the interconnectedness of individuals and communities. Grounded in the Africentric perspective, the paper underscores the significance of collectivism, emphasizing that an individual's interests and identity are closely linked with the community's well-being. It delves into the Ubuntu management philosophy and its five levels of management applications, illustrating their relevance in promoting collaboration, communal relationships, and shared responsibility. The study aims to address a gap in the literature by exploring the influence of the Africentric philosophy in fostering collaboration between organizations and the BNS community and by demonstrating the importance of marginalized communities' economic well-being in research, policy, and practice. We expect our paper to contribute to the broader discourse on inclusive transformation through Ubuntu by presenting an Ubuntu-driven approach to economic development. The paper includes valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars seeking to adopt an Africentric perspective in their work.

Title: Africentric Play-Based Learning
Author: Jones Awe, Kudzi Marufu; Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute

Africentric Play-Based Learning (APBL), an educational approach that incorporates traditional African games into the classroom as a learning tool that creates a connection between a student's cultural background to what the student is learning, makes learning more relevant and creates an



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environment in which the student's learning is enhanced. Kudzi Marufu, and Jones Awe, conducted a 4-hour workshop at playgrounds, daycares, community events, libraries, and after-school programs in an effort to introduce APBL to the community. The objective of APBL is to help close the achievement gap and improve the learning outcomes for African Nova Scotian students. In this presentation, we describe why APBL matters to the African Nova Scotian learners and educators' community because playing regardless of age has a significant value in prompting physical prowess, teamwork, a sense of pride, and cognitive skills - thus, contributing to Africentric self-expression and the philosophy of Ubuntu among learners, educators as well as into the community at large. We present pictures and videos showcasing activities with children and traditional African games. Several other benefits can be derived from the APBL such as bringing global thinking (not group thinking) to the classroom, trying new ways of playing, and celebrating Nova Scotia's diversity through play and storytelling.

Title: Support Needs of General Nurses Working In Psychiatric Wards In Limpopo Province, South Africa

Author: M.E. Rangwaneni; University of Venda, South Africa

Nurses are the forefront liners of the health care system, including the mental health system, as they are the ones who assess, admit, treat, and manage MHCUs with different mental disorders. In many circumstances, hospitals allocate general nurses (general registered nurses, enrolled nurses, and enrolled nursing assistants) and psychiatric nurses in psychiatric wards. Despite their limited scope of practice, these general nurses in psychiatric wards face challenges and demands of working, functioning, and coping in psychiatric wards. Therefore, this study aimed to explore and describe the support needs of general nurses working in psychiatric wards in Limpopo Province, South Africa. A qualitative study explored and described the support needs of general nurses in Limpopo Province, South Africa, in psychiatric wards. Purposive sampling was used to select hospitals and general nurses. Unstructured interviews were used to collect data from 20 general nurses who gave informed consent. Participants were asked questions about their support needs while working in a psychiatric ward. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study. Data was analyzed using eight steps of Tech's method. Measures to ensure trustworthiness and ethical principles adhered to throughout the study. Themes that emerged after data analysis were a) professional development and (b) wellness services. The study concluded that psychiatric nurses and hospital management should support general nurses in psychiatric wards through professional development and wellness services. Further research is required to evaluate the efficiency of the support process to improve the delivery of care for MHCUs' psychiatric wards.

Title: Myths and Misconceptions About Food Restriction During Pregnancy Amongst Elderly Women Of Rural Villages In Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Author: Harvey Sekwaleng Malapane, Mukhethwa Khorommbi, Anzani Mugware, and Tshifhiwa Cytheia Mandiwana; University of Venda, South Africa

Women and children are the most vulnerable to malnutrition due to inadequate dietary intake, unequal food distribution, improper food storage and preparation as well as dietary restrictions.

To investigate the myths and misconceptions about food restriction during pregnancy amongst elderly women of rural villages in Limpopo Province, South Africa. Qualitative descriptive and exploratory design was used. Thirty-four elderly women aged 60 years and above were purposively sampled from two rural villages of Limpopo Province. Seven focus group discussions were conducted with three to five members per group using a semi-structured interview guide. Thematic content analysis was used for data analysis. Findings show that food restrictions occur in all food groups, though protein foods were the most restricted during pregnancy which includes African tripe, chicken feet and head, eggs, ox-livers, meat, and recommended foods are mostly fruits and vegetables. The study revealed that myths and misconceptions about food restrictions during pregnancy

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still exist and culture was observed as the main influence on food restriction. Although culture cannot be easily changed, awareness should be raised to ensure that pregnant women are not deprived of foods that are essential during pregnancy for the development and growth of the fetus. The current study will help to bridge the gap of the existing knowledge about the restriction of certain foods during pregnancy.

Title: Perceived needs of family members caring for MHCUs in Vhembe District Limpopo Province

Author: T.E. Mbedzi, A.E. an der Wath, M.M. Moagi; University of Venda, South Africa

The prevalence of mental illness is on the rise in all regions of the world. There is an increased need for families to give care due to the deinstitutionalization (DI) of mental health care users (MHCUs) to community-based care. Family members may not be psychologically, emotionally, and socially prepared to undertake this new role. In the context of South Africa, most MHCUs reside in rural areas and 91% of them live with their family members. Exploring and describing the needs of family members caring for MHCUs is important for addressing their healthcare needs. The study aimed to explore and describe the needs of family members caring for MHCUs in Vhembe district, Limpopo province, South Africa. A qualitative, descriptive, and contextual design was used to collect data. The study used a non-probability purposive sampling technique to select family members caring for MHCUS in the Vhembe district of Limpopo province. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, and analysis was done using thematic data analysis. Measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the study were taken into consideration throughout the study. The results of the interview yielded two themes: The healthcare needs, and the healthcare expectations needs of family members caring for MHCUs. The study showed that family members caring for MHCUs have varied needs from the healthcare system. Therefore, family support from other family members, the community, and the healthcare providers could reduce the care burden perceived by family members.

Title: Efficacy of endogenous parenting practices in contemporary under-resourced communities: A nexus of IKS and Social Work perspective

Author: Adam T. Mukushi, Jabulani. C Makhubele. and Vincent Mabvurira; University of Venda, South Africa

This study sought to explore the contribution of the Shona indigenous knowledge systems to contemporary child protection in Zimbabwe. The study interest cropped up after realizing that children in need of care and protection were on increase reflecting gaps within the current “western” adopted system, hence, learning from indigenous knowledge, which to date is largely undocumented, could assist in improving the welfare of children. The study objectives were to examine ways in which traditional Zimbabwean people prevented child abuse, responded to child abuse, review the possibility of indigenous knowledge systems in strengthening contemporary child protection systems, and look at harmful traditional practices which need to be avoided. The study was informed by the Afrocentric perspective and adopted a qualitative approach with an exploratory case study design. The study was conducted in Gokwe North, a rural district in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. Twenty-four participants were purposively sampled and engaged, and these included three chiefs, one District Development Coordinator, one community cadre, one child protection social worker, three village heads, and three elderly people. Data was gathered through interviews and a focus group discussion. Data collected were analysed using thematic content analysis. The study found that from time immemorial there have always been culturally appropriate strategies for preventing child abuse. Child protection strategies that were used include sexual and relationship education, virginity tests, a central locking system, curfew times, myths, and collective responsibility. If child abuse happened, physical punishment and traditional courts were the major responsive mechanisms. Some of these traditional practices have great potential in strengthening the contemporary child protection system by focusing on rebuilding and strengthening extended family ties, community-based structures for the protection of orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) and tapping into traditional wisdom. The study recommends the reconstruction of extended family unity and capacitating community-based structures for supporting OVC and integration of traditional wisdom in educating children.

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