

**TOWARDS CURRICULUM
INTELLECTUALISING: A REFLEXIVE
ACCOUNT OF MAKING MEANING OF
POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS'
CONCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN SCHOLARSHIP**

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QUESTIONS...

- ✘ *Who is African?*
- ✘ *What makes scholarship African?*
- ✘ *Does African scholarship differ from other forms of scholarship? How?*
- ✘ *Can you go outside Africa and do African scholarship or vice-versa?*
- ✘ *Is African scholarship for the common good of Africa? Who decides what is good?*
- ✘ *Where do our different understandings of African scholarship come from?*
- ✘ *Can we come to a common understanding of African scholarship? Should we?*

INTRODUCTION

- ✘ Project Background
- ✘ Project data: Questionnaire - probed students' conceptions and experiences of African scholarship
- ✘ Collective meaning making of African scholarship → unintended learning about curriculum intellectualising

PHASE 1: THE MEANING MAKING PROCESS FOR CONFERENCES

- ✘ Workshop 1 – inductive analysis of questionnaire (blanks, no idea, linked to funding)
- ✘ Clustered responses
- ✘ Workshop 2 - writing retreat - Hierarchical pattern in student responses
- ✘ Presentation at 2 conferences
- ✘ Recommendations – issues of African scholarship integral part of lived curriculum

PHASE 2: WRITING THE PAPER

- ✘ Workshop 3 – Debating positioning of the paper.
- ✘ Contestations on African scholarship
- ✘ Implicitly assumed certain positions on African scholarship
- ✘ Multiple understandings of African scholarship
- ✘ *Questions* rather than answers

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OUR LEARNINGS FOR CURRICULUM INTELLECTUALISING

- ✘ value judgements on students' understandings at the beginning of the meaning making process – a limiting effect on our *own* understanding.
- ✘ reconsider our recommendations to 'fix' what we saw as deficits in the students' understandings.
- ✘ rushed to make recommendations for curriculum "doing" without making enough time for curriculum "thinking".

CURRICULUM INTELLECTUALISING AS A THEORETICAL LENS

- ✘ Curriculum intellectualising – continuing process of playing with different ideas and standpoints – taking a stand, whilst simultaneously standing back and looking at our stance.
- ✘ Said (1994:11) argues, such a complicated conversation would have “an edge to it, . . . [would] publicly...raise embarrassing questions, [would] ... confront orthodoxy and dogma, . . . [and would not] easily be co-opted”.
- ✘ Said’s (1994:14) understanding of intellectualising as a vocation that “involves both commitment and risk, boldness and vulnerability”.

OUR LEARNINGS ABOUT CURRICULUM INTELLECTUALISING

- ✘ Collaborative conversations
- ✘ Open and honest dialogue
- ✘ Space, both physical and conceptual
- ✘ Comfortable, yet discomfoting mutual relationships