Ubuntu Ethics: A framework for rehumanising social research with young people

Trevor MAKHETHA

ABSTRACT

Ubuntu is an African moral and philosophic worldview based on the values of shared and interconnected humanness. This contribution argues that Ubuntu can and should be extended to the realm of social science research by embracing Ubuntu ethics: an alternative ethical framework to the dominant Western-centric conventions. This presents social science researchers with a viable opportunity to open areas of inquiry that are often considered too sensitive, taboo, or risky to study. This is especially true for researchers working in oppressive, exploitative, exclusionary, and dehumanising contexts. This youth-centred qualitative study shows that research which embraces Ubuntu ethics has the potential to rehumanise research participants and researchers alike. By reflecting on research conducted with young people who work and live on the streets of Cape Town, I illustrate the transformative potential of research rooted in Ubuntu Ethics. This contribution offers a novel reformulation of research ethics in practice, specifically useful for the teaching and practice of Social Work Research in Africa.

KEY TERMS: *Ubuntu ethics, social work research, decolonising research, rehumanising research, homeless youth*

AUTHOR DETAILS

Trevor MAKHETHA, PhD, Department of Sociology, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

Current and previous volumes are available at:
https://ajsw.africasocialwork.net

HOW TO REFERENCE USING ASWDNET STYLE

Makhetha T (2024). Ubuntu Ethics: A framework for rehumanising social research with young people. *African Journal of Social Work, 14(6),* 382-391. https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ajsw.v14i6.9

INTRODUCTION

This paper draws on research conducted with young people who live and work on the streets of Cape Town, South Africa. My study sought to explore the reasons why youth live and work on the street, their family and community backgrounds as well as the livelihood strategies they employ as means to survive. However, during my fieldwork, I encountered multiple ethical dilemmas. These ethical dilemmas concerned what I deemed to be normal human exchanges such as sharing food or other resources and discussing personal matters not directly related to the research questions such as our health, the scars on our bodies, emotions, and past experiences of grieving and the loss of loved ones. As a novice researcher at the time, I felt as if it was expected of me to alienate myself from my participants as much as possible. I was made to believe that the more "objective" I was, the better my research will be. Objectivity was synonymous with detachment. However, this Western imperative to remain "objective" or detached was in direct conflict with my own cultural and political values and beliefs. Indeed, like many before me, I felt like my Western-centric tertiary training was dehumanising me and those people who share my socioeconomic and cultural background such as the participants in my study. I felt a great sense of discomfort and in these moments rumbled the sentiments of renowned artist, Queen, when they said, "God knows I want to break free!"

This paper is structured as follows: I examine the dominance and pitfalls of uncritically subscribing to what I term "Western-centric" ethics and the urgency for African scholars to embrace and adopt African philosophy and cosmology as a guiding principle in our conceptualisation of research ethics. I then introduce what is meant by Ubuntu, Ubuntu ethics, and its potential for the rehumanisation of social research in Africa. I then discuss the methodology used to structure the research. This is followed by personal ethnographic reflections of my research experience with young people who live and work on the streets of Cape Town, South Africa. I then discuss the significance of my findings in relation to existing scholarship as it pertains to research as a potential humanising endeavour, and how my work calls for a shift in how we conceptualise Social Work practice and research on the African continent. The paper is concluded by reflecting on how this contribution adds to the growing chorus calling for centring African ways of being in and knowing the world.

Beyond Western-centric ethics

Whilst calls for decolonising research and decolonising research methodologies (Smith, 1999) reverberated through much of the post-colonial world in the last 30 years (Maldonado-Torres, 2006), Western-centric ontologies and epistemologies remain dominant (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). This is true concerning "research ethics" or what is considered "ethical research" or "ethical behaviour". Mangena (2016:67) argues that Western-centric understandings of ethics are often limited to Aristotelian eudaimonism, Kantian deontology, Platonic Justice and Metzian norms. I contend that mandatory compliance with Western-centric research ethics, enforced primarily by Research Ethics Committees (RECs) or Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), is by its very nature reactive. It is reactionary in the sense that it emanates from conventions and codes such as the Nuremberg Code, The Declaration of Helsinki, The Belmont Report, and The Common Rule as a response to the horrible, inhumane and racist treatment of so-called "human subjects." If that was not the case, we would not have had "human experiments" such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, the Willowbrook Hepatitis Study, and Nazi medical experiments resulting in the genocide of millions of Jews, and the Herero and Nama peoples of Namibia. These events led to the institutionalisation of, broadly speaking, the Research Ethics Committees/ Institutional Review Boards (IRBs/RECs). Regrettably, as Guishard (2015) asserts, IRBs/RECs tend to be:

I.   Rooted in individualised, western, and white-privileged conceptualisations of risk which too often discount third-party and community risk/stigma.

II.   More applicable to positivistic, biomedical, and clinical research designs than to social and behavioural, qualitative, and/or participatory orientations research.

III. Rarely inclusive of members of the populations under study in the ethical analyses of research risks, benefits, and burdens.

IV.   Presumptuous about the moral superiority, knowledge and capacities academic researchers possess compared to the naivete and vulnerability of the researched.

V.   Inattentive to a "care perspective" on research ethics and thus prioritising: general knowledge over nuanced knowledge, rights over responsibilities, impartial, formal, and abstract principles over subjective, "contextualised", informal, intimate, and "concrete practices".

In other words, Western-centric conceptualisations of research ethics are (at the best of times reactionary, and at the worst of times) inappropriate to adequately facilitate "ethical research" in Africa and the global South (Louw, 2008; Chillisa, 2011; Chilisa, Major & Khudu-Petersen, 2017; Crawford, Mai-Bornu & Landstrom, 2021). Consequently, this contribution proposes Ubuntu ethics – an African moral and philosophic worldview – as a vehicle to decolonise and rehumanise social research. Like Denzin (2008:1) I conceptualised ethics as "pedagogies

of practice" and concur when he states that "Institutional Review Boards (IRB's)/ Research Ethics Committee (REC's) are institutional apparatuses that regulate a particular form of ethical conduct, a form that may be no longer workable in a transdisciplinary, global and postcolonial world". Similarly, Social Work scholars and practitioners in recent years echoed this sentiment for research and practice to embrace African morals and philosophies – African ways of being in and knowing the world (see for example Khupe, 2014; Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013; Chigangaidze, 2022; Chigevenga, 2022).

Ubuntu ethics, I argue, is at its core decolonial. I frame decolonising social research as a process of gathering data with communities that places local voices and epistemologies at the centre of the research process. Decolonised research is inherently human-centred (Smith, 1999). Likewise, by rehumanising research, I argue from the point of view that colonisation, slavery, and apartheid in South Africa were fundamentally about dehumanising us as a people (Bhengu, 1996). It was about asserting the myth that some human beings were superior to others (Mokgoro, 1998). South Africa, as was the case with the rest of the colonised world, was thus a dehumanising space (Mokgoro, 1998; Bhengu, 1996). Some of the same narratives exist in dominant scholarship and literature concerning research methodology in general and research ethics in particular (Smith, 1999; Zavala, 2013). There is thus a need to rethink what counts as ethical research, especially in the global South and in Africa (Seehawer, 2018). Like Chigevenga (2022:205), I contend that we need to "revamp research methods and processes utilised in African contexts so that it becomes meaningful and beneficial to both the researcher and the researched". Moreover, in building on the work of Seehawer (2018), Keikelame & Swarts (2019) and Chigangaidze (2022), I offer tangible strategies for how one might implement (or as I prefer embody) Ubuntu Ethics in qualitative social research.

Ubuntu ethics: Toward an alternative ethical framework

Ubuntu is derived from the Nguni (isiZulu) aphorism: "*Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu*" or in seSotho "*motho ke motho ka batho babang*" (Ramose, 1999). Translated into English, it means "a person is a person through other persons" (Broodryk, 2008). Said differently, it means "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore, I am" (Mbiti, 1969:215). My humanity – *our humanity!* – is thus inextricably tied (Ramose, 1999). It goes to the heart of what it means to be a human. For Shutte (2001:2) Ubuntu "embodies an understanding of what it is to be human and what is necessary for human beings to grow and find fulfilment. It is an ethical concept and expresses a vision of what is valuable and worthwhile in life". Indeed, Ubuntu is an "African worldview based on the values of intense humanness, caring, sharing, respect, compassion and associated values, ensuring a happy and qualitative community life in the spirit of family" (Ramoze, 1999; Broodryk, 2008:17).

The late Desmond Tutu, Chairperson of the South African Truth and Reconciliation [TRC] Commission and Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, once remarked that *"Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language. It speaks of the very essence of being human ... It is to say, 'My humanity is inextricably bound up in yours'. We belong in a bundle of life".* Indeed, words do not, and cannot, fully convey the depth of this aphorism. Likewise, Broodryk (2008:17) posit that "Ubuntu is a comprehensive ancient African world-view based on the values of intense humanness, caring, sharing, respect, compassion and associated values, ensuring a happy and qualitative community life in the spirit of family". Phillip Ogochukwu Ujomudike (2016) recently offered a working definition of ubuntu ethics as "a set of values central among which are reciprocity, common good, peaceful relations, emphasis on human dignity, and the value of human life as well as consensus, tolerance, and mutual respect". This contribution extends this work by offering some practical ways to implement Ubuntu Ethics in qualitative social research.

Ubuntu ethics, I argue, presents us with a viable opportunity to open areas of inquiry often considered to be too sensitive, taboo, or too risky to investigate or examine (see also Nokgoro, 1998; Metz & Gaieb, 2010; Mkabela, 2015). This is especially true for constituencies considered to be marginalised or oppressed (Mkhezi, 2008). Children and youth in general, and those who work and live on the street (commonly referred to as "homeless children/youth") in particular, are such a constituency. I argue that dominant Western-centric understandings of ethical behaviour are not only restrictive and limiting, but it is at its core, reactionary rather than preventative (see also Mkabela, 2015 and Mkhize, 2008). In what follows I illustrate how applying Ubuntu ethics enabled and necessitated more than harm reduction, informed consent, and anonymity in my interactions with my participants, who later becomes my friends.

METHODOLOGY

At the time of doing this research, I was employed as a Social Worker and supervisor of an outpatient rehabilitation centre in Cape Town, South Africa. Most of the young people – aged 13 - 25 with whom I interacted had a history of neglect, abuse, and trauma. The more I worked with these young people, the more questions it generated, such as: is there a measure of choice involved in living on the street, or is it a function of circumstance only? What are their experiences of intimidation and abuse? What responses are forthcoming from local and national authorities?

These and other questions initially inspired me to conduct the research. My study set out to explore the reasons young people cite for being on the street; their family and community background and how that contributed to them choosing to live and work on the street. Livelihood strategies these young people employ were also explored; and lastly, the extent of interaction between young people who live and work on the street and law enforcement agencies. Ethical clearance for this study was approved by the Faculty of Law, at the University of Cape Town, and all procedural ethics were adhered to.

This qualitative study relied mainly on formal and informal observations (to establish trends and patterns), focus group discussions, and individual semi-structured interviews. Youth, for the purpose of my study, were defined as persons aged 18 – 35 who live and work on the street. This was an important consideration to ensure that participants were considered of legal age in respect of informed consent. Once I identified young people within this age range, I asked if I may observe their interactions with the aim that these observations will form the basis of later semi-structured interviews. My introduction to potential participants related to who I was, what I was researching, and why I wanted to conduct this research. There was a general sense of interest in why somebody "like me" would want to talk to people "like them". I later learned that because of my reputation as a Social Worker, some of my participants constructed me as an important resource but also as strict with close ties to law enforcement agencies. After contracting and signing consent forms (a condition set by my IRB/REC) I started observing the young people and within a few days, I was invited to "hang out" with my participants on street corners, at the beach, in parking lots and on the mountain (where most of their social activities, such as eating, sleeping, drinking, etc, take place) along the southern peninsula of Cape Town, South Africa. After becoming more acquainted with my participants I invited them to participate in focused group discussions and later individual interviews. Interviews and focus group discussions took place in the afternoons during weekdays and over weekends. On average, I conducted two to three in-depth interviews with the 12 participants selected for this study. The age of the participants I reflected on in this paper ranged from 18 and 25 years. All verbal discussions were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data was then systemically analysed and written up in a dissertation and in other published formats.

FINDINGS: EMBODYING UBUNTU ETHICS

Negotiating access

I employed snowball sampling, and that is how I met most of my participants. Approaching youth who live and work on the street was a daunting task, and the reception I received was more pleasant with some than with others. For example, I found my initial contact with males more hostile than with females. Males were more defensive and more suspicious of me, some asking whether the contents of our conversations would be shared with the police and their relatives. The initial opposition I encountered, I later discovered, was a form of gatekeeping to ensure that these young people are not further exploited. Likewise, senior (older) members in these groups typically act as gatekeepers and for me to access younger members, I needed the "blessing" of senior members. Negotiating access, and later consent, was a dynamic and evolving process. What fascinated me the most was the importance that all members of the group needed to agree on before I would be granted access. At first, senior members of the group would request that I explain in detail what I hope to achieve from my research, what I needed from them, and what I would do with their information. Being respectful of their time, group dynamics and hierarchy was of utmost importance to the senior members. After spending a considerable amount of time with my participants, one of the senior members, unprovoked, explained to me why he was "hard on me". This incident reaffirmed my belief that it is crucial to build rapport and a sense of trust if I wanted my participants to speak freely about their experiences on the street. It also illustrated the importance to respect groups and communities and not imposing my values on them. Moreover, these young people wanted to ensure that our relationship would not be unequal (as much as that was possible) to their disadvantage. This made me appreciate them and their involvement even more.

Language

At the beginning of the research process, I interacted with my participants dressed in semi-formal clothing thinking that I needed to look "respectable" if I wanted them to take me seriously. My dress code, instead, isolated me from these young people. After this incident, I decided to wear mostly short pants and T-shirts. I choose this dress code, partly to blend in (as far as that was possible) and for young people to see my willingness to work with them (ie: physical labour – such as car guiding) and to get dirty. During our discussions, my participants often joked that I was not used to "getting dirty" but commended me for my efforts. This was an important step in building rapport, after which they were more open to talking to me. Additionally, I discovered that when speaking to them in English, they found it difficult to fully express themselves compared to me speaking to them in Kaaps. Kaaps is the spoken language for the overwhelming majority of the young people I interacted with. To this end, language

was a source of power within the group, because those who spoke English (during informal group meetings) tended to dominate discussions. It is important to note that most tourists who visit Cape Town mostly communicate in English. As such, those fluent in English are tasked to beg for money and food. This in turn gives them a power base within the group. Subsequent interviews were conducted only in Kaaps. I believe language – and the ability to speak a particular variant thereof – was a turning point in my research, and made my participants more accessible and willing to embrace and interact with me.

Building relationships based on trust, empathy, and care

As I indicated before, initial contact with almost all my participants was uncomfortable and they treated me with a level of contempt and mistrust. I was positioned as an outsider. Furthermore, I had a full-time job and was living in a decent and secure shelter. I had a lot more going for me when compared to these young people. The reality was, in my mind, I could have easily been one of them. Nevertheless, establishing rapport and trust with my participants was crucial for the study to be successful. This proved to be challenging, and time-consuming because I needed to spend much time building rapport before initiating conversations about my research project. As such, pre-interview conversations were more informal and less structured. These conversations related to street living, and my participants often directed the conversation towards talking about romantic relationships and the loss of loved ones (my participants regarded these are important and probably to test whether I would be willing to share potentially emotive information) and I always obliged. For example, on one occasion, I spent two hours and ten minutes discussing with one male participant how I got the scar on my leg. At that moment it didn't dawn on me that "the personal question about a scar on my body" was irrelevant or even inappropriate, I instinctively responded and shared the story. This participant (without being asked to do so) showed me some of his scars and the stories behind those. Being vulnerable and open to sharing personal stories and parts of my life made it easier for my participants to also be vulnerable and share stories of their own. Not once did I feel afraid or scared to "open up" – in hindsight, I felt safe and cared for by my participants.

Participating in community work

The young people whom I encountered come from a history of distrust and disappointment, which made it difficult for them to trust people generally, and adults in particular. The majority of the youth I engaged with knew that I was a Social Worker in the community, but this did not make accessing them any easier. Apart from changing the way I dressed and how I communicated with them, I needed to spend a lot more time with them doing what they do (such as begging and working as a car guard – what my participants call "work"). In the first two months, I made sure I always had coins or packed sandwiches in my backpack in case they asked me – they always did. Very sensitive and personal stories were shared whilst "*working*". One particular Saturday afternoon, after working as a parking attendant with my participant I handed the money I made to the senior member and he said: "*it's okay, you can keep the money, we enjoyed working with you today*". It was evident that they accepted me into their group (even if it was temporary and attached to certain conditions) which solidified our relationship. I became particularly close with a 23-year-old male, who is also a senior member of the group. This participant previously worked as a drug mule and recounted countless stories of how the drug trade worked. The fact that he shared this incriminating information is itself essential to reflect upon. Since then, my participants looked for me and whenever they saw me (even during working hours) they would come up to me, take my hand, or lean on me as we would talk. Asking them questions was no longer difficult, and before I could ask them they would start telling me what happened the night before, who fought with whom, who stole whose food, and who had sex with whom, where, etc.

Giving, "helping out", and sharing personal resources

Throughout the process of doing this research, I was constantly asking myself, "Am I giving too much or too little? "After reflecting on my research journey, I realised that my relationship with young people was not about whether I was able to give them food or money, but it became about spending time together. We became friends, and I loved their company. We were always excited to share stories about our lived realities and well-being. For me, it became about spending my friends and comrades! In hindsight, there were many moments I forgot that I was engaged in "data collection". My encounters with my participants felt easy and unpretentious. It felt 'normal'. But it was this very sense of feeling comfortable and relaxed with my participants that triggered feelings that something was wrong…for, after all, I was the researcher (the knowledge bearer/ the person with power and influence), and they were the helpless victims of society and the state! This notion could not be further from the truth. On the contrary, my participants rejected any sense of pity and wanted to be regarded as resourceful and innovative.

This notwithstanding, when young people asked me for assistance I always did so. For example, a 21-year-old female asked if I could help create her CV because she was potentially going to get a job at a nearby restaurant (which she did). I recently checked in with this participant who reported that she now lives at a night shelter and works as a waitress at the same restaurant. I also assisted two male youths with getting their identity documents, both of them are now engaged in contractual manual labour, one is reunited with his family, and the other lives in a night shelter. I have not written about this until now, fearing that my objectivity in the research and my proximity to the research participants may be criticised as being too close, and too subjective. Shame Blackman (2007) discusses the tendency of researchers who do not write about experiences that would portray them as doing "unacademic". As an emerging black scholar, I too had similar fears that I could be critiqued for not taking my research seriously. But these notions conflict with my own cultural and ideological beliefs about what it means to be human in a context such as South Africa, Africa, and the Global South.

DISCUSSION

Qualitative research conducted with children and youth in educational, health and social welfare settings has increased considerably over the last century (Smith, 1999). Children and youth coming from impoverished backgrounds, often constructed as doubly marginalised by both the state as well as society at large, have been the focus of much of this research (Fredericks & Adams, 2011; Kurtis & Adams, 2015). Such research highlighted key insights gathered particularly through qualitative research conducted in contexts of poverty and unemployment, oppression, social exclusion, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, and war. In other words, that data was collected in dehumanising spaces. Surprisingly, this kind of research often presents its findings with little or no reflection on the human interaction/dynamic between the researcher(s) and their participant(s). This contribution is written in response to this gap in the literature, as well as to recent calls to rehumanise social inquiry. Moreover, I draw on ethnographic journal entries to illustrate the important internal shifts I went through, which I believe, also changed my Social Work research and practice with young people. Indeed, conducting this study fundamentally changed my Social Work practice, as well as how I conceptualise "research ethics" or "ethical research". In what follows, I reflect on the implications of my findings for existing scholarship on ethical research in social science, and the humanising potential of research grounded in Ubuntu Ethics.

Research as a humanising endeavour

Participants explained to me that they are often tricked into unequal and exploitative relationships with other adults, including those associated with NGOs and the state. This made them suspicious and distrusting "outsiders". This was indeed an interesting observation and confirmed to me that although "homeless", these young people are not without agency, intellect, or common sense. On the contrary, these young people were resourceful, resilient, and wanted to be treated as equals. This made it possible for me to be myself – being open and honest about my past, my life experiences, the trauma I experienced, and how ill-equipped I felt to be doing this kind of research. So much so that at times I asked myself "I am I really doing research"/ "Is this really what I am supposed to be doing". I asked these questions because my "advanced research methodology training" often positioned researchers as silent/objective actors in the research process. In these courses, we almost always only read and engaged "the data". We hardly read/learnt about the feelings, emotions, and reactions of the researcher in qualitative research. On the few occasions that we discussed the role of the researcher, it was almost always in relation to "research ethics", and these discussions were limited to informed consent, voluntary participation, and doing no harm. Based on the literature reflected earlier, it is evident that although well intended, western-centric conceptualisations are often rooted in individualised, western, and white-privileged conceptualisations of risk which too often discount third-party and community risk/stigma. I, in turn, was intentional about using my research as a strategy to amplify young people's voices and acknowledge their agency. This, I believe, rehumanised them and disrupted the notion of positioning them as "at risk" or "risky" youth. Rather, reveals them as individuals with complex stories filled with love, trauma, joy, frustrations happiness, anger, pleasure, and sorrow. These young people are no different to any of us who may not be in their shoes. They are human, and that connects(ed) us. That is also what liberates(ed) us.

Ubuntu ethics and social work research

At its core, "Social Work is a practice-based profession that advances social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and emancipation of people" (Chigangaidze, 2022). If we are to realise this objective we have to acknowledge local knowledge and ways of being in the world. We have to respect and affirm human agency, dignity, and humanity. I believe Ubuntu enables us to amplify human capabilities and strengths. Moreover, Ubuntu ethics creates the conditions necessary to engage in meaningful social research that does not exploit, oppress, or invalidate. Rather, it asserts that my humanity (as the researcher) is inextricably linked to

theirs (the researched). Research so conceived has the potential to open areas of inquiry often considered to be too sensitive, taboo, or too risky to investigate. The study revealed that qualitative research, built on trust, is best suited to explore the "homeless phenomenon", particularly among children and youth. In this particular study, it was found that it takes time to develop trusting relationships with young people, and researchers need to be flexible, and able to adapt to challenging (and changing) research environments. This study particularly showed how, at times, lines are blurred, making it difficult to distinguish between the researcher and the researched. The study illuminated the value of creatively engaging young people and "tuning in". Of particular importance was appreciating and critically examining the contradictions and complexity of the identities we inhabit and 'perform' – whether it be a researcher/professional or researcher/researched. More than anything, this revealed that before I am a researcher/academic/scholar, I am a human being. Moreover, my humanity is inextricably tied to theirs, thus, my well-being is bound up with theirs.

CONCLUSION

Conducting research with youth who live and work on the street requires sincere and culturally appropriate research techniques. This contribution argues that Ubuntu ethics presents us with a viable opportunity to open areas of inquiry often considered to be too sensitive, taboo, or too risky to investigate or examine. I argued that dominant Western-centric understandings of ethical behaviour are not only restrictive and limiting, but it is at its core, reactionary rather than preventative. The quality and depth of data I collected would not have been possible had I not "crossed some lines": meaning that I deviated from the official script by which I was expected to follow in the course of my research. My Westernized postgraduate training (even though I am located at the Southern tip of the African continent) installed within me a deep sense of ambivalence concerning the nature of the relationships I could cultivate with my participants. However, in the field, I rejected the "imperative" to remain detached from my participants which would've been tantamount to denying my participant's humanity – and by implication, my humanity. In hindsight, I don't think I would do it any differently, for Ubuntu demands more than rigid adherence to procedural ethics. It calls on us to place the needs of others before our own, for my well-being is inextricably tied to theirs. This contribution is particularly timely given the ongoing work to institutionalize Africa and the African conceptualisations of research ethics.

REFERENCES

Bhengu, M. J. (1996). *Ubuntu: the essence of democracy*. Cape Town, South Africa: Novalis Press.

Chilisa, B. (2011)*. Indigenous research methodologies.* Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Chilisa, B., Major, T. and Khudu-Petersen, K. (2017). Community engagement with a postcolonial, African-based relational paradigm. *Qualitative Research. 17. (3),* 326-339. 10.1177/1468794117696176.

Crawford, G., Mai-Bornu, Z. and Landström, K. (2021) Decolonising knowledge production on Africa: why it's still necessary and what can be done. *Journal of the British Academy, 9(s1),* 21–46.

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S., & Smith, L. T, eds. (2008). *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Dube, M. (2009). "I am because we are': giving primacy to African indigenous values in HIV&AIDS prevention". In *African ethics: an anthology of comparative and applied ethics*, edited by M. F. Murove. University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 188–217.

Fredericks, B., & Adams, K. (2011). "Decolonising action research". ALAR: *Action Learning and Action Research Journal, 17*, 2–7.

Keane, M., Khupe, C. and Seehawer, M. (2017). "Decolonising methodology: who benefits from indigenous knowledge research?" *Educational Research and Social Change, 6*:12–24.

Keikelame M, J. and Swartz, L. (2019). Decolonising research methodologies: lessons from a qualitative research project, Cape Town, South Africa, Global *Health Action, 12:1*, 1561175, DOI:10.1080/16549716.2018.1561175

Khupe, C. (2014). Indigenous knowledge and school science: Possibilities for integration. Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Khupe C, and Keane M. (2017). Towards an African education research methodology: decolonising new knowledge. *Education Research for Social Change, 6*, 25–37.

Kurtiş, T., & Adams, G. E. (2015). "Decolonizing liberation: Toward transnational feminist psychology*". Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 3*, 388–413.

Louw, D. (2006). "The African concept of Ubuntu and restorative justice". In *Handbook of restorative justice: a global perspective*, edited by D. Sullivan & L. Tifft. New York: Routledge, pp 161–172.

Mangena, M. (2016). African Ethics through Ubuntu: A Postmodern Exposition. Africology: *The Journal of Pan African Studies, 9:2,* 66-80.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2011). "Thinking through the decolonial turn: Post-continental interventions, in theory, philosophy, and critique—an introduction. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Hispanic World, 1,* 1–15.

Metz, T and Gaieb, J. B. R. (2010). The African ethic of Ubuntu/Botho: Implications for research on morality. *Journal of Moral Education 39(3)*, 273–290

Mkabela, Q. N. (2015). Ubuntu as the foundation for researching African indigenous psychology. *Indilinga – African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, 4,* 284–291.

Mkhize, N. (2008). "Ubuntu and harmony: an African approach to morality and ethics". In R. Nicolson (Ed.) *Persons in community: African ethics in a global culture.* Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. pp 35–44.

Mokgoro, Y. (1998). "Ubuntu and the law in South Africa". *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal, 1(1),* 15–26.

Mugumbate, J., & Chereni, A. 2019. "Using African ubuntu theory in social work with children in Zimbabwe." *African Journal of Social Work, 9(1),* 27–34.

Mugumbate, J., & Nyanguru, A. (2013). "Exploring African philosophy: The value of ubuntu in social work." *African Journal of Social Work,, 3(1),* 82–100.

Mupedziswa, R., Rankopo, M., & Mwansa, L. (2019). Ubuntu as a Pan-African philosophical framework for Social Work in Africa. In J. M. Twikirize & H. Spitzer (Eds.), *Social work practice in Africa: Indigenous and innovative approaches*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Nhemachena A, Mlambo N. and Kaundjua M. (2016). "The notion of the 'field' and the practices of researching and writing Africa: towards decolonial praxis*". Journal of Pan African Studies, 9,* 15–36.

Prinsloo, E. D. (1998). "Ubuntu culture and participatory management". In *Philosophy from Africa; a text with readings*, edited by P. H. Coetzee & A. P. J. Roux. Cape Town, Oxford University Press Southern Africa. pp 41–51.

Ramose, M. (1999). *African philosophy through Ubuntu*. Harare: Mond Books.

Seehawer M, K. (2018). Decolonising research in a Sub-Saharan African context: exploring Ubuntu as a foundation for research methodology, ethics and agenda. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 21*, 4, 453-466.

Shutte, A. (2001). *Ubuntu: an ethic for the new South Africa.* Cape Town, South Africa: Cluster Publications.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonising methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London, England: Zed Books.

Ujomudike, P. O. (2016). "Ubuntu Ethics". In Ten Have, H. (Ed) *Encyclopaedia of Global Bioethics.* Springer, Cham.

Zavala, M. (2013). "What do we mean by decolonizing research strategies? Lessons from decolonizing, Indigenous research projects in New Zealand and Latin America". *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 2*, 55–71.