

“Nothing About Us Without Us”: Towards Community-Centred Education and Research

Tuesday 3 August 2021 - Parallel Session 2 - 12.45pm to 1.45pm (GMT+1)

GRANT - Developing Cultural Responsiveness

Constance Khupe (*University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa*)

In post-colonial southern Africa, calls for the preservation of Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies in education and research exist side-by-side with school curricula and research practices that are primarily based on the experiences and worldviews of the privileged and the powerful. Although Indigenous groups constitute the majority of the southern African population, their knowledge and ways of living remain at the margins of education and research. Widening access has not improved educational outcomes. Learner-centred curricula are yet to be explored in ways that align education with priorities of Indigenous people in rural communities. Prescribed centralised curricula are founded outside of the realities and experiences of rural and indigenous learners. This paper draws on findings from an exploratory study with a rural-based Indigenous community in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa to propose a community-centred education and research framework as an imperative for relevant education and relevant research. The framework proposes meaningful engagement, collaborative engagement with communities in making research and education decisions. Community-centred education and research has the potential to contribute towards acknowledging the role of indigenous knowledge and practices in shaping and sustaining the livelihoods of rural-based populations.