Leveraging Indigenous Knowledge to Decolonise Planning Theory Curricula and Practice for Empowering Future Planners

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Indigenous knowledge (IK) is local knowledge specific to a particular community inherited from previous generations. During colonisation, European states forcibly disparaged IK and forced Western 'scientific' knowledge on local communities. Decolonisation included both independence from foreign powers and a rekindling of indigenous knowledge. The re-emergence of IK encompassed inclusion in academic literature and curricula alongside Western perspectives. This study focuses on planning theory curricula and practice. Decolonisation further implies that curricula should be developed based on students' lives in the real world, where the IK plays a critical role. This study employed a qualitative design, purposefully selecting respondents for interviews and conducting surveys to collect data. Content and thematic analyses were applied. The findings reveal that IK greatly contributes to decolonising the theory of planning curricula and practice in South Africa as a Global South country with a rich IK system.

Keywords: planning theories; curricula; practice; indigenous knowledge; planning education.

Abstract

Introduction

For centuries, indigenous communities have refined ways of understanding and interacting with their environments, developing indigenous knowledge (IK), which remains crucial for their livelihoods. Communities' locations, history, and cultures all contribute to IK. Many rural communities self-identify as indigenous which, in South Africa, comprises numerous traditional tribes, such as Zulu and Tswana. Additionally, Hlalele (2019) explained that IK is known as local knowledge unique to a specific community and is inherited from generations of trial and error. This is true for South African indigenous communities' IK. A practical example is traditional healing and knowledge of medicinal herbs as IK in South Africa. Local knowledge and traditions, which are embedded in cultural customs within a specific landscape, differ from Western knowledge. For example, scientific health care, which is based on 'scientific knowledge'. During the colonisation era, IK was undermined, while Western scientific knowledge was imposed on indigenous communities (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). In this process, traditional healing was construed as witchcraft. Colonisation impacted IK in many other ways, including the substitution of indigenous lifestyles

with Western ways, and settlement planning (Frescura, 1990, 2015).

Colonisation can be interpreted as a centuries-old phenomenon where dominant countries exercised power over other less powerful states. In most situations, colonisation damages the colonies while benefiting the colonists, as evident from the Roman occupation of nations around the Mediterranean Sea for their natural resources and food supplies (Silva-Sánchez and Armada, 2023). In the 17th century, European nations colonised countries in Asia, the Americas and Africa in search of spices, precious metals and other natural resources. These nations include the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, British, French, and German countries. Colonisation of Africa by Europeans occurred through military dominance to access resources or critical locations for trade or military purposes. Thus, colonists benefited from their colonies. In this process, colonisers mistreated indigenous peoples (Plumwood, 2012; Paradies, 2016). Colonisation is a form of control that ignores the customary law and norms governing the rights of indigenous communities, which produces social injustices. According to Taylor et al. (2003), colonisation introduced new education systems that reinforced European languages and knowledge and simultaneously exploited their natural environment. This process degraded IK, causing less of this knowledge to be transferred to younger generations. Consequently, most IK now resides with communities' elders (Melore and Nel, 2020). Decolonising knowledge requires education to include IK as a vital source of knowledge.

Decolonisation is a broad concept containing actions and methods that address, counter, or eradicate the harmful effects of colonialism. According to Amundsen (2018), decolonisation is a strategy to address historical injustices, including the repudiation of values and worldviews imposed by colonisers, as well as all forms of racism and intergroup conflict that ensued, by seeking to alter the governmental authority of the state. Decolonisation seeks to reduce the dominance of European knowledge to allow IK systems to be applied and empowered. Khan et al. (2022) defined decolonising knowledge as searching for the truth and knowledge rooted in indigenous communities. The critical question is how decolonising IK can improve the theory taught at planning schools, specifically, the planning theory curricula and planning practice to empower future planners in South Africa.

Urban and Regional Planning in South Africa was historically introduced by people embedded in the British planning system. Consequently, planning theories taught to students in South Africa were deeply rooted in that knowledge system. Colonial and apartheid-era planning legislation was established with the 'Transvaal Ordinance' of 1931 (and similar ordinances in other provinces), which controlled land use to maintain white dominance. This was followed by the 1967 Physical Planning Act, which not only ignored African residential areas, but limited African urbanisation (Oranje, 2014; Hendler, 2015; Jeeva, 2023; Oranje and Merrifield, 2010; Harrison et al., 2008). The profession was formalised by establishing the South African Institute of Town Planners in 1954 and the South African Council for Town and Regional Planners in 1984 to regulate planning practice (Jeeva, 2023). Post-apartheid reforms, including the Planning Profession Act 36 of 2002, led to the formation of the South African Council for Planners (SACPLAN) in 2005 to ensure more inclusive and equitable planning (SACPLAN, 2014; De Jager, 2021). SACPLAN plays an important role in urban and regional planning in South Africa as it informs standards and competencies, which must be included in planning schools' curricula.

Planning theory considers the planning process and the normative approaches to planning. Watson (2016) explained that planning theories suggest how to address planning issues and yield successful results; nonetheless, these planning theories are primarily Western-centric and based on European experiences and concepts. While some concepts may have universal application, not all can be applied in South Africa. This study explores the extent of decolonisation in South African planning theory as taught in planning schools. The results will identify the extent to which IK has been included in curricula and teaching of the planning schools in higher education institutions

(HEIs), which could assist planners in practice.

The findings emphasise a continued dependence on Western-centric planning theories in South African planning curricula. While some HEIs have started integrating indigenous theories, such as Ubuntu, the dominance of European theories remains significant. The findings advocate for a more equitable approach to educational planning that acknowledges both the foundational elements of European ideas and the significance of African IK. Incorporating procedural and critical planning theories indicates an understanding of the dynamic character of planning practice. To establish resilient, inclusive, and complete communities, it is essential to decolonise planning theories purposely and effectively include IK into the planning curricula. This transition is not solely intellectual; it is vital for preparing future planners with the crucial skills, contextual awareness, and cultural sensitivity required to tackle the distinct issues encountered by different communities.

Literature review on indigenous knowledge for decolonising planning theory curricula and practice

Indigenous knowledge (IK) pertains to the native knowledge transferred from generation to generation through different indigenous classifications. Indigenous knowledge is also localised to a specific group in an area, and it is crucial to recognise this knowledge as it is passed down over time (Ngulube, 2002; Hlalele, 2019). Communities use IK when making important decisions relevant to their existence and adapt their everyday activities within their natural environment accordingly. Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005) state that indigenous communities have distinct ways of viewing and relating to their regions' earth, vegetation, and animals. Indigenous knowledge transmitted through oral traditions, practices, and ceremonies occurs naturally (Billawer and Nel, 2024). During colonisation, IK was undermined, while European knowledge was imposed.

Scholars argued that colonisation negatively affected a colonised state's poor and indigenous communities (Axelsson et al., 2016; Barlo, 2016). One example of ignoring traditional rules and maltreatment was when Aboriginal people were separated from their children who were placed in Western society to grow up with European ways. Furthermore, colonisation established educational systems that prioritised European knowledge, undermining IK (Taylor et al., 2003; Farahmandian, 2015). The European educational frameworks enforced on educational institutions now require decolonisation and strengthening of weakened IK.

Decolonisation is an extensive concept encompassing actions and procedures, which confront, counteract, or eliminate the adverse impacts of colonialism. According to Amundsen (2018), decolonisation is a strategy to address historical injustices, including the rejection of values and worldviews of the colonisers, as well as forms of racism leading to intergroup conflict; the strategy requires the decolonisation of knowledge. Crawford et al. (2023) pointed out injustices in knowledge include unequal access to knowledge relevant to South African communities, which are dominated by European knowledge systems. Opinions exist regarding Global South knowledge, much of which is still rooted in Global North knowledge. This applies to many areas of knowledge, including urban and regional planning. Consequently, there is a necessity for the decolonisation of planning curricula.

Decolonising planning curricula in South Africa would guarantee relevance to social and historical inclusion, such as concentrating on student communities' IK (Mahabeer, 2018). This means that the higher education institution (HEI) planning curricula must shift from colonial teaching practices to incorporate knowledge of the people training to be planners. Decolonising planning curricula in South Africa involves incorporating students and staff's expertise, ideals and beliefs (Meda, 2020). Therefore, decolonising planning curricula in South Africa is an ongoing process of deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge relevant to learning programmes, such as planning theory curricula.

Planning theory is shaped by processes and ideas that fit a local situation and builds outcomes,

which resolve planning challenges (Faludi, 1973; Donaghy and Hopkins, 2006). The theory gives planners information to understand and address planning difficulties and practical planning issues. These appear to be secure in the context of the Global North, mainly influenced by British and American researchers. Planning scholars from the Global North have abandoned or ignored traditional African planning (Sihlongonyane, 2018). As stated, the discounting of planning theories relevant to the Global South is due to the dominance of the Global North planning theories. Planning theories taught to students are predominantly from the Global North (as the first lecturers were from the North) and might not apply to the challenges encountered in South African planning. Yiftachel (1989) asserts that the theoretical foundation of planning is fragmented and unclear, offering minimal assistance to planning students and professionals in the South. This is a significant urban and regional planning concern if students and practitioners cannot relate to planning theories. Fishman (2015) agrees that historical planning theories from the Global North continue to be taught to South African (Global South) planning students. As previously noted, many of these Global North-based planning theories are disconnected from the practical realities of countries in the Global South. Watson (2016) concurred that planning theory emerged within a global historical context, which scholars led from Western (Global North) nations. These concepts were later exploited and appropriated more broadly, shaping planning discourse worldwide. However, many such planning theories are unsuitable for practical application or have not been tested in the South African context or the broader Global South (Denoon-Stevens et al., 2022). This implies a significant need for 'homegrown' Global South planning theories in South Africa, which incorporate more IK into the planning curricula.

Methodology

An interpretive paradigm was adopted to understand social reality through interpretation (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022). The study determined whether leveraging IK to decolonise planning theories could empower future planners through curricula and practice by interpretating social research on curricula and planning. Therefore, the study focused on the perspectives of staff at South African HEIs offering urban and regional planning programmes as well as professional urban and regional planners who studied at these institutions. Their perspectives of South African HEIs planning theory curricula the possibility of incorporating IK was determined. This briefly articulated the background of the study as part of the research paradigm. The study obtained ethical on 2 March 2023 from the University of the Free State ethical committee, which granted 12 months to collect data before 28 February 2024. Data collection started in March 2023 and took ten months to collect, ending 11 December 2023 with no extension required from the ethical committee. This illustrated that the correct protocol was used to collect data, and the focus shifted to the method adopted for the study.

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) was used to analyse text data (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008; Schreier, 2012). The method interpreted content by a systematic process of classifying and finding themes or patterns (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The study used the inductive qualitative content analysis (IQCA) method. There were no pre-existing frameworks or standardised measures, and all collected data were synthesised into a broader general statement (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008; Schreier, 2012). The study's categorisation was directly related to the collected content, which could later have been changed to new themes as part of the reporting phase (Kibiswa, 2019). Fig. 1 identifies the IQCA method with the three phases: preparation, organising, and reporting.

Preparation phase

The preparation phase is first in the IQCA method and comprises two steps, selecting the unit of analysis and making sense of the data (Fig. 2). The content was sampled and collected through methods shown in Fig. 2.

The two units of analysis were included in sampling. The first unit consisted of participants who were either the Head of Department (HoD) or Programme Director of urban and regional planning

programmes at a South African HEI. The second unit consisted of participants who obtained an urban and regional planning qualification at a South African HEI and were SACPLAN registered planners (**Fig. 2**). Purposive and self-selection sampling was used. **Table 1** explains how the units of analysis were sampled and data collected for the study. Importantly, this article addressed only one of the questions during the data collection process, which formed part of a larger thesis research project.
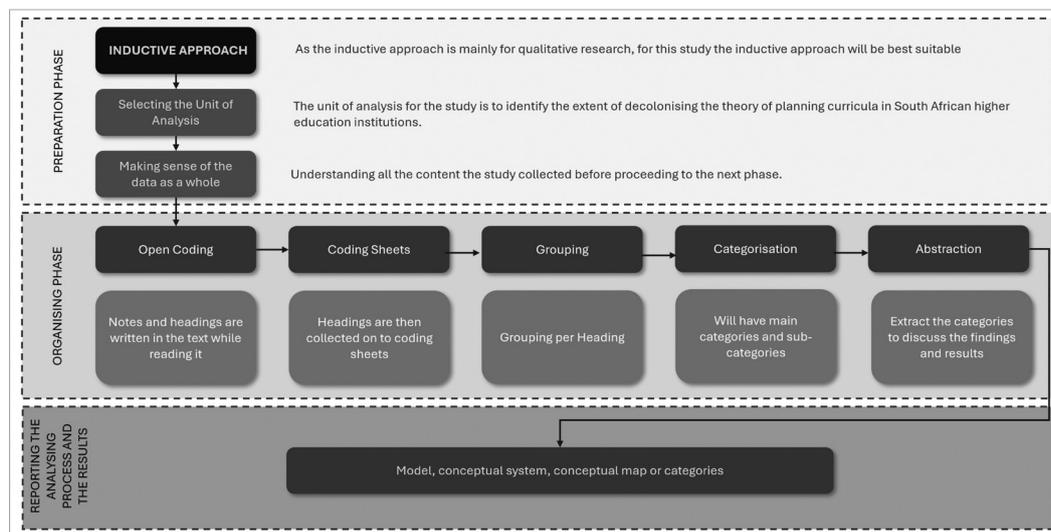

Fig. 1

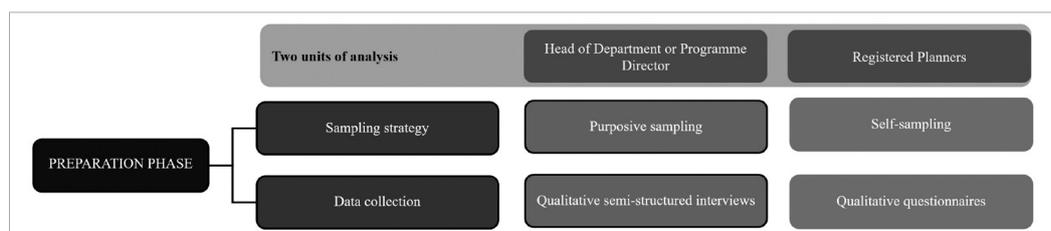Inductive Qualitative Content Analysis Approach

Fig. 2

Preparation Phase Approach

Organising phase

The organising phase is second in the IQCA process (**Fig. 1**) and involves open coding, coding sheets, grouping, category creation, and abstraction (Elo et al., 2014; Kibiswa, 2019; Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). Open coding allowed content comments and headings to be written to identify significant information (Kibiswa, 2019). Data were organised by using codes to identify key concepts in coding sheets (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). In the next step, cluster analysis was used to group data from the coding sheet into four groups (**Table 2**). The cluster analysis method separates data into meaningful subgroups or merging similar data into groups or divisions (Fraley and Raftery, 1998). Grouping reduces the number of categories into broader groups of similarities or dissimilarities (Elo et al., 2014).

Fig. 1 illustrates that the fourth step of the organising phase is categorising the grouped data. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) mentioned that this involves grouping the content data into categories. The objective of developing categories is to explain the phenomenon, boost understanding, and generate knowledge. **Table 2** shows that one of the generic categories is the academics' perspective, which comprised the HoD or Programme Director, as seen in **Table 1** under unit of analysis.

Reporting the analysis process and results is the final phase of this study's IQCA method (**Fig. 1**). The first and second phases were critical in preparing and organising the content for analysis and reporting. Content analysis is a process of analysing, evaluating, and organising textual data to extract new knowledge by reducing the number of topics or categories (Stemler, 2015).

Table 1

Units of analysis sampling and data collection

Unit of Analysis	Sampling	Data collection
HoD or Programme Director	South Africa has eleven HEIs that offer urban and regional planning programmes that's accredited by SACPLAN are illustrated as follows: _ Cape Peninsula University of Technology _ Durban University of Technology _ North-West University _ University of Cape Town _ University of Johannesburg _ University of KwaZulu-Natal _ University of Pretoria _ University of Stellenbosch _ University of the Free State _ University of the Witwatersrand _ University of Venda Of the eleven HEIs only nine planning HEIs agreed to participate. To not discriminate against any HEIs and in line with the ethics the two HEIs that did not participate would not be mentioned. It was critical to sample the best unit of analysis that could be selected to contribute to achieving the research aim and objectives. The top manager of each Urban and Regional Planning Department at the HEIs had been sampled purposively.	A qualitative research method, semi-structured interviews, was utilised (Creswell & Báez, 2020). The goal of using semi-structured interviews was to provide the respondents with some flexibility in explaining their opinions and highlighting areas of specific interest and competence (Horton et al., 2004). Semi-structured interviews are similar to structured interview processes, which use a standard list of questions but allow the interviewees to elaborate more and ask additional interview questions as follow-up questions. The following question was asked: _ Planning theories are mainly Western Eurocentric. Which theories are your department teaching the students and why?
Registered planners	Self-selection sampling was employed for the 477 consultants listed on the SACPLAN's website since the consultants' urban and regional planners can participate in the research. As the self-selection method had been selected, 58 planners participated and only 49 planners were used as the 9 planners did not obtain their qualification at a South African HEIs. This number of participants was adequate to provide a range of responses.	The qualitative questionnaires are unique because they are so developed that the participant cannot just select yes or no but must write an answer to gain their knowledge of the study. Additionally, qualitative survey questionnaires are used as open-ended questions to produce long-term written answers to reveal opinions, experiences, narratives or accounts of focus groups (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016). The qualitative survey had some demographic questions (to have been able to filter out the non-professional planers and those that did not study in South Africa) and then the following question was asked: _ Planning theories are mainly Western Eurocentric. Which theories were taught when you were a student and why do you think it was relevant for you to learn the mentioned theories?

Elo and Kyngäs (2008) explains that for successful content analysis, the researcher must be able to analyse and simplify the content and create categories to reflect the study's objectives accurately.

Therefore, the categories established in **Table 2** were used to present the results of the units of analysis systematically, with clear step-by-step instructions, starting with the main category, then having the two generic categories, each having two subcategories to ensure a logistical flow.

Grouped	Code	Description	Main categories	Generic categories	Subcategories
Theories of planning taught	IAQ-TPNR	Theories of planning not relevant	TPT – Planning Theories taught	AP – Academics perspective	AP1 – List of theories identified
	IAQ-WET	Western Eurocentric theories			AP2 – Elaboration on the purpose of teaching these theories
	IAQ-DAT	Does Africa theory exist		PP – Planners perspective	PP1 – List of theories identified
	IAQ-LTP	List of theories of planning			PP2 – Why mainly western theories

Table 2

Units of analysis data grouped and categories

Main category: planning theories taught

Planning theories taught to students were reviewed for the possibility of leveraging IK to decolonise the curricula. The review reveals that South African planning theories curricula are mostly Eurocentric. A South African scholar and academic, Sihlongonyane (2018), confirmed that planning theories are mainly from Europe and America. Therefore, the main category is planning theories taught. The findings were divided into two generic categories: academics' and planners' perspectives (**Table 2**) to explore the possibility of decolonising planning theory curricula. Through reporting the findings, both the generic categories have two subcategories. The academic perspective subcategories list the theories and elaborate on why these identified theories are taught. The planner perspective subcategories list the theories taught and why most theories are Western. This section reports on findings of the South African academics and planners.

Generic category 1: Academics' perspectives

The academics were asked which theories their department taught and why. Therefore, a list of planning theories from nine different HEIs were populated as the first subcategory. **Table 3** lists planning theories that academics identified being taught to students some; academics could have mentioned up to three planning theories). **Table 3** briefly describes the theories, their origin and the number of academics who taught the respective planning theories.

Planning theories	Brief description	Origins	Number of academics
Critical planning theories	Critical planning theories that investigate and challenge the underlying power structures, socioeconomic disparities, and assumptions that underpin urban planning methods to achieve more fair and inclusive outcomes (Yiftachel and Huxley, 2000).	Europe	2
Garden City	The first planning idea for the perfect social city. Howard had the standpoint that each town or country had a special pulling force for densification, and the garden city concept was established.	Europe	5

Table 3

List of planning theories taught

Planning theories	Brief description	Origins	Number of academics
Indigenous management theories	Includes African concepts like Ubuntu and offers culturally rooted alternatives to Western models by emphasising collective identity, relational leadership, moral integrity, and integrating social, spiritual, and environmental values into decision-making and organisational practices.	Africa	1
Positivistic planning theory	Stresses the utilisation of scientific methodologies and empirical evidence to attain logical and practical planning results. It posits that planners can create an improved world through objective analysis and scientific knowledge.	Post the World War II in Europe and North America	2
Post-positivistic (procedural) planning theories	Procedural planning theory refers to systems or approaches in town planning that focus on the process of planning decision-making, the structure of the planning agencies, and processes related to policymaking and plan implementation.	Post the World War II in Europe and North America	9

The following subcategory elaborates why academics taught the listed planning theories. Academics only mentioned three planning theories each, so they did not elaborate on why they used them all. Table 3 indicates that all the academics taught post-positivistic/procedural planning theories. Allmendinger (2002) mentions that the procedural planning theory is concerned with the planning processes and required data, and Fig. 3 identifies six of the procedural planning theories.

Fig. 3

Procedural planning theories

Procedural planning theories are critical because they include processes for the Global South. Five academics mention that all the procedural planning theories in Fig. 3 are bottom-up theories. Still, the Rational-Comprehensive theory is a top–down approach to planning for citizens, and plans to resolve problems are developed and implemented with no public participation. One of the academics mentioned that the Communicative planning theory enables a bottom-up approach, which acknowledges the importance of local knowledge and fosters a sense of ownership among residents and the effectiveness of planning outcomes. Another academic stated that the planning theory curricula also have procedural planning theories, as the planning steps. The academics explained that teaching students theoretical concepts provided tools for real-life planning problems.

Table 3 recognises that five academics use the Garden City planning theory in their curricula. The Garden City planning theory was developed as the foundation of traditional theories, providing a

prism through which students grasp the aim of planning. It was also discovered that the public participation theory evolved from the layers of participation in the Garden City theory, just as Western theories helped to shape the Global South theories. Five academics taught the Garden City planning theories to ensure that students understood the foundation of planning theories before learning about indigenous-related theories. One academic voiced that was is important to first teach students about historical theories, such as the Garden City theory, to understand why the planning theories in South Africa require change.

Only one of the academics identified that they included indigenous management theories into their curricula as an Ubuntu theory. Khan (2023) stated that Ubuntu's theory is founded on caring and sharing ideals to address the needs of communities. These theories are thus African and indigenous-related, catering to South Africa's planning needs. The question remains how exactly this Ubuntu theory caters to South African planning needs.

Generic category 2: Planners' perspectives

Planners' perspectives was the second generic category. All 49 planners acquired their planning qualifications in South Africa and practiced there. The generic category was subdivided into two subcategories: the list of theories identified and why the planners identified these theories as mainly Western. Table 4 demonstrates a list of the planning theories taught to planners during their qualifications.

Planning theories	Brief description	Origins	Number of planners
Central Place Theory	Described in Table 3	Shown in Table 3	12
Garden City	Described in Table 3	Shown in Table 3	24
Procedural theories	Described in Table 3	Shown in Table 3	18
Positivistic planning theory	Described in Table 3	Shown in Table 3	6
New Urbanisation	New Urbanism is a planning and development methodology that promotes the establishment of walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods featuring diverse housing options, commercial enterprises, and communal areas.	America	6

Table 4

List of identified planning theories taught to planners

Planners identified the planning theory they were taught as mainly Western. Twenty-four planners were taught the Garden City theory. Nine of the twenty-four said Garden City was relevant as it aimed to create self-contained communities within greenbelts and focused on sustainability and equity in South Africa. Six of twenty-four planners also mentioned that the Garden City theory still applies to African cities' development and is a critical concept. More than half of the planners explained that the Garden City theory is relevant and useful for planning in South Africa. The other nine planners stated that the theory was hinged on the British Planning System. Additionally, the Garden City theory was established to decentralise the urban settings to rural areas to optimise the livelihood of citizens by developing new cities. The combined nine planners' perspectives were that there was a shortage of available land in most South African urban settings. Therefore, planning rural areas was impossible, and the Garden City theory was irrelevant in most South African cities.

Eighteen planners were taught procedural planning theories. Seven of the eighteen planners said that the procedural planning theories established comprehensive foundational knowledge essential to comprehend the origins of the profession, its evolution through various periods and main ideologies, and the methodologies employed by experts to develop solutions relevant to specific eras. The other eleven of the eighteen planners state that procedural planning theories specify that planners focus on formulating solutions pertinent to certain areas. The findings of these planners emphasise that procedural planning theory offers a vital historical and methodological framework while facilitating the incorporation of IK by directing planners to develop context-specific, locally pertinent solutions.

Six planners were taught the positivistic planning theory, also known as the modernist planning theory. One of the six planners explained that the modernist theories taught a lesson on global power dynamics and their impact on the development of less developed nations. The planner said these theories are relevant to Global South planning issues, but questioned them. Therefore, the positivistic planning theory does not support IK. Additionally, the planners who listed the central place theory and new urbanisation theory did not elaborate on them specifically in Western planning theories.

By analysing planners' interviews on the theories they were taught, the following general points emerged:

_ Twenty-six planners explained that the planning theories they had been taught were essentially Western theories. Over the years, Western theories have been available; therefore, most of the theories taught have been Western.

_ Twelve of the planners said Eurocentric theories are essential as they form and mould the South African planning theories and thinking. The historical European and American theories were relevant to understanding the physical planning practice. Still, theories needed to be amended and updated constantly to ensure current trends are taught.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study demonstrates that planning theory curricula at South African HEIs are influenced by Eurocentric theories, highlighting the persistent impact of colonisation on planning education. Both academics and professional planners confirm that procedural, positivist, and classical European theories, including the Garden City model, remain foundational to planning education. Although these theories offer essential knowledge and methodological instruments, they neglect the distinct socio-cultural, environmental, and spatial issues encountered by communities in South Africa and the wider Global South. The inadequate incorporation of IK, exemplified by the minimal integration of concepts like Ubuntu, highlights a significant disparity between the theoretical frameworks and the practical realities of planning.

The study highlights an increasing wave among academics and planners to decolonise planning theory curricula. There is agreement that IK provides culturally rooted, locally pertinent insights that could enable future planners to create solutions more attuned to the varied requirements of South African communities. However, despite this recognition, advancement continues to be inactive and inconsistent among institutions. The dominance of Western-centric frameworks indicates that structural, institutional, and epistemological obstacles persist, hindering the effective incorporation of IK into planning education and practice.

Decolonising planning theory courses is an academic endeavour and an essential transition to ensure that future planners possess the knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness to serve their communities properly. This necessitates a revaluation of the curricula, academic methods, and the valuation of knowledge sources. Higher Education Institutions must transcend superficial inclusion of indigenous concepts and strive to formulate planning theories and practices that accurately represent the actual experiences of the people they serve.

The study concludes that utilising IK to decolonise planning curricula is a moral and practical necessity for South Africa. Achieving this will need intentional, ongoing efforts to modify curricula, educate instructors, and involve communities in collaborative knowledge creation. Planning education in South Africa can only contribute to developing resilient, equitable, and contextually suitable urban and rural ecosystems through a deliberate and inclusive approach.

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