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Situating Ubuntu Philosophy in Pre-service Teacher Education

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Abstract. Ubuntu African philosophy and its values have been a subject of discussion by stakeholders due to its humanness and communal nature. It embodies African cultural values and belief systems that form the ways of life of indigenous people. These critical attributes of Ubuntu have necessitated its integration into pre-service teacher education to prepare Ubuntu-focused teachers who can contribute to decolonizing the education system in South Africa and beyond. However, efforts must be made to integrate Ubuntu values into pre-service teacher education. This paper reports on an investigation of the relevance of Ubuntu's philosophy to pre-service teacher education. The investigation adopted the qualitative integrative literature review approach by selecting twenty-four articles from Scopus, EBSCO, and Google Scholar databases for review. The authors selected relevant articles using the relevant inclusion criteria and analyzed them under different themes to answer the two research questions formulated for this study. In order to increase teachers' capacity to support the decolonization of education in Africa, the article suggests that the humanness and communalism approaches to education should be incorporated into pre-service teacher education curricula. That the quest for colonial knowledge over the years in South Africa and, indeed, Africa has been attributed to the Eurocentric and increased domination of African culture of togetherness and ethics of care. The paper also concludes that Ubuntu higher education can serve as a framework for decolonizing the African higher education system. The authors suggest that there is a need to formulate strategies for integrating important values of Ubuntu, like humanness, interconnectedness, and communalism, into the pre-service teacher education program.

Keywords: humanness; communalism; decolonization; pre-service teacher education; Ubuntu

1. Introduction

Ubuntu philosophy and its relevance to teaching and learning has been a subject of discourse among education stakeholders. The principle of Ubuntu is not only relevant to teaching and learning (Etieyibo, 2017), but studies have also indicated

that Ubuntu philosophy can help in shaping the values of the society, particularly democratic values such as human rights (Oviawe, 2016), the right of people to participate in politics and involvement in nation building (Etieyibo, 2017; Oviawe, 2016) as entrenched in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa. In the view of Nkoane and Phori (2019), Ubuntu philosophy is multifaceted and multidimensional because it is the foundation and the means through which African indigenous education is disseminated. Education experts and other critical stakeholders have advocated the need to integrate Ubuntu values into the pre-service teacher education curriculum to produce teachers with the capacity to integrate Ubuntu values into classroom teaching (Makalela, 2018; Mkosi et al., 2023). The relevance of Ubuntu philosophy has gained momentum and recognition in educational discourse. However, African governments still need to make greater efforts to ensure its full integration into the school curriculum to decolonize the education system (Mwansa, 2011; Seehawer, 2018). The South African school curriculum reflects the colonial Eurocentric education consciousness (Heleta, 2016; Senekal & Lenz, 2020). In-service teachers, who are the essential drivers in the implementation of the curriculum, lack the knowledge of Ubuntu and the indigenous knowledge system in decolonizing education curriculum either because it was not part of their pre-service Bachelor of education program or in-service training program provided by the Department of Basic Education (Mthimkhulu, 2024). In addressing this gap, this study intends to examine literature to find out the level of integration of Ubuntu values in the pre-service teacher Bachelor of education program by exploring the awareness levels of preservice teachers about Ubuntu values and their potential to contribute to the task of decolonizing education in South African schools. The pre-service teachers are expected to be key drivers of the implementation of decolonization of education; hence, they must be adequately informed about Ubuntu values and the indigenous knowledge system while undergoing pre-service teacher training programs. The findings of the research may help the curriculum designers for the Bachelor of Education program rewrite the course material in light of the necessity of decolonizing South African education. The paper addresses the idea of Ubuntu philosophy, its historical context, and some of the research that has been done to determine whether Ubuntu pedagogy is still relevant for use in higher education in various Southern African nations. Additionally, the paper provides a brief overview of a few key ideas in the decolonization of African education and pre-service teacher education. The study examined the literature to answer the following research questions:

- What is the relevance of Ubuntu philosophy in the pre-service teacher Bachelor of Education program?
- In what ways can Ubuntu values assist pre-service Bachelor of education teachers to decolonize education?

2. Research Method

2.1 Research Design

The study adopted systematic literature review research design for data collection and analysis. The systematic literature review design is described as: “a scientific process governed by a set of explicit and demanding rules oriented towards demonstrating comprehensiveness, immunity from bias, and transparency and

accountability of technique and execution” (Dixon-Woods, 2011, p. 332). Other researchers also say that systematic literature review approach is suitable in identifying research that has been done, areas with limited research, and those areas that need further research (Cooper et al., 2018). This approach has been identified as suitable for this study because it will enable the researchers to critically evaluate the importance of Ubuntu philosophy in pre-service teacher education. However, the systematic literature review findings are limited, making generalizing findings difficult (Cooper et al., 2018).

2.2 Criteria for Selection of Articles for the Study

Articles selected from the study followed predetermined criteria. To be included, selected articles had to be peer reviewed articles published between 2010 to 2023 (13 years) that speak to the research topic and research questions. The articles selected for the study are indexed in highly rated journals because of the need to ensure that the data for the study is from a credible source and falls under the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method research approaches. Articles selected for the study were searched manually from the EBSCO database. The authors did not consider book chapters, conference proceedings, book reviews, commentaries, editorial notes, and books for the review. The authors considered only articles written in English, and articles written in other languages apart from English were rejected. After extensive review, 24 articles were carefully selected based on the abovementioned inclusion criteria. The two research questions the study intends to address are:

1. What is the relevance of Ubuntu philosophy in pre-service teacher Bachelor of Education programs?
2. In what ways can Ubuntu values assist pre-service Bachelor of education teachers to decolonize education?

The purpose of this paper is to explore the relevance of Ubuntu to pre-service teachers pursuing a Bachelor of Education and its impact on teaching and learning. The paper seeks to establish the need to integrate Ubuntu values into pre-service teacher education. This method is appropriate for articulating various tensions and ambiguities in the discourses of Ubuntu and decoloniality. The researchers conducted a comprehensive electronic literature search on the subject identified for the study. Articles selected for the study were analyzed and discussed under different themes to answer questions for which this study was specifically designed. In the literature, the following issues pertinent to this were extensively discussed under the following themes: Ubuntu African Philosophy, pre-service teacher education, Ubuntu philosophy in pre-service teacher education, Ubuntu and decolonization of education, and relevance of Ubuntu African philosophy in pre-service teacher education. Twenty-four (24) articles published in high-impact journals were selected for review and their key features are summarized below.

Table 1: Showing important characteristics of selected articles

S/N	Author (year)	Research Design	Sample/Population	Key Findings/Results
1.	Letseka (2012)	Qualitative	Literature and document analysis	Findings reveal that Ubuntu's philosophy can potentially promote public policy for the good of humanity. Also, it is found to have similarities with the Eurasian bildung philosophy that emphasizes Ubuntu ethics of caring and sharing.
2.	Waghid and Smeyers (2012)	Qualitative	Literature and document	The results demonstrate critically examined concepts and methods that are essential to African philosophy, together with the reasoning behind them, and how these kinds of philosophical investigation may lead to tenable educational partnerships.
3.	Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013)	Qualitative	Literature and document analysis	The paper's findings indicate that utilizing Ubuntu values in social work makes it suitable for enhancing ethical professional practice and community engagement.
4.	Daniel Mhlanga (2014)	Qualitative	Literature review	The findings reiterate the need to integrate community learning, like Ubuntu, into children's education. This can be done by using child-centred pedagogies complemented by a moral foundation from home.
5.	Mubangizi and Kaya (2015)	Qualitative	Two universities in South Africa	The results showed that two South African higher education institutions' curricula included integrations of the Ubuntu principles and African Indigenous Knowledge Systems.
6.	Ogunniyi and Rollnick (2015)	Qualitative	Selected African Countries	The results draw attention to the issue of insufficient pre-service teacher preparation, particularly in the physical sciences, across the African continent in the years after the end of colonial rule. At that time there was an urgent need for more qualified pre-service teachers at because sciences are the bedrock of development.

7.	Qobo and Nyathi (2016)	Quantitative	Document analysis	The findings pointed to the need to understand Ubuntu's humanistic values that seek to create solidarity beyond Sub-Saharan Africa. Ubuntu values can create understanding towards decolonizing education.
8.	Mukeredzi (2016)	Qualitative	Fifteen purposively selected Bachelor of Education students teachers.	Findings from the study suggests that the exposure of pre-service teachers to rural teaching during their pre-service programs can enhance their rural teaching pedagogy and develop their interest in teaching in the countryside.
9.	Nkambule and Mukeredzi (2017)	Qualitative	21 Bachelor of education students teachers, four secondary schools, and one primary school	The study reveals that in a province in South Africa, pre-service education programs can promote a shift in mindsets of teacher candidates due to their engagement in school experience in a rural setting.
10.	Etiyibo (2017)	Qualitative	Document analysis	The results of the study demonstrate the significance of Ubuntu pedagogy in the teaching of moral development and values in communities inspired by Ubuntu.
11.	Makalela (2018)	Qualitative	12-year second-year Bachelor students. 6 male and six female students.	The findings from the study reveal that the Ubuntu language pedagogy approach supports students in navigating and appreciating different languages.
12.	Nxumalo and Mncube (2018)	Qualitative	Literature and document analysis	The results highlight the significance of African Indigenous knowledge systems in the development and instruction of decolonized curriculum elements such as cultural values, ethical principles, and community identity.
13.	Ngubane and Gumede (2018)	Mixed method	50 Undergraduate students	Research indicates that students embrace Ubuntu as a foundation for fostering collaboration, community, respect, and compassion as well as a catalyst for exchanging knowledge, resources, and ideas.
14.	Nkoane and Phori (2019)	Qualitative	Not indicated	Teaching and learning in the 21 st century should follow new trends as opposed to outdated approaches. The findings also reveal that 21 st -century teaching, including Ubuntu-based pedagogies, can challenge students to be independent thinkers,

				and promote critical thinking and humane ethical consciousness.
15.	Mugumbate and Chereni (2019)	Qualitative	Document analysis, Literature.	The results demonstrate that social workers have a duty to connect with Ubuntu and validate the significance of these principles in their work with African children.
16.	Uleanya et al. (2019)	Mixed method	400 Undergraduate students, 8 Academic staff	The findings argue for the introduction of the mother tongue as a language of instruction in South African higher education institutions due to challenges encountered by students who struggle to learn through English as a medium of instruction.
17.	Tran and Wall (2019)	Qualitative (Interview)	25 vocational education, three states in Australia, 50 teachers.	The results show three ways that educating international students might embody the Ubuntu ideology. These three strategies are situatedness, connectivity, and humanness.
18.	Marovah (2020)	Qualitative	Literature	Ubuntu values help advance critical citizenship and inculcate citizenship values within the human and capacity approach framework.
19.	Waghid (2020)	Qualitative	Literature and document	The findings reveal that the Ubuntu philosophy framework for higher education can help strengthen the call for decolonizing education, particularly at the higher education level.
20.	Ngubane and Makua (2021)	Qualitative	Literature	The study affirms the status of Ubuntu as a transformative pedagogy and decolonial approach that supports inclusivity in African educational systems. The findings also call for the implementation of Ubuntu pedagogy at every level of education in South Africa.
21.	Ndebele and Legg-Jack (2022)	Quantitative (Semi-structured interview)	26 B.Ed. Hons	The findings affirm the importance of mentoring in pre-service teacher training programs because it helps develop student skills and competence as professional teachers.
22.	Mutanga (2022)	Qualitative (Interview, content analysis, and group discussion)	43 teachers (24 females & 19 males), ten in-service teachers, and 10 trainees, two schools comprise one rural and one urban	The findings highlight the challenges in realizing the Ubuntu philosophical values of inclusivity in education.

23.	Mkosi et al. (2023)	Qualitative	Literature, Document analysis.	The findings reveal the need to integrate Indigenous knowledge and Ubuntu Philosophy into the curriculum at all levels of education in South Africa. Also, it recommends professional development for in-service teachers on Ubuntu philosophy.
24.	Olawumi and Mavuso (2023)	Qualitative	26 peer review articles	Findings reveal the need for professional development for teachers to enhance their pedagogical competence to teach values and morals in the classroom. It can help learner transform their behavior and attitudes towards their environment.

3. Ubuntu African Philosophy

By sharing love, respect, togetherness, connectivity, and affection with others, the Ubuntu Philosophy – which is native to Africa – displays what it means to be human (Mubangizi & Kaya, 2015; Mkosi et al., 2023). Ubuntu originates from the indigenous African Bantu philosophy and knowledge, which presents spirituality as the foundation of human nature and reveals people's authentic selves to the rest of the world and God's creation. The Ubuntu concept emphasizes that all living things, including humans, have commonalities or understandings (Mubangizi & Kaya, 2015). The African value system, humanity, justice, and fairness are all emphasized in the Ubuntu ideology (Qobo & Nyathi, 2016). Ubuntu philosophy has been in existence before the colonialism in Africa. According to the Nguni Ubuntu, *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* means "a person is a person through other persons" (Bangura, 2009, pp. 35–36). This is translated to mean that "being human is to affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity of others in its infinity variety of content and form" (Chimbi & Jita, 2022, p. 138).

Ubuntu philosophy is a communal approach indigenous to African people. It is associated with the way of life of indigenous African people, dating back to the period before the coming of the Western civilization in Africa. Its principles are grounded in the humanistic principles highly valued by African indigenous peoples. Principles like solidarity, kindness, cooperation, respect, and compassion are deeply rooted in the Ubuntu indigenous philosophy (Ngubane & Makua, 2021). The interpretation of the Ubuntu philosophy, however, varies depending on the context in which it is studied, making defining it complex. The goal of this study was to investigate the significance of Ubuntu as an African philosophy and its applicability as a pedagogy for decolonizing the South African educational system. Broodryk (2005) outlined this viewpoint, arguing that defining Ubuntu universally outside of its particular context can cause it to lose its significance.

However, Bhengu (2010) conceptualized Ubuntu philosophy as an African indigenous way of life that preaches collective solidarity in African culture that can promote humanity, compassion, respect, collectivity, tolerance, unity, etc. In the view of Mugumbate and Chereni (2019), Ubuntu African philosophy is a collection of Black African indigenous people's ways of life that make people more human. This view indicates that the central theme of Ubuntu philosophy lies in its value of humanness, compassion, solidarity, and other vital indigenous virtues, which differ across different ethnic groups. Amanze (2024) provides a connection between the sacredness of the environment, the people's belief about land, its connection with nature, and the communalism nature of Ubuntu. The author argues for the role of the African traditional religious systems in the protection of values of the people both spiritually and physically, and the need to protect and conserve important values like communalism and the interconnectedness of indigenous people, which is in tandem with the Ubuntu philosophy (Amanze, 2024).

4. Pre-Service Teacher Education Program: An Overview

The landscape of pre-service teacher education programs in Africa has evolved significantly since the post-independence era, particularly with the advent of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program. The UPE was conceived to provide a compulsory education program aimed at ensuring that all children of school age are enrolled in both primary and secondary schools in the post-independence era and to increase enrollment in schools. Ogunbiyi and Rollnick (2015) emphasize that this period witnessed a surge in government investments to enhance school infrastructure and teacher training to meet the rising demand for educators. In response to the acute shortage of teachers in both primary and secondary schools, universities across Africa began establishing pre-service teacher programs (Ogunbiyi & Rollnick, 2015).

Mukeredzi (2016) provided insight into the difficulties faced by pre-service teachers, especially in rural areas where their capacity to interact with people successfully is frequently hampered by their lack of preparation. The study underscores how crucial it is to give pre-service teachers the knowledge and abilities they need to succeed in a variety of learning environments. Additionally, students' interest in teaching in rural areas is piqued by exposure to rural settings throughout teacher preparation programs, which improves awareness of rural concerns and pedagogy (Mukeredzi 2016; Olawumi & Mavuso, 2023). The significance of students' experiences within the pre-service teacher education programs is highlighted by Nkambule and Mukeredzi (2017). The study, conducted in the rural community of Acornhoek, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa, explores the transformative impact of professional learning during teaching practice. The findings reveal a notable paradigm shift in the professional development of pre-service teachers, evident in their enhanced competence, reasoning, and understanding, underscoring the pivotal role of practical experiences in shaping future educators (Nkambule & Mukeredzi, 2017). The findings indicate the need for pre-service curriculum planners to consider including practical experience in the in-service teacher education program. As good as this may be, requesting students to be familiar with the rural communities to acquire sufficient knowledge of the rural issues will pose challenges of time and resources. However, incorporating local experience as part of the professional experience of pre-service teachers should be researched to encourage the incorporation of African traditional pedagogy into teaching and learning. This position will complement the mandatory school experience for the Bachelor of Education Student program.

In a recent study, *The impact of mentoring on the development of pre-service teachers from a university in South Africa*, Ndebele and Legg-Jack (2022) emphasized the widespread issues of teachers in South African schools having insufficient pedagogical skills and topic understanding. The study examined the transforming impacts of mentorship on pre-service teachers at a South African university, with a focus on the efficacy of mentorship programs. The study showcased the multifaceted impact of mentorship, revealing that pre-service teachers experienced positive growth across five key dimensions: pedagogical knowledge, system requirements, personal attributes, modeling, and feedback (Ndebele &

Legg-Jack 2022; Olawumi et al., 2023). Notably, the findings from the study emphasized the pivotal role of mentorship activities in fostering the professional development of teachers. Mentorship equipped pre-service teachers with the requisite skills for effective teaching and provided invaluable support in navigating the complexities of classroom dynamics. Thus, the study underscored the imperative of integrating mentorship initiatives into the pre-service teacher education programs to cultivate competent and confident educators poised to meet the demands of South African educational needs. Good as these findings are, mentorship programs for pre-service teacher programs must be strengthened to allow students to gain more experience while undergoing the Bachelor of Education program. Universities in South Africa should consider integrating a mentoring program as a mandatory module for pre-service teacher education programs.

5. Conceptualization of Ubuntu Philosophy in Pre-Service Teacher Education Program

Despite being widely utilized in many South African communities, research investigations have shown that it is difficult to define Ubuntu (Mabovula, 2011; Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). Everyone agrees that ubuntu means morality, personhood, and humanity (Letseka, 2012; Mkosi et al., 2023). In contrast to the individualistic Western society, Nxumalo and Mncube (2018) claim that the Ubuntu idea emphasizes the value of community existence. The Ubuntu concept strongly emphasizes the understanding and connections between humans and other forms of creation in their surroundings, which they appreciate and value as essential components of their existence. The quest for colonial knowledge over the years in South Africa and, indeed, Africa has been attributed to the Eurocentric and increased domination of African culture of togetherness and ethics of care. This Eurocentric domination can be checked by introducing Ubuntu philosophy into the pre-service teacher curriculum to decolonize the knowledge system. Mbembe (2015) helps us realize that the Eurocentric canon is a canon that rejects other forms of knowledge as inferior and only recognizes the Western method of knowing as true. This assertion indicates that African countries should begin to replace Western history with African indigenous history, develop African folklore and storytelling, and encourage the teaching and development of African spirituality and healing systems to pave the way for decolonizing the education system. In their study on decolonizing knowledge and the archive question, Nxumalo and Mncube (2018) concluded that decolonization has two facets: creating alternative models (Ubuntu) and critiquing the prevalent Western knowledge models. One of the challenges inherent in promoting indigenous African values and practices is the neglect of education stakeholders and researchers. The African indigenous system suffers from inadequate attention and cannot compete with its European counterparts. The Eurocentric Western method of education can only be challenged appropriately by emphasizing the development of indigenous African knowledge systems to compete with their foreign counterparts. The alternative models must be developed and integrated into pre-service teacher education to produce teachers who can utilize Ubuntu's values in their teaching. Some of these strategies teachers can adopt in teaching Ubuntu values include indoctrination, religious authority, common sense, values

clarification, moral dilemmas, and philosophical/ethical inquiry approaches (Fisher, 2003). However, a lot still needs to be done because, in the post-colonial era, the knowledge system in African countries has still been dominated by the Western models, which are regarded as superior knowledge, and other forms of knowledge are regarded as inferior (Nxumalo & Mncube, 2018). This is because Eurocentric curricula are still dominating the African curriculum.

Researchers at different times have attempted to describe Ubuntu African values and the need to integrate them into pre-service teacher education. According to Oviawe (2016), humanity is the culture of existence that unites individuals and brings harmony to their diverse identities. The African nation's pride and hope are entrenched in the Ubuntu principle (Lefa, 2015; Mahaye, 2018). Ubuntu prioritizes morally righteous beliefs and actions (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). Since this philosophy incorporates many ideas fundamental to humanity, like spirituality and culture, its adoption in the pre-teacher education curriculum will aid the development of teachers with such values as excellent moral judgment (Mahaye, 2018). Ubuntu enables education to be seen as a way of advancing society rather than the market, helping practitioners to develop a sense of values (Mahaye, 2018).

Ubuntu, which is rooted in Nguni and Sotho languages respectively, is a moral concept known as *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* and *motho ke motho ka batho* (Letseka, 2012). Daniel Mhlanga (2014) provide a rough translation of this guiding principle as follows: "A person is a person through other persons." This is translated to mean that "being human is to affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity of others in its infinity variety of content and form" (Chimbi & Jita, 2022, p. 138). As per Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013), the proverb "I am because we all are" frequently reflects this idea. Most African indigenous languages employ this term (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). According to Piper (2016), the name "Ubuntu" originates from South Africa and means "human kindness". It is a philosophy that advocates for a shared moral code. When used in educational development, the Ubuntu concept is a powerful tool that can help proponents of philosophy work longer, harder, and more effectively to improve education in Africa as a whole. On the other hand, tying Ubuntu to a specific place could obscure its significance. According to Makalela (2018), Ubuntu is utilized in a few Bantu languages across various African borders. It demonstrates that the Ubuntu philosophy transcends boundaries and is expressed under several names while maintaining the same usage and meaning. "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" means "to be a human being is to affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity of others and, on that basis, establish humane relations with them" (Naicker 2015). This term, found in most African languages, emphasizes the importance of being oneself because of others (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013).

6. Ubuntu's Significance for the Decolonization of Education

In the previous sections, this paper argued the relevance of Ubuntu philosophy in our everyday lives, most notably in the indigenous education system. However, this section explores how Ubuntu values can assist in decolonizing the African education system. The call for decolonization of Education in Africa has been

stressed. It has been emphasized that the neo-colonization of education in Africa, particularly South Africa, has been responsible for the high dropout rate (Uleanya et al., 2019). Part of the argument put forward by stakeholders is that after the end of colonization, African education is dominated by the colonial master's system of education, that is, the Eurocentric system of education. European history and geography are still dominant in the school curriculum in Africa, while indigenous African history is being relegated. Inadequate attention is being provided to the development of African traditional healing systems, which are not adequately documented; hence, the imposition of western form of healing systems developed over the years. This also may affect teachers' integration of these traditional practices in their teaching. The dominance of African Education is more prominent in higher education, and stakeholders are opposed to transforming the Eurocentric education system in favor of the indigenous system that emphasizes communalism and empathy. These researchers believe that the education system must be re-imaged to reflect the culture and philosophy of the indigenous system of education that existed before the colonial era. Brás (2024) also supported this view and aver that the Eurocentric form of education handed over to Africans by colonial masters has been criticized as being Western and rated to be superior to indigenous education.

In a study by Duku and Salami (2017), the authors examined the relevance of school governing bodies to the effective decolonization of education in South Africa. The study argued for the importance of school governing bodies (SGB) in decolonizing education in South Africa. The result of the findings revealed that since traditional leaders are part of the SGB, they are well-versed in indigenous knowledge and, thereby, a good source of information about the culture and values of the people. The findings suggested that members of the SGB should statutorily include knowledgeable individuals who can assist in the decolonization of Education in South Africa. The study further argues for harvesting indigenous knowledge and incorporating it into the pre-service curriculum. It engaged educators who were well versed in indigenous knowledge in delivering the curriculum in the classroom, thereby eliminating foreign practices in the education system.

Studies have shown the relevance of Ubuntu in decolonizing and indigenizing social work education in Africa. Mugumbate et al. (2023), in a study titled "Understanding Ubuntu and its contribution to social work education in Africa and other regions of the world," the authors reiterated the need for integration of Ubuntu values into the social work curriculum in higher institutions as a philosophical foundation. The study identified Ubuntu philosophy as a source of ethics, values, knowledge, pedagogical approach, and indigenization and decolonization of African social work education. However, the study outlined some impediments to the use of Ubuntu, including the colonial history of the profession, changes to African society, and lack of Ubuntu-inspired education resources. The study, among others, recommended continuous professional development and utilization of educational resources based on the critical philosophy and guiding principles of Ubuntu (Etieyibo, 2017; Ngubane & Makua,

2021) as a way forward to decolonizing and indigenizing the higher education curriculum in Africa.

7. Relevance of Ubuntu Africa Philosophy in Pre-Service Teacher Education Program

The relevance of Ubuntu as a pedagogical tool in pre-service teacher education has been emphasized. In a study conducted by Ngubane and Gumede (2018), using Ubuntu pedagogy to facilitate academic support in a higher education classroom was investigated. The study examined Ubuntu as a strategy to promote the development of the academic performance of engineering students in South African Universities. Findings from the study indicated that learning under the Ubuntu-grounded core value environment like cooperation, kindness, communalism, and solidarity are fundamental principles for understanding complex and challenging academic literacy skills among English second language students (Ngubane & Gumede, 2018). Also, the study pointed out the importance of Ubuntu values like cooperation, togetherness, support, love, and kindness as an essential tool that helps them to imbibe the culture of sharing ideas, resources, and expertise (Ngubane & Gumede, 2018). The study also further indicated that through the spirit of Ubuntu, students could interact and create a warm and non-learning environment for interaction among students and with the lecturer (Ngubane & Gumede, 2018).

In another study by Waghid (2020) on the Ubuntu philosophy of higher Education in Africa, the author reflected on the African philosophy (Ubuntu) and its link to teaching and learning in the African continent. The study identified three areas where Ubuntu philosophy can be classified: humanity is at liberty to share and should show a willingness to share; human beings do things together because they are connected. Secondly, the connectedness of human beings can be enhanced through the display of generosity, hospitality, caring, and compassion, which are strong pillars on which Ubuntu's philosophy hinges. The third classification indicates that openness, acknowledging others, and engaging with them are essential attributes a person practicing Ubuntu must display. Reflecting on these significant principles, Waghid (2020) drew attention to integrating these Ubuntu principles in addressing the problems facing higher Education in Africa. The paper further argues that Ubuntu higher education can serve as a framework for decolonizing the African higher education system. However, African philosophy can be essential in developing African higher education to compete with Western education. Piper (2016), in a study titled *International education is a broken field: Can Ubuntu education bring solutions?*, examined the view that international education is not structured to accommodate the principle of Ubuntu. The study asserts that international implementers, funders, and scholars who fail to adequately challenge the power dynamics at play in educational development are linked to the advancement of education in Africa (Waghid, 2020). Piper (2016) further noted that educational development donor countries fail to identify with the culture, values, and respects, which are some of the principles of Ubuntu since they are not known to them. This assertion indicated that donor countries should emphasize the educational imbalances in the African system as well as practices that are important to the local practice of the indigenous people, like respect,

cooperation, togetherness, humility, and love, thereby supporting structures and effect fundamental changes to give way to the integration of values of Ubuntu into the higher education system in the global South.

Shanyanana and Waghid (2016) also reiterate the need for reconceptualizing Ubuntu as inclusion in African higher education and advocate the need for the integration of African communal practices of Ubuntu in higher education to address the perceived marginalized groups (people with low incomes, people with disabilities, women, and other marginalized groups). The findings from the study proposed the need for an African philosophy of Ubuntu to be re-examined to curtail the exclusionary practice of higher education institutions. This finding revealed the relevance of Ubuntu philosophy as a veritable tool that provides a platform on which the principle of inclusivity in African higher education is laid. This assertion would go a long way in addressing unjust practices characterized by African higher education practices. Shanyanana and Waghid (2016) include discrimination against women, low-income individuals, and persons with disabilities as a few of these unfair practices that prevent them from pursuing higher education. An African Ubuntu that prioritizes Humanness and interconnectedness can be adopted in teaching international students, according to a study (Tran & Wall, 2019) that looked at Ubuntu in adult vocational education and its implications for teaching international students. This is in contrast to international students relying on the effectiveness and appropriateness of pedagogical practices that force them to adopt Eurocentric expectations while accessing international education. The study identified three main Ubuntu philosophies that can serve as a pedagogical strategy in teaching international students in the global West. According to Tran and Wall (2019), these strategies include humanness, interconnectedness, and situatedness. Given that ubuntu is a non-Western ideology, these ideas can help conceive international education practice. The growing enrolment of international students in Europe necessitated providing education devoid of dominant Western teaching for international students in European countries. International students from Africa studying in Europe should not be forced to adapt to the Eurocentric, imperialism-based pedagogical form of teaching and learning (Tran, 2013); instead, a blend of teaching with Ubuntu philosophy should be conceptualized. The three values of Ubuntu, humanness, interconnectedness, and situatedness, are fundamental principles. Humanity has been defined by different writers in different ways, such as the ethics of caring for others (Waghid & Smeyers, 2012), the importance of a shared orientation, spirituality, and collective worldview (Ntseane 2011), and the connection to animals and the natural world (Wall & Perrin, 2015).

To better understand inclusive education and the implementation of Zimbabwe's new primary curriculum framework from 2015 to 2022, Mutanga (2022) conducted a study to gather the views and experiences of both in-service and trainee teachers. The province of Manicaland, in eastern Zimbabwe, served as the site of the qualitative investigation. For the study, a deliberate sample of forty-three individuals was chosen. The new curriculum was grounded on Ubuntu philosophy, and the paper sought to find out the views and experiences of in-service and trainee teachers on the extent of the implementation of inclusive

education while implementing the new curriculum in Zimbabwe. Findings revealed that inclusive education, apart from the environment, must reflect inclusivity. Teacher training programs for in-service and trainee teachers in Zimbabwe should include Ubuntu. The findings also indicate that the curriculum, pedagogies, the environment, and teacher preparedness are four key elements of Ubuntu and help determine the quality of education. Teachers should be well grounded in the Ubuntu inclusivity philosophy in their pre-service training, as observed by (Marovah, 2020; Mutanga, 2022). The findings also reveal some challenges associated with introducing Ubuntu's principle of inclusivity in the new curriculum. One such challenge is the negative societal perception that hinders inclusive Education (Education of students with disabilities). This position was also supported by Ngubane and Makua (2021), who said that society's attitude is not always deliberate because of cruelty but maybe because of fear of the unknown. Other problems include the lack of resources for the implementation of inclusive education in Zimbabwe, which provides education to the doorstep of students with disabilities who cannot physically get to school.

8. Conclusions

The paper explored the relevance of Ubuntu values in pre-service teacher education in Africa. The literature by Shanyanana and Waghid (2016), Waghid (2020), and Ngubane and Gumede (2018) suggests that Ubuntu is an African philosophy that promotes sharing love, respect, togetherness, connectivity, and affection with others to promote humanity and the sense of being human. The paper came to the conclusion that, in order to increase teachers' ability to support the decolonization of education in Africa, the humanness and communalism approaches to education ought to be incorporated into the pre-service teacher education curriculum. Also, it concludes that the quest for colonial knowledge in South Africa and Africa has been attributed to the Eurocentric and increased domination of African culture of togetherness and ethics of care. This Eurocentric domination can be checked by introducing Ubuntu philosophy into the pre-service teacher curriculum to decolonize the knowledge system. It also emerges from the literature that the education system must be re-imaged to reflect the culture and philosophy of the indigenous education system that existed before the colonial era. The paper argues for integrating Ubuntu philosophy into the pre-service teacher education program to give way to the emergence of Ubuntu-focused teachers. The paper also concludes that Ubuntu higher education can serve as a framework for decolonizing the African higher education system. However, African philosophy can be essential in developing African higher education to compete with Western education.

9. Recommendations

The study recommended that the University, the Department of Higher Education and Training, and other stakeholders in the education system should consider incorporating Ubuntu values into the pre-service teacher education to produce Ubuntu teachers. Also, the study recommends the development of a framework by higher education institutions (HEIs) to integrate Ubuntu values like humanness, communalism, and interconnectedness into the pre-service teacher education program. The study maintains the need to develop relevant content and

pedagogical content knowledge on Ubuntu values as part of the pre-service teacher education program decolonization of education in South Africa. The Department of Basic Education should also provide educational resources on Ubuntu to facilitate its integration into teaching and learning in South Africa Primary and secondary schools. This recommendation will address the problem of shortage of resources for effective integration of Ubuntu into teaching and learning. Other researchers should undertake empirical studies on integrating Ubuntu Values into the pre-service teacher education program.

10. Limitation

We undertake to integrate Ubuntu into teaching and learning across educational institutions in South Africa. The study being a qualitative systematic literature review approach, its findings cannot be generalized because empirical or statistical data was not obtained; instead, articles were selected and reviewed. Also, a limited number of literatures, twenty-four articles, were selected for review, which can be increased in future research by other researchers. However, we recommend further research where empirical data using data collection instruments like questionnaires or interviews can be adopted to generalize findings.

11. References

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