Decolonising Social Work Education in South Africa

A Report Emerging from a Series of Workshops Held in September 2016

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ASASWEI (Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions)
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Introduction

Heeding the call of university students and academic colleagues to consider the extent to which higher education presents a colonised curriculum, the Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI) undertook in its strategic planning at the end of 2015 to foster ongoing spaces for dialogue among social work academics regarding what decolonisation means for us. One of the first interventions to give effect to this was a series of facilitated discussions held in four regions across the country from 19-23 September: Cape Town, East London, Durban and Pretoria. These workshops attracted 113 participants, including two members of the Department of Social Development and one from the South African Council for Social Service Professions. This represents 45% of all social work academics.

The regional workshops comprised two main discussion topics. First, participants discussed the meaning of and relationship between the widely used terms: decolonisation, Africanisation and indigenous knowledge/practice. While this did not generate neat definitions, it was successful in tabling the range of views of participants on these terms, which led to a common understanding of them. Second, participants discussed the implications and application of these terms for five facets of social work education: theory, literature, practice, field practice and research. These discussions took place in smaller groups (and when a workshop had small numbers to start with, one group discussed two or three of the topics), which were then reported back to the plenary. The ideas generated in these discussions were documented and are appended to this report.

The purpose of this report is to synthesise the fruits of these workshops into a more compact and action-oriented form, which represent widely held views of ASASWEI members regarding the decolonisation of social work education in South Africa. It is our hope that member institutions will commit to engaging with this report and reviewing their academic offerings in light of the report. What is clear from the workshops, however, is that there are multiple and sometimes competing perspectives on these topics, which may result in member institutions utilising this report in diverse ways. What is also clear from the workshops, however, is that much of what decolonisation requires is critical engagement with ourselves and each other, and so a process of engagement with the concepts and implications of decolonisation is as much decolonising as actually changing curricula.

Methods

South Africa has 16 universities that are accredited with the BSW, all of whom are members of ASASWEI. As these universities are spread countrywide across seven provinces, the Exco decided to group these universities according to different regions, thus making it accessible for all social work academics to attend at least one workshop closest to them. Hence four workshops were scheduled, with the same agenda. Members of ASASWEI were informed individually via the ASASWEI listserv of the background and the agenda items prior to the workshops itself. In addition, a wide selection of related articles/readings/literature were made available via Dropbox for members prior to the workshops taking place.

The four workshops were facilitated by members of the ASASWEI Executive, who have jointly designed the workshop purpose and agenda. The agenda, with the questions that guided the discussions, is included as Appendix A. The workshops were facilitated as follows:

- The Cape Town workshop was facilitated by Dr Annaline Keet and attended by 17 participants.
- The Durban workshop was facilitated by Prof Adrian van Breda and attended by 11 participants.

- The East London workshop was facilitated by Dr Annaline Keet and Dr John Rautenbach and attended by 26 participants.
- The Pretoria workshop was facilitated by Prof Adrian van Breda and attended by 59 participants.

In total 113 people participated in the workshops, constituting 45% of individual ASASWEI members. All but one university were represented by at least one academic.

The regional reports (included as Appendixes C to F) were compiled from the notes written by the participants. In some cases, the PowerPoint slides or flipchart sheets written by the groups are simply typed up as is, while in others, the facilitator has worked the material into a more narrative-style report, particularly to clarify the meaning of points that otherwise might be cryptic.

The first draft of this report was compiled by Prof Adrian van Breda, based on the four regional reports, as well as his recollection of the discussions in Durban and Pretoria, much of both of which were also digitally recorded. He writes:

> *I am deeply aware of my own position as a white male as I facilitated group discussions and now write this report on the decolonisation and Africanisation of social work education. The very discussions challenge my own whiteness and the privileges that have come with that, as well as with my maleness. I have endeavoured in this first draft to listen carefully to what has emerged through these discussions, to understand them and to reflect them as faithfully as I can.*

This first draft was subsequently reviewed by the other members of Exco, all of whom participated in at least one workshop and two of whom were responsible for facilitating at least one workshop. Their comments and reflections were incorporated into the second draft.

Draft 2 was circulated to all members of ASASWEI and Heads of Department were asked to engage their teams in discussion about the draft and provide feedback to Exco. Feedback was received from the University of Pretoria, University of Johannesburg, Stellenbosch University and Unisa. Some universities indicated that the report stimulated fruitful ongoing dialogue about the meaning of decolonisation and its implications for their education and research programme. These comments were integrated into the current version of the report.

Defining Terms

All workshops commenced with a general discussion of terminology in order to generate members' understanding of such terms. It would appear that these discussions generated more questions than answers.

There was general agreement that '**decolonisation**' was a response to 'colonisation', which was interpreted as three main historical periods – the years following the arrival of the first Europeans in the Cape (1652-), the years that South Africa was under British rule (1806-) and the years that South Africa was under Apartheid rule (1948-). It is important also to recognise the importation of Indian and other peoples as indentured labourers (or slaves), particularly in the second half of the 19th century, who themselves experienced a range of oppressions and colonisations. Participants recognised various positive contributions as a result of colonisation, but emphasised the many ways in which the 'indigenous peoples' of Southern Africa (i.e. those people groups who were here before 1652) were subjected and subordinated to the culture, power and economics of European settlers, and traditional ways of living were misrepresented and undervalued. This '**colonisation**' resulted, over the generations, in a loss of pride in oneself and in a marginalisation of African ways

of being, knowing and doing. In addition, European languages (notably English and Dutch/Afrikaans) became dominant in education and work, resulting in further cultural marginalization of indigenous peoples. These various forms of subordination grew increasingly into systematic and structural forces that severely limited the freedom and opportunities of indigenous peoples, as well as other 'non-white' groups (such as coloured and Indian peoples). Relief came only in 1994 when South Africa became a non-racial inclusive democracy, thus ending centuries of colonial or apartheid oppression of the majority of the population.

Decolonisation was thus, most simply, understood to be a process of undoing the negative effects of colonisation. There was widespread recognition that colonisation brought various benefits to South Africa, such as infrastructure and healthcare. Many were of the view that these benefits remained positive and desirable, even though colonisation itself was widely held to be profoundly negative, and thus decolonisation did not mean reverting back to a way of life that was present 350 years ago. Many experienced the middle class benefits of housing, education, health, transport, etc. as desirable and were not seeking to abandon these. Thus, decolonisation was not interpreted to mean a complete stripping away of everything brought in by colonisers.

Participants also highlighted that decolonisation (or more precisely, **decoloniality**) involved addressing the 'captured mind' of those who were colonised. Even though the coloniser may have left, the mind may remain colonised, as well as the structures of society, making decolonisation difficult. Decoloniality is thus a process of shaking off the remaining chains of colonisation and coloniality, even after the colonisers have left.

However, two main themes emerged from the discussions as being important goals of decolonisation generally:

1. A desire to reclaim one's heritage (or culture). Decolonisation resulted in a marginalisation of traditional culture and a dominance of British/Western (perhaps now also American) cultural practices and values. Participants spoke about reviving cultural ways and moving towards a more central (thus less marginalised) space in communities. There was some disagreement about what this might entail, for example some were in favour of promoting virginity testing as a cultural practice towards sexual health, while others viewed this as a patriarchal practice that needed to be discarded. Nevertheless, despite a few such instances, there was general agreement that people's culture or heritage needed to be reclaimed and celebrated, within the deep social work commitment to social justice and human rights.
2. Many recognised themselves in the writings of Franz Fanon, who emphasised the colonisation of the mind. Participants, particularly in the smaller groups where discussions were more intimate, could see how their own identity (self-image, self-esteem, self-definition) had been negatively shaped by colonisation, and how despite 22 years of post-colonial living they had internalised the colonial messages. One participant referred to this as 'coloniality', meaning the continued internal colonisation of the mind long after the end of the colony. Some participants thought that their own education in social work may have contributed to further internal colonisation of the mind, reinforced by the middle class benefits of their education, resulting in a reluctance to 'go back' to their heritage. This evoked critical self-reflection about the self in society.

Many participants referred to the writings of Fanon and Biko as speaking to these themes.

Based on these discussions, we suggest that decolonisation can be experientially (if not theoretically) summarised as *a reclaiming and a revaluing of one's sociocultural heritage*. The 'reclaiming' is about rediscovering one's heritage, past or roots – those things that have been pushed to the edges as a result of a powerful other centre. The 'revaluing' is about esteeming and

cherishing one's heritage and one's self (particularly as a black person, as a woman), in contrast to the devaluing with which one might have lived for many years.

In light of these, we came to the terms indigenous knowledge/practice and Africanisation. A distinction was drawn between 'indigenisation' and 'indigenous knowledge/practice'. '**Indigenisation**' implies taking something from the Global North (or indeed any social system outside of one's own) and reformulating it in indigenous terms, so that it takes on an indigenous 'look and feel'. An example of this might be ecological theory, which resonated with African notions of interdependence and interrelatedness, best summed up in the philosophy of Ubuntu. Reframing ecological theory, which comes from the Global North, in African terms would be an example of indigenisation. This was not rejected as an invalid practice by participants, who argued that we should take possession of the best of the West, making it our own, appropriating it. However, it was agreed that indigenisation is quite distinct from decolonisation in that moves from the Global North onto the local context.

On the other hand, '**indigenous practice'** or **'indigenous knowledge systems**' were understood to be practices or knowledges (or ways of doing, knowing or being) that emerge from within the indigenous context, and is thus more closely aligned with decolonisation. This is a grassroots, bottom up, emic view of practice and knowledge. The challenge experienced here was that, other than specific cultural traditions, most of the examples participants came up with (such as communalism, family-centred society, interdependence), were found to be present in similar form in the Global North. In some discussions, therefore, the conversation about indigenous knowledge/practice lead to a sense of convergence between North and South. This also was not rejected as an invalid practice, and suggested that we might all be part of a larger human community that has more in common than in difference.

Finally, '**Africanisation**' was understood to be equivalent to 'indigenisation', but specifically within an African context (rather than, for example, Native American or Australian Aboriginal). What this term did connote, however, was that this is not about one's local ethnic indigenous practices and knowledge only, but rather about what we have in common with other South African indigenous practices and knowledge, and indeed with all other Africans, though it is also recognised that the construction of the profession of social work varies, sometimes considerably, across countries, even within Africa. Thus, broad African worldviews are important, including a regard for spirituality and affect in the pursuit of knowledge.

It is important to mention that, in the context of these discussions, issues of whiteness and blackness also emerged, since these terms speak to a centuries-long history of racial oppression of black people by white people. (While not discussed in the workshops, we should here include also the oppression of Afrikaner people by English people for more than a century.) Thus, issues of whiteness and blackness needed consideration, and are part of what made these conversations delicate and, at times, awkward. While uncomfortable at times, the discussions opened up space for engagement and introspection on the self with the shared sociohistorical context of our country. But those of us who are white did have to ask questions of ourselves, not about the marginalisation of our culture and identity, but rather about white privilege that we enjoyed (whether or not knowingly or deliberately) and what that means for us in a decolonised or postcolonial society.

No attempt was made after these discussions to formulate definitions of the terms. This is a summary of the discussions, leaving out many of the detailed nuances that are beyond the scope of this report. We thus recognise and support varied constructions of the terms and the need for ongoing discussion and reflection. This is a reflection of a widely shared view that decolonisation is

a process, not a state. It is something that we can and should do continuously and probably for years to some, as we work to undo the negative consequences of hundreds of years of colonial rule.

After this discussion, the plenary group was divided into smaller groups to discuss the implications of these ideas for five facets of social work education: theory, literature, practice, field practice and research. When the plenary group was large, there were five smaller groups. But when the group was small, the group was divided into just two or three smaller groups who handled more than one of the facets. The findings from discussions of the various groups are presented jointly in the following sections. Each section starts with a brief introduction to the theme and then a listing of key suggestions that emerged from the discussions that social work educators could implement as they work to decolonise the social work curriculum.

Theory

Two important points were realised by most participants. First, social work has few of its very own theories. For the most part, social work draws on theories from other disciplines (such as sociology and psychology) and repurposes them for social work. This realisation gave participants the freedom to engage in similar fashion with this theme. Second, participants were unable to think of social work (or related) theories that were indigenous or local – all (or most) of the theories that we use appear to come from the Global North.

Interestingly, no groups mentioned (or wrote in their notes) **social development** as an international theory that has developed in a unique form in South Africa: **developmental social welfare** (Patel, 2015). One group did list 'social development theory' but did not link it clearly to the foundation of our welfare approach to address large-scale poverty, promoting empowerment, and critical and radical social work – as well as strength-perspective as the critical edge through which developmental social work operates. This is rather surprising, given that social development is the foundation of our welfare approach in South Africa, and given that the social development theory we use in South Africa, has several distinctive features that differ from how it is theorised elsewhere in the world. It may be that participants think of social development as an approach, paradigm, framework, model or some other such thing. But at least in some way, we suggest, social development is a theory.

In the absence of alternative indigenous theories, we recommend here that we consider social development as a (if not the) central theory informing and guiding social work thinking in South Africa.

Some participants considered **Ubuntu** as a possible theory. There was recognition that Ubuntu is a major worldview that underpins African culture, and informs many indigenous ways of being, doing and thinking. Participants thus considered whether Ubuntu was an indigenous explanatory framework that could be formalised into an indigenous theory.

Some participants gave thought to the development of indigenous theory. **Grounded theory** was mentioned as one research design that could lead to the generation of theory that was culturally relevant and specific to local contexts.

Some participants suggested drawing on theories developed in other parts of the **Global South**, since many of these countries have grappled with similar challenges as South Africa in terms of decolonisation and poverty. Theories specifically mentioned, which could be indigenised or Africanised include:

1. Human Scale Development (Max-Neeff)

2. Circle of courage (Brendtro & Brokenleg)
3. Community integration (Biko)
4. African feminism (a variety of African feminist scholars, particularly in theology)

In addition, authors from South Africa and the Global South who write helpfully on topics that are applicable to social work education include:

1. Biko – I write what I like; etc.
2. Fanon – Black skin, white masks; Wretched of the earth; etc.
3. Freire – Pedagogy of the oppressed; etc.
4. Gray, Coates & Yellowbird – Indigenous social work around the world.

It seems this list is rather impoverished in scope, and some participants recognised the need to look purposively for theories that have emerged in the Global South and in South Africa that have gone unnoticed and to raise these up as potentially useful theories in our context.

Most participants moved quite easily into identifying theories that have merged primarily in the **Global North** but that have relevance for us in South Africa as providing a theoretical foundation for a decolonised social work education. These theories are, for the most part, presented only in texts from the Global North that contextualise and illustrate the theories in Western and First World settings. These theories need therefore to be indigenised by repackaging them in the local context and idiom. There was also widespread agreement that students need to be invited to engage critically with these theories – and not merely swallow them.

These theories (and also perspectives, approaches and models) include:

1. Anti-discriminatory theory
2. Crisis intervention
3. Critical social work (and other critical theories)
4. Ecological and systems theories
5. Ethics of care
6. Feminist theory
7. Human capabilities theory
8. Motivational interviewing
9. Narrative theory (and therapy)
10. Post-modernist theory
11. Problem-solving and task centred models
12. Reflective practice
13. Restorative justice
14. Strengths perspective and resilience theory
15. Asset based community development

All workshops stressed the importance of the development of **new indigenous theory**, that is, theory that emerges from within our own contexts. This is, perhaps, easier said than done. But participants suggested listening closely to students' narratives, and to those of their clients, to build up case material (or case studies) that could begin to inform and shape indigenous theory. Students' own knowledge constitutes highly localised theory, which when woven together could begin to constitute social theory that is emic and represents their own perspective and experience.

Literature

This theme is closely related to theory and smaller workshops combined them into one discussion, where they merged somewhat. But the focus here is slightly wider than theory, incorporating not

only theory, but all literature relevant for social work in South Africa (including, for example, practice methods and skills, research methodology, ethics, etc.).

Participants in general agreed that non-local literature still has value and should be retained, but that there is a severe need for a most substantial opus of South African literature. Some ideas of how to remedy this include:

1. Writing our own text books, where there are currently gaps, such as
    a. An introduction to social work (which we have)
    b. Social work theories for South Africa (in which even Global North theories are framed in local contexts and idiom)
    c. Fields of practice in South Africa (which we used to have in McKendrick's *social work in action*, but now very dated)
    d. A collection of case studies illustrating different facets of social work practice (there are similar American texts on family therapy to benchmark against)
    e. Ethics in South Africa (which draw on African conceptions of ethics and communal responsibility)
2. Collecting local literature on a range of facets of social work education that can be assembled into readers (thus not text books, but simply a collection of articles, or even just a reference list to avoid copyright issues). Such articles should not merely reflect a western orientation to the topic, but quite specifically tease out the local application or manifestation of the topic (e.g. indigenous approaches to grief). This is in fact in the strategic plan for ASASWEI and Dr Rautenbach from the ASASWEI Executive has been identified to follow up on this. Categories into which such articles could be collected include:
    a. Case, group and community work (or micro, meso and macro practice)
    b. Fields of practice
    c. Different models of helping
    d. Social issues (poverty, substance abuse, migration, health, loss, etc)
    e. Different population groups (children, families, older persons, etc)
    f. Social policy responses
3. The publishing of open access books should be considered, particularly since text books appear to generate little income for authors and cannot be submitted to DoHET for subsidy, so as to increase student access.
4. Arrange for a special issue of a local journal on decolonised or indigenous social work. This is also already on the ASASWEI strategic plan.
5. Get the local journals up to a level where they can be internationally listed with ISI or IBSS. This is, in fact, a very challenging process, which Social Work Practitioner-Researcher has attempted unsuccessfully. Nevertheless both our journals should be encouraged to pursue this, to raise the stature of the journals and to attract a broader readership.

It was noted, however, that there are various disincentives to writing text books. DoHET does not subsidise textbooks, because they are regarded as not constituting original research. And there is a general scepticism of prescribing textbooks one has written for one's own courses.

Participants in some workshops raised their concerns around the way journals are subsidised by DoHET and by universities, and how this negatively impacts publication of locally-relevant literature. DoHET does not differentiate between local and international journals in their subsidy to universities – publications in all listed journals attract the same subsidy. However, there are some local journals (and many African journals) that are not on the ISI/IBSS list, and also not on the DoHET SA Journal list. This means that articles published for an African audience (particularly outside of South Africa) typically will not be recognised by DoHET.

In addition to this, universities sometimes differentiate the cut of the subsidy paid to authors based on the listing of the journal. One university pays half the amount for a local publication as for an international publication, which severely disincentivises publishing locally. These distinctions can also negatively impact academics when it comes to promotion applications and NRF rating, which marginalises social work as an academic discipline in South Africa. Two actions are recommended by participants in such cases:

1. Challenge universities (and DoHET) on their policies that are at odds with the stated commitment of (most) universities to decolonisation of higher education.
2. Take a political stand to publish (at least some of) your research locally, particularly those that add value to indigenous social work, and accept the financial and promotional loss for the benefit of the social work community.

On the other hand, one group recognised the time that the development of such an opus of literature would require, and the ways that this might not be possible due to teaching and administrative loads, or might be at odds with our research interests and ambitions. Thus, we need also to respect ourselves as academics and family members. Another group pointed out that closing this knowledge gap in literature will take time, and should be approached in a progressive way. This appeared to imply that there should be a strategy of what needs to be written and what is most urgent and then someone (perhaps ASASWEI) would be tasked to monitor the progress over a number of years towards closing the gap and encouraging academics to attend to those aspects that are overlooked.

Practice

Much of the discussion on practice (i.e. the skills and processes of doing social work that we teach to our students) related to greater incorporation of African motifs into the helping process, particularly at the micro and meso levels, but also at macro. These include:

1. Spirituality
2. Ubuntu, relationships, interconnectedness, generosity
3. Respect for others and the world
4. Strengths, particularly cultural resources and resilience processes
5. Developing a sense of pride in oneself and one's cultural and racial identity
6. Local or cultural idioms, which are often located in language, thus finding and sharing cultural and linguistic metaphors that people may connect to at a more intuitive level
7. Greater inclusion of the extended family and activating cultural family practices, such as getting two extended families together to discuss a problem facing a couple
8. Greater inclusion of peer networks (meso, group) in facilitating the resolution of an individual's problem, as these networks are often a naturally occurring indigenous resource
9. Learning non-talking skills to assist clients, such as breath work or the emotional freedom technique
10. Develop greater capacity in students for reflective and reflexive practice, requiring more awareness of oneself and one's culture, race, gender, heritage, etc. and how these intersect with and sometimes impinge on those of others.
11. Utilise the person-in-environment (ecological) approach that is at the root of social work historically, but expand 'environment' to include also the spiritual, cultural, economic and political contexts.
12. Utilise locally relevant case studies when teaching these skills and processes.
13. Continue to uphold basic social work values, such as human rights, dignity and respect.
14. Assume that every client comes from another culture (even if they don't) and engage with them openly and respectfully, being curious to learn about their cultural resources and to learn something new from them.

In addition to these points, which focus primarily, but not exclusively, at the micro and meso levels of generalist social work practice, some participants strongly advocated for an expansion of macro practice – community development interventions to the address the challenges faced by communities. They cautioned against a perceived decline of interest in macro practice among social workers. They pointed towards the importance of fostering community-level Ubuntu, revitalising cultural values and practices, and engaging with traditional leaders and healers. Asset-based community development (ABCD) was specifically mentioned as a community development model that is particularly aligned with indigenous and culturally-relevant social work macro practice.

Field practice

The discussions on field practice, placements and internship generated extensive discussion among some participants, with a very wide range of ideas, many of which appeared to be generic rather than specific to the decolonisation agenda. This suggests that there is a need for far greater dialogue about the challenges and opportunities that field practice poses for universities. One group started (and ended) by declaring that finding field placements is difficult! Clearly, field practice is the aspects of social work education that is most complex (involving a wide range of role players, with high ethical risks, triggering significant personal issues in students), most important (it is in the field that everything taught in class must be put into practice, and for which we ultimately are training them) and costly (good placements are hard to find, as are good supervisors).

Notwithstanding these challenges, field practice is seen by most participants as the ideal opportunity for students to learn about indigenous social work, because they will be working with specific clients from particular communities with particular cultural heritages. This creates multiple opportunities for students to learn how to practice in a way that is contextually and culturally relevant, and to see decolonisation in action.

Key suggestions that emerged specific to the focus of this report include:

1. Placements themselves might need to be decolonised, suggesting that placements (and supervisors) should be engaged in the same process of dialogue about what an indigenous social work service might look like.
2. We need to shift (or expand) from our current emphasis on instructing students on what they have to do in their placements, to encouraging them to see what they can learn about indigenous practice through their placements. Students can learn from their clients and help implement solutions that the clients think will help to address their life challenge. Students could be required to provide a section in their reports on what they have learned from each contact/session about indigenous and contextually-relevant social work practice, so that they become attuned to context and build up a repertoire of indigenous knowledge.
3. Greater use of non-traditional placements should be considered (i.e. outside of formal NGOs and DSD), such as CBOs, FBOs, schools, etc and even in communities that have no offices at all. Some universities are doing this already, often out of necessity. But these opportunities could be pursued more purposefully and utilised more fruitfully to develop indigenous practice knowledge and skills in students. (Non-traditional placements do, however, present a number of challenges for social work educators, and thus need to be undertaken with due care.)
4. All of this should help cultivate graduates who can think, be creative and be flexible in any practice context.
5. Care should be taken to ensure that the latitude extended to students should not be misused to undermine the academic and professional learning endeavour. Students need to be held to account, ethics must be maintained, evidence of skill must be provided, and appropriate boundaries must be upheld.

Research

The discussion concerning the decolonisation of social work research (both the research we do ourselves and the research that we supervise) attended to the purpose, process and outcomes of research. Research should, to a greater or lesser extent, contribute to the transformation of society and the achievement of core social work values (such as equity, dignity and justice) for all people. The process of research – how we think about research methods and implement those methods – should be critiqued and problematized, to examine hidden assumptions. And the outcomes of research should be utilised for the common good and shared in such a way that those who need access to the outcomes are able to get them. In summary, researchers should consider the extent to which their research contributes to the perpetuation of colonialism or to the decolonisation agenda.

Specific recommendations that emerged from the discussions include:

1. Far greater emphasis should be given to the *ethics of care*, which are discussed in some detail by the Cape Town group (under both theory and research). An ethics of care centres on relationship and interdependence, which resonates with Ubuntu, which brings with it concerns for mutual well-being and benefit. These participants argue that ethics of care is, to some extent, in contrast to an ethic of human rights, and thus may be of greater relevance for informing research ethics in South Africa. This perspective also suggests that researchers need to avoid a tick-list approach to research ethics, but rather engage deeply and compassionately with the ethical implications of their research.
2. More research projects should be initiated to answer *research questions* about indigenous knowledge and practice and about the decolonisation of contemporary South Africa society. This would contribute to the development of indigenous knowledge and practice systems, which could inform teaching as well as practice and field instruction.
3. Participants emphasise the importance of *reflexivity* in decolonised research. This suggests that researchers should carefully consider their own positionality in the research they do, in relation to gender, race, culture, socioeconomic status or class, language, level of education, etc.
4. The use of a *reference or advisory group* from the community in which research is done can assist with promoting research reflexivity and the contextual appropriateness of the research project.
5. In designing our studies, participants recommended that we consider the insights generated in the earlier discussion on the decolonisation of social work *theory*, and thus draw more strongly on theories that align with a decolonisation and indigenous agenda or that have emerged in local contexts.
6. Participants suggested that all researchers (ourselves and our students) should be pushed to think and write about the *contextual, local, African and indigenous relevance* of their research, and to be more purposeful in engaging with this.
7. A number of *research approaches and designs* were mentioned as being particularly aligned to a decolonisation agenda, viz. qualitative and mixed methods approaches, and grounded theory, narrative and participatory action research designs. In addition, a constructivist epistemology was promoted.
8. In addition, the use of *creative and visual methods* for data collection (such as photo voice and sculpture) was recommended as a way to get beyond a predominant reliance on words, which may be inadequate to cross language and cultural barriers between researchers and participants.
9. Participants emphasised that research findings *belong* to the communities from which they were gathered. Researchers should not merely extract data from communities (which some refer to as 'extractive research', but rather utilise research processes and outcomes to

facilitate community change. This is a 'giving back' to those who contributed to the research.

10. Some participants suggested that research should be conducted that is locally relevant but also has *global appeal*. The assumption that research on indigenous practices is of interest only locally is thus challenged, and participants suggest that international readers are, in fact, fascinated by indigenous knowledge and are keen to engage further with rigorous research on highly situated local knowledge and practice.

The Way Forward

The regional workshops have generated rich and useful insights into the decolonisation of social work education and indigenous social work knowledge and practice. The detailed discussions of the regions are provided in Appendixes C to F. The most common or prominent ideas have been incorporated into the body of this report and attention has been given to pulling through the practical implications of these discussions for social work educators.

It is our hope that, even though we may not be in full agreement on the definitions of terms, we may be able to agree on the usefulness and relevance of the practice recommendations that have emerged from these workshops, as reflected in this report.

In light of that, we wish to propose a brief position statement for consideration by ASASWEI:

> *The Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI) commits itself to ongoing and rigorous efforts to decolonise our social work curriculum (including our teaching, field practice and research), to cultivate a social work education that is inclusively African and responsive to the needs and aspirations of local communities, and to contribute towards decolonised social policies and legislation.*

This report should serve a number of purposes within ASASWEI as a collective and at the level of each academic department of social work:

1. Departments should engage critically with their own curriculum to determine to what extent it perpetuates the colonisation of South Africa, and to identify places where the programme can be reconstructed to facilitate greater appreciation for decolonial and indigenous knowledge and practice.
2. Departments should engage with their students about this, is our own understanding of the terms and their implications for social work education may differ in important ways from our students. Furthermore, a participatory approach to curriculum construction is intrinsically an important decolonial activity.
3. Academics should give greater consideration to the implications of decolonisation for their research, postgraduate supervision, publications and theory development. Projects to address the gaps in the knowledge and literature base should be initiated.
4. Academics should engage in the critique and development of social policy and legislation, to assist the nation in constructing a foundation of policy and legislation that is African and relevant to our local context.

Appendix A: Workshop Agenda

Time	Agenda
08:30 – 09:00	Welcome, Registration, Coffee/Tea
09:00 – 10:30	Welcome and overview of ASASWEI Strategic Plan for 2016/17
	Scoping of the terms indigenization, decolonization and Africanisation
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee/Tea
10:50 – 12:30	Facilitated breakaway discussions to discuss the implications of these concepts for social work education in relation to: 1. Theory (What indigenous and decolonized knowledge systems are available or do we need to generate?) 2. Literature (What foreign literature is most useful to retain and what local literature is available or can be generated?) 3. Practice (What indigenous and decolonized skills and interventions models, at micro, meso and macro, are available or do we need to generate?) 4. Internship/Field Practice (What are the implications of decolonization and indigenization on where and how we do field work?) 5. Research (How do we generate and publish indigenous knowledge and investigate indigenous practices?)
12:30 – 13:00	Light lunch
13:00 – 14:00	Feedback from each breakaway group with brief discussion (8 minutes presentation and 4 minutes discussion)
14:00 – 14:30	Discussion on the way forward: • Preparation of a regional report to ASASWEI • Generation of a national report by ASASWEI Exco Thanks and closure

Appendix B: Workshop Attendance

UNIVERSITIES INVITED & GUESTS	NUMBER OF ACADEMIC STAFF	NUMBER WHO ATTENDED
NMMU	10	7
NWU (X 3)	24	4
SUN	6	4
UCT	17	2
UFH	14	10
UFS	8	5
UJ (& CSDA)	17	15
UKZN	19	8
UL	10	7
UNISA (PRETORIA & KZN)	50	7
UNIVEN	9	9
UNIZULU	8	0
UP	20	17 (1 apology)
UWC	11	8
Wits	15	1 (1 apology)
WSU	4	4
OTHER		
HUGENOTE COLLEGE		2
DSD	(2)	2
SACSSP	(1)	1
TOTALS	(244)	113 (45%)

Appendix C: Cape Town (19 September 2016)

In this workshop we decided to combine the following themes due to the number of people we had (moving in and out of the workshop) and they seemed closer to each other, hence the following arrangement:

Theory / Literature

There has been an acknowledgment about the current imbalance we find in the theories used in our teaching and learning, it being basically westernised. While this acknowledgement is there, the group also finds it equally difficult to, without having worked with indigenous theories in social work, to think of a way forward without those currently in use. A strategy identified to move forward from are thus to look at those theories that seems more adaptive to / have the ability to take in consideration the local context. I am attempting to categorised them in the manner that they contribute to our ability to draw from, capitalise on and develop the local: It is also acknowledged that there is a need to not just be confined to what we traditionally use as a social work theory – but that we branch within our broader sociological context.

Group 1: (Seen as addressing broader structural challenges in society that influences social work practice)

1. *Human Capabilities Theory*: Amartya Sen – for its ability to understand development not only from a narrow economic metrics like growth in GDP per capita – but whether these growths does in fact contribute to the improvement in human life (that people can value) – thus an understanding of poverty as deprivation in the capability to live a good life and development thus understood as a capability expansion.
2. *Human Scale Development*: (Manfred Max-Neef and others), regarding human scale development as an ontological condition, stemming from the condition of being human and can be seen as constant. What changes are the strategies by which these needs are satisfied. A taxonomy of human need and a process by which communities can identify their wealths and poverties according to their fundamental human needs. It is focused and based on the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, on the generation of growing levels of self-reliance, and on the construction of organic articulations of people with nature and technology, of global processes with local activity, of the personal with the social, of planning with autonomy, and of civil society with the state
3. *Strength-based theories*: For its ability to value the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in people and communities. As this is an approach that does not ignore the difficult spaces people are involved in, they do see people as partners with existing abilities in developing solutions. Has the ability for broad application across different population groups.

Group 2: (For its contribution to develop critical engagement capabilities of social work students)

1. *Anti-discriminatory theory / practice*: As it explores the range of discriminations that people experience and are able to work around a number of theories that inform Anti-discriminatory practice
2. *Post-modernist / critical theories*: Argues that a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation, to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them. In a broader sense critical theories aim to explain *all* the circumstances that enslave humans. Postmodernism holds that meanings are socially constructed; in fact there can be simultaneous, multiple realities and while postmodernism sometimes lacks a normative

imperative[6]; to foster social change, especially based around archaic groupings such as classes, is presumptuous. However, Postmodernism and Critical Theory share a definite rejection of economic rationalism and managerialism.

3. *Ethics of care:* The shared assumptions of the ethics of care are a set of interwoven arguments about the nature of the good in human interactions, and of how moral subjects generate and act on knowledge about the good. First among these shared assumptions of care ethics is what is calls a relational ontology. The ethics of care places at the centre of moral inquiry the interdependence of humans and their responsibilities to each other, rather than individuals and their rights. It also recognises the equal moral worth of all persons, and holds that their informal and interpersonal relations are an appropriate object and ground of moral deliberation. It further emphasises caring as moral posture or disposition: moral subjects should attend to others with compassion, responding to each person as unique and irreplaceable, and recognising each moral decision as taking place within a specific context. This contrasts with conventional rights-based ethics, in which the aim is to 'rise above' personal attachment, to consider right action from the standpoint of a disinterested and disengaged moral actor. Nurturing as a concept at the heart of care ethics requires that caring is also a process that fosters the growth of those participating in caring relationships, and their willingness to take on open-ended responsibilities in regard to each other. There is then a link with feminist theory as the above assumptions reject the masculinist norms of traditional rights-based moral theory.
4. *Feminist theory*: Feminist theory as a focus away from the male viewpoint and experience. In doing so, feminist theory shines light on social problems, trends, and issues that are otherwise overlooked or misidentified by the historically dominant male perspective within social theory. There is thus a focus on discrimination and exclusion on the basis of sex and gender, objectification, structural and economic inequality, power and oppression, and gender roles and stereotypes, among others. Feminist theory is thus about viewing the social world in a way that illuminates the forces that create and support inequality, oppression, and injustice, and in doing so, promotes the pursuit of equality and justice.

Group 3:

1. *Narrative theory:* as it uses an assumption that narrative is a basic human strategy for coming to terms with fundamental elements of our experience, such as time, process, and change, and it proceeds from this assumption to study the distinctive nature of narrative and its various structures, elements, uses, and effects. Narrative theorists are interested in how stories help people make sense of the world, while also studying how people make sense of stories.
2. *Solution-focused theory*: It is competency-based, which minimizes emphasis on past failings and problems, and instead focuses on clients' strengths and previous successes. There is a focus on working from the client's understandings of her/his concern/situation and what the client might want differently. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy differs from traditional treatment in that traditional treatment focuses on exploring problematic feelings, cognitions, behaviours, and/or interaction, providing interpretations, confrontation, and client education.
3. *Problem-solving / task-centred:* As a social work technology designed to help clients and practitioners collaborate on specific, measurable, and achievable goals. It is brief (typically 8–12 sessions), and can be used with individuals, couples, families, and groups in a wide variety of social work practice contexts. TCP (task centred) as a four-step process that trains social work practitioners to work closely with clients to establish distinct and achievable goals based on an agreed-upon presenting problem, usually called the target problem.
4. *Ecological theories*: An ecological model of man and society, and of how to help people in current behavioural and ecological sciences, as well as in social work, refers to a conceptual system about mind-body-environment in transactional relationships. People and their

physical-social-cultural environment are understood to interact in processes of mutual reciprocity and complementary exchanges of resources, through which processes the systemic functional requirements are met, dynamic equilibrium and exchange balance are attained, and dialectical change takes place. Ecological theory includes and adds dynamic and humanistic dimensions to general and social system theories.

5. *Motivational interviewing*: Motivational Interviewing is a method that works on facilitating and engaging intrinsic motivation within the client in order to change behaviour.[2] MI is a goal-oriented, client-centred counselling style for eliciting behaviour change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence. The approach attempts to increase the client's awareness of the potential problems caused, consequences experienced, and risks faced as a result of the behaviour in question. Alternatively, or in addition, therapists may help clients envision a better future, and become increasingly motivated to achieve it.[7] Either way, the strategy seeks to help clients think differently about their behavior and ultimately to consider what might be gained through change.[8]
6. *Social Development Theory…*
7. *Crisis Intervention…*
8. *Circle of courage*: Representing a medicine wheel, which for tribal people in North America represents the need for all things to be in balance and harmony. It is seen as appropriate for its achievement of great success in building the strengths of young people and reclaiming them as needed citizens. In tribal and kinship cultures, natural social relationships made sure that the growth needs of the young would be met. In current societal arrangements, however, the child and youth development infrastructure has collapsed
9. *Systems Theory…*
10. *Restorative Justice:* as it views crime as more than breaking the las – it also causes harm to people, relationships and the community. Thus seen as a just response to address those harms as well as the wrongdoings.
11. *Tree of life…*

The questions were then posed amongst the group as to what to do to build / develop / design for the future.

- There is a need to draw on students' feedback from their field work experiences (in this sense something more than just determining whether they were able theory to the practical context. In this sense it will mean drawing from their observations on those cultural practices, interactions between people they work with that can help us bring these more into the centre of our classroom practices.
- We need to make more use of South Africa examples, case studies….
- We need to determine what of our current practices is working and what is not working (for instance, above theories and interventions being deliberated in the group as currently in use that is actually beneficial to services in the local context)
- There should be a huge emphasis on consciousness raising of the social work student (who am I / having these voices heard / what do I bring) as part of pedagogical processes.
- There should be a lot more focus on community development theories drawn from indigenous practices.
- There should be an increased focus on prevention theories such as family preservation. Projects such as
    - Eye of the Child project
    - Tholomala project
- Theories should be constructed around cultural specific practices such as dealing with loss and grief, welcoming of newly born babies and milestones, reflection on male rituals such as male circumcision and gay men.

- Assessments should be culturally specific.
- Present westernised theories are running alongside indigenous knowledges and we need to work towards an inclusivity that informs and reshape significantly what we are currently using.
- Consideration should also be given to indigenous languages to be incorporated into our text with translations in footnotes.

Practice / Field Practice

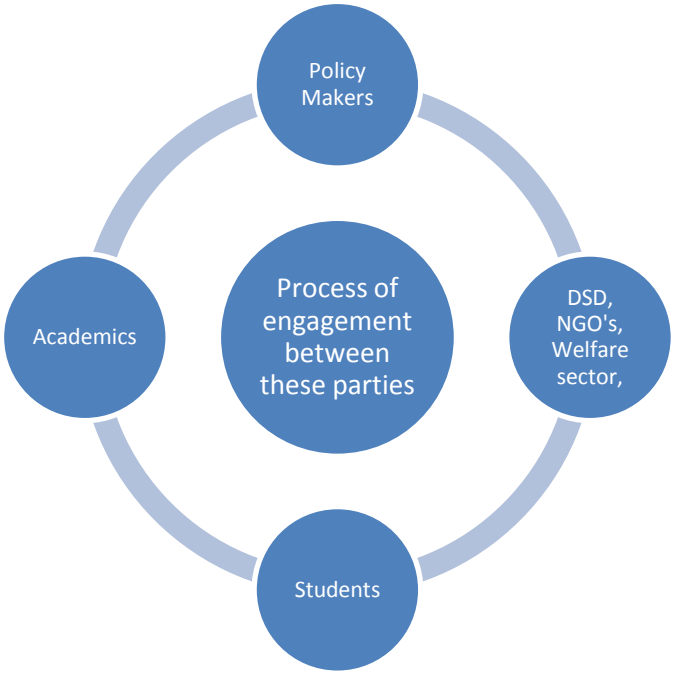
In working on these themes the group found themselves over-lapping with the theory literature themes as internship are so fundamentally linked to the classroom.

They first posed the question for themselves about the current text (based on skills and intervention models) used vs Indigenous / Africanised text. There has been a strong feeling that the text being drawn on remain traditionally westernised but in many cases academic staff strive to teach contextually relevant. One way of doing this is the use of local case studies (see reference to this in part 1) to make abstract theories relevant to daily experiences. In doing this there is a huge opportunity for developing locally relevant theory / and documenting synergy and confliction of local realities with existing theories.

Practice placement, while done through traditional social welfare organizations, work with people at grassroots level. It thus creates the opportunity to engage with local practices, to link research with practice activities and through this develop locally relevant (indigenous) theories. The actual engagement with people at grassroots level can thus be regarded as indigenous / Africanised but it is possible that the lens through which internship and practice is viewed, does not give recognition to those practices at play.

Practice placements are also mostly within the traditional welfare organizations – moving outside this structure towards more community based practice sites (thus having to re-think requirements from SACSSP side), will provide a much larger exposure to day to day indigenous practices through which theory can evolve.

As a process to deal with the practice and internship challenges the group is of the impression that the following collaborative engagements are needed for an inter-related process of developing:



There is thus a recognition with this group that while there are local indigenous theories in existence (mostly outside of social work) we have not sufficiently brought this into our space of utilization – thus not made them accessible for our use. We thus need an integrated approach through which we develop our own research (as a matter of urgency) – focused on writing up our own African experiences and capacities.

In academia, we often fall back to the space where we find it difficult to free up the time for constructive research. However, we often under-utilise the potential locked up in partnering with practitioners.

Some Implications:

1. The development of decolonised skills and intervention models can potentially be costly.
2. We have to re-think how we view and use human resources to our disposal – at an initial reflection it feels like this can be a limitation.
3. We also need to be realistic about the time needed for us to generate our own indigenous knowledges for utilization in social work training – through this awareness we can be able to design a roadmap indicating our needs, time-lines for deliverables and collaborations needed to make this happen.
4. There is a need to start engaging with text developed locally (even outside of social work but relevant to the work we engage with), so that we can capitalise on these. (central knowledge bank thus very useful)

Research

Two central questions evolved around this discussion:

1. How do we teach and how we can change the system? and

2. How do we train for transformation, liberation and social justice?

HOW DO WE TEACH AND HOW CAN WE CHANGE THE SYSTEM?

Looking at knowledge development:

Consider post-colonial theories, Critical Theory, Feminist theory to inform our research. These will help with the development of more comprehensive understanding of how current social challenges are influenced by historical and structural challenges.

Ethics of care:

1. Need to have clarity on own personal issues.
2. Awareness around implication of researching own clients.
3. Be aware of issues of power (especially in the research relationship) – these become renewed questions as much of the development of indigenous knowledges will require the views of the people we work with and their everyday experiences.
4. Work with and be responsive towards the ethical parameters of engaging indigenous communities (issues of race, gender, age, language). Think around access issues and interrogate issues around conflict of interest.
5. Colleagues to consider group research as well and these will make a great impact and contribute to the sharing of knowledge.
6. It is important that we engage with our own experiences of research, what it mean for us to be a researcher, to uncover our own experiences.

Student teaching:

What do we need to teach our students for transformation, liberation and social justice?

1. A focus on interactive teaching vs the student as passive recipient.
2. We need to interrogate ourselves on the following questions (for us and for our students to engage with):
   - Why am I here?
   - What can I contribute?
3. We need to prepare our students for what it means to be a social worker in this specific context. They need to develop their identity and image as a social worker and be clear as to what their aspirations are.
4. Their learning through internship must be as integrated as possible – based in communities rather than in offices.

5. To understand issues around cultural trauma and post-colonial theoretical constructs are essential for more effective interventions. To do so students should become engaged in interviewing their parents around history – these may provide different and deeper analytical lenses for them through which to understand current destructions in the communities they are working within and their interventions can as a result become more restorative. As these become very personal, they need to be debriefed about these experiences.

Us as researchers

1. We as educators / researchers need to interrogate our own experiences of research / what it mean to be a researcher / what it is that we wish to achieve / uncover our own experiences – thus be reflexive in terms of our own research agendas.
2. Action research has been identified as a research method that can be utilised appropriately in conjunction with communities.

How research should be disseminated:

1. It must be accessible to the social work practice
2. We need to lobby / politicise journals and work actively towards special additions to accelerate this particular research agenda.
3. We need to go back to our communities with the research conducted in their spaces and use this for the development of social action.
4. We need to consider social media as means to engage and disseminate our research findings.

TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION, LIBERATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. It becomes important to engage with the question around **what knowledges we value, centre and prioritise.**
2. What theories do we use / as teachers, what informs our training.
3. Where do we locate ourselves / what lenses do we use – our way of seeing the world.
4. We need to become aware of our process of personal transformation that is possible / or is happening through our teaching and research agendas. (the personal is political).

We need to be aware of the relationship between the researcher and the researched.

1. Issues of being empathically engaged / seek to understand from the view of those we engage in research. – thus not a top-down approach.
2. To be consistently reflexive as a researcher is in itself transformative.

What do we research:

1. We need to focus on the development of critical research questions.
2. What do indigenous knowledges look like in the context of a very diverse society?
3. What then is local / what is indigenous?
4. Research questions must be developed around the political landscape of our society.
5. Issues of religion and spirituality and how they influence the everyday lives of the people we work with
6. Issues of diversity and cross-cultural interactions.
7. The role of traditional leaders and traditional healers in the everyday lives of the people we work with / their interaction with the resolution of personal challenges of people.

How do we research:

1. Our analytical thinking needs to be central to our research engagements.
2. Beyond the traditional research methodologies that we use, we also need to look at alternative approaches as well. Some identified by this group – qualitative, participatory and visual in nature are the following:
    - Photo voice
    - Pictures
    - Music
    - Dance
    - Photos

Appendix D: Durban (21 September 2016)

Theory & Literature

1. Indigenous/decolonised knowledge systems exist, but need to be found/identified, including:
    a. Gaps
    b. Issues (e.g. violence)
    c. Explanations (e.g. colonisation)
    d. Responses (e.g. …)
    e. Values (e.g. Ubuntu)
2. There are also non-indigenous knowledges that may be useful to us
    a. Marginalised theories and philosophies from the West/Global North
    b. Theories, philosophies and approaches from elsewhere in the Global South
    c. These theories exist, but need to be found/identified and read, discussed and applied.
3. We need to not just produce local data, but also to use/apply local interpretive frames
    a. *Hybrid knowledge!!
    b. Strategies to accomplish this:
        i. Use local journals (social work / maatskaplikewerk; social work practitioner-researcher)
        ii. Organise special issues of these journals on indigenous or decolonised knowledge
        iii. Grounded theory approaches
        iv. Online/funded projects, particularly to facilitate collaboration on decolonised research.
        v. Use the ASASWEI forum to create discussion groups, share literature through Dropbox (as we've done with the readings on decolonisation)
        vi. Collaboration: supervision, learning, research spaces

Practice

1. Micro, Mezzo & Macro - Generate a new model of intra psychic intervention for pride in their identity / black pride / Healing the black soul. Family counseling, family mediation, confidentiality
2. Respect
3. Ubuntu – connectivity
4. Spirituality
5. Empathy
6. Strengthens perspective
7. Powerful idioms
8. Existing groups
9. Lack of self-determination (Indian and African) Future determined by family

Field Practice

1. Learn from context
2. Respect communalism
3. Marry the two worlds
4. Moving away from traditional types of placements and that are not office based

Research

1. More research on African practices is needed
2. Grounded Theory

Appendix E: East London (22 September 2016)

Theory

WHAT IS THEORY?

- Explore, describe, explain & predict
- Is this appropriate for the Indigenisation process?

Predominant theories being for example:

- Ecosystems
- Micro – Macro Theories

There are very few theories developed by social workers: "PROSTITUTING"
Post-colonial theory is necessary to contextualise social work (theoretical framework)
South African situations that have a context but theory does not adequately explain Eg feminist theories
How to adapt from Eurocentric Ideas
INDIGENISATION IS TAKING TOO LONG!
THEORY CAN BE A COLONISING EXPERIENCE "Colonial Hangover'
SUGGESTED THEORIES

- Reflective practice
- Critical social work
- Mirror cultural lenses
- Create controversy to promote debate to create theory
- Promote post graduate student research – which is a good foundation. AND the PG students to promote their own areas of research
- Course guides and readings that are prescribed for all modules – incorporate local literature
- With the existing theory, the suggested theories is about offering a starting point so to engage with the process (blended theories may be an appropriate interim name to use)
- Integrate into our context

Literature

CHALLENGE: Insufficient local literature

1. Needs to be timeline specific
2. Central data base (research/publications)
3. Current books published (analyse: gaps and strengths)
4. Theoretical framework alluded to for the above 2 points
5. Merge into practice/fieldwork to enhance research

Actions to take:

1. Use literature and develop our own indigenous context
2. Textbook – Introduction to Social work rework
3. Diversity – broad to embrace that diversity
4. Using South African publishers
5. Open Access

Practice

1. We need to find the problems to come up with solutions
2. Don't change theories but adapt it to circumstances
3. Simplify the context, are we using euro approaches to South African context,
4. Are we using to many approaches form international literature?
5. We need to use knowledge within, and understand it our self before we teach and practise.
6. Policy makers need to be part of the system, need to know what is going on ground level
7. What theories can we adapt or develop for Africa / basics of theories to workable
8. Do we know what we are teaching? We were trained the colonized way, and how do we develop new ways.
9. Develop theories from how the students see it not how we as academics see it.
10. Many concepts that we need to address. For example, confidentiality. Is it a western concept or is an African concept. We must first start with ourselves and see what your values are.
11. The need to clarify the basis of social work practise in South Africa is very important. What are the basic but fundamental issues that the social work professional must resolve in order to be responsive and relevant to the South African socio economic development?
12. What is the solutions
13. Too little time is spent on introspection and for students to understand to respect clients for their culture and for them as a human.
14. We need to define social work in the South African context.
15. The people environment relationship must be defined to the psychological, spiritual, economic and political context.
16. Engage students to the action participatory research.
17. Find Africa solutions for Africa problems

Field Practice

There was agreement from the breakaway panel members that fieldwork should be flexible in nature and guided by the context of the communities and cultures within which the university is situated. Fieldwork should give students an opportunity to observe, experience and practice as well as develop students who can think, be creative and be flexible in practice. Fieldwork should also incorporate ongoing partnerships, discussions and training with agencies and supervisors so that there is a strong link between education and practice. It was also agreed that discussions relating to decolonisation and indigenous knowledge should form a part of this partnership and that such discussions would further enhance fieldwork opportunities for students

Panel members agreed that the following points within fieldwork programmes could be considered:

1. Can we make sure that students get an experience to work with different indigenous communities?
2. We need to find out what agencies are doing in the EC and how they are doing this?
3. What can our students learn here at your agency?
4. Do students need to do what the university prescribes or should we allow them to do what the agency is doing?
5. Need to look at impact studies and more research with regards to work students are doing and work being done by agencies.
6. Reflections are important – ethical and unethical behaviour
7. Report writing should be agency style with university reports only for assessment

8. Assessments should be open and inclusive of students and agency supervisors, can assessments be more qualitative in style?
9. Ice breakers and assessment tools that are indigenous to community should be developed and used within fieldwork, programmes should be developed from within, using icebreakers and programme activities that are familiar to the community
10. E Portfolio's – by end of fourth year ELO's should be met and POE should be complete
11. ABCD is real and can work in SA in EC for fieldwork and communities, fieldwork opportunities should support the use of this theory and encourage empowerment of communities through some contribution towards poverty eradication and income generating activities.
12. The discussion amongst colleagues was very useful in terms of exploring and discussing what the different universities are doing in terms of fieldwork, it raised awareness of "best practice" within fieldwork and such discussions should be encouraged and supported through regular communication, research and publications.

Research

1. When start with the theory – and take into consideration the indigenous context
2. How do we generate – see what is existing and see how does that apply in practice – taking Constructivism as epistemology
3. Language – using and the and meaning of the way you say things
4. Indigenous research – constructivism – learning what a concept means.
5. Research ethics – having cultural advisor
6. What do we do to generate that type of research
7. Diversity – there are some common issues that we can build on…What are the common grounds within the African context
8. Conducting research – first translate the instrument
9. Look at theory then adding the African context
10. What about developing our own indigenous dictionary?
11. Conducting research in Africa? Ea sampling – randomized sampling – going to the chief and select the sample.
12. Methodologies – look at what is more relevant in the African context – ea using folk tales
13. Indigenous journal – write about African stories and publishing (Two South African Journals – special issues)
14. Working at developing an African Journal
15. There are many commonalities internationally in terms of indigenous knowledge systems we need to build on that
16. Qualitative research approach – use to explore concepts that we can later follow up with quantitative research.

Appendix F: Pretoria (23 September 2016)

Theory

1. Knowledge must be linked with values, skills and attitudes
2. Use of collective/shared knowledge
3. Bringing together personal knowledge and literature to check common areas and areas of disagreement
4. Encouraging critical consciousness among students
5. Ubuntu principles should be developed into theory
6. Female voices needed to be raised (African feminism)
7. Use what we have – what is good for us in our current contexts
8. Looking at what is helpful in various existing theories (from the global north)
9. Need to be open to new knowledge
10. Need interventions that are relevant at grassroots levels
11. Steve Biko's theory of community integration
12. Education that allows students to be assertive
13. We develop models and want our students to 'fit in' to them, rather than adapting our models to fit our students
14. Language barriers
15. Need for discussion groups among students
16. Learning can also take place outside the classroom
17. Changing the way we think about our profession – from teaching to practice

Literature

1. Literature that we have has enabled us to do the work that we have been doing. Western and African approaches are both relevant, so perhaps we should not adopt an 'either/or' approach, rather 'together/and'
2. Do we create a new language at the expense of what was working?
3. Other countries have successfully decolonized, so we should read the literature that has emerged from those processes and take lessons from it.
4. Social work has a good starting point for decolonizing and indigenizing in the foundational principles of respecting diversity and beginning where the client is. Social work literature is written from the basis of these core principles, which stands social work in good stead.
5. With regard to knowledge generation, there is a need for literature we can use in the classroom, and it must be practical in terms of what we are doing i.e. teaching students to practice in their contexts, and recognizing that contexts vary.
6. Tensions exist because although we might be able to introduce an indigenous component into our modules, until there is literature that we can use, we still have to measure our students against a set of outcomes. How can we do this if there is no literature to support what we are teaching?
7. There is a dissonance between what we teach and what students practice when they meet the reality of engaging with clients and client systems
8. On that note, we should recognize that South Africa is a very diverse nation and therefore there will not be one textbook that covers all of the South African contexts and possibilities.
9. Knowledge generation is seen as a progressive closing of gaps
10. Knowledge generation is influenced by the tensions around publication.
11. Publication has issues of money, ratings and performance management.
12. The DoE list of accredited journals serves to preference certain journals and viewpoints
13. We question whose voice is silenced and whose voices are preferenced in the production of literature and publication

14. In this respect, we as academics have become acquiescent, as we do not challenge the status quo. We encourage our students to be social activists, but we neglect to action this ourselves. Are we prepared to 'take the knock' and publish a 'local' article for publication in a 'local' journal and forgo the ratings, money etc, and be prepared to argue our position in our next performance appraisal?
15. There is also space for a body of critical literature that examines the structures of government, management and allocation of resources. Theories that inform government structures and policies are clearly not a good fit as there is a divide between policy, the needs of the people on the ground and what happens in the field

Practice

1. Micro practice with individuals and families
    a. Person-centred, systems theory, PIE (ecosystems) theory
    b. Need to retain micro skills, however need to be culturally sensitive, e.g. eye contact is constructed differently in different cultures
    c. There is a need for alternative approaches in family therapy that incorporate indigenous knowledge
    d. Social workers need to be equipped with alternative ways of working with families and individuals. E.g. with very traumatised client, can use hypnosis, breath work, emotional freedom technique (beyond 'talk therapy')
    e. Consider how we can build resilience in our own students
    f. Theories must talk to the context and contemporary social issues
    g. Spirituality is important in the lives of people in Africa – we do seem to be embracing this more, and it is appearing more often in the literature, e.g. Payne's *Modern social work theories.*
2. Meso practice with groups
    a. Meso is very relevant – a vehicle to address common social issues, such as
        i. Spirit of Ubuntu and diversity
        ii. Sense of community/togetherness/interdependence
        iii. Can be utilised to empower people through therapy
        iv. Can be utilised for need identification
        v. May obtain valuable information that can play a significant role in influencing decision makers
    b. We need to document indigenous case studies
    c. Group work has been there (naturally in African culture) – we have just not recognised it. Instead we impose.
3. Macro practice with communities
    a. Need to cultivate an integrated micro-meso-macro approach
    b. Need to be aware of culture in communities
    c. We need to bring back Ubuntu for community healing
    d. Most social workers are not practising community development. There seems to be a lack of interest and commitment.
    e. How community work is structured needs to be revisited.
    f. How do we integration and work with traditional community leaders and healers?

Field Practice

1. The dilemma is that finding placements in general is difficult, never mind 'decolonised' placements. What is our responsibility as educators ito placements? Field placement / host is not responsible.

2. The curriculum must change. Placements need to be comfortable with using indigenous practices, thus perhaps placements also need to be decolonised?
3. The issue of various cultural practices. All parties need to be knowledgeable about cultural and indigenous practices (educators, field supervisors, etc). Context/flexibility ito preparing our students to work in different field settings – sensitising for different cultural contexts.
4. Decolonising theory will influence decolonising practice and therefore also field practice settings.
5. How can practice 'decolonise'? Align lectures, field placements and students.
    a. Start at the individual level – a mind shift
    b. Feedback from students – they observe student-community relations and should influence our process. How do we incorporate our student feedback?
    c. Feedback from field placements themselves
    d. Workshops with field supervisors to align understanding between parties: ensure growth environments
    e. Students proposing their own placements can assist, as they understand/show interest in understanding
    f. We as educators need to teach students to be sensitive and open to learning in diverse cultural settings.
    g. Educators can consider challenging students to deal with diverse cultures – trained and socialised to adapt to various cultures.
    h. We need to find a balance – what remains applicable in a decolonised practice?
6. Elements to be treasured and addressed
    a. Basic focus on human rights
    b. Respect for diversity – modelling of respect for our students
    c. No 'blanket' approach – know we have similarities and differences
    d. Opening up discussions with students about cultures
    e. Creating and building understanding
    f. In learning about cultures – if I don't understand or value differences, I still need to respect them.
    g. Fine tuning basic differences, e.g. looking into eyes versus looking down.
    h. Educators should teach different ways of doing things and learn <u>when</u> to utilise these ways.
    i. Consider a module on indigenous knowledge systems (IKS)
    j. Even in our own cultures, we need to know how things are done and acknowledge different ways but be <u>cautious</u>.
7. Cultural challenges in practice teaching are REAL
    a. E.g. student could not complete work due to ancestors condemning her to work – we need to find respectful ways of dealing with such issues
    b. Consider a 'student first' approach
    c. 'Draw a line'
    d. Field work has many challenges – time intensive, transport, etc
    e. But we cannot allow students to hide behind any excuses (cultural or otherwise) – educators are allowed and empowered to implement educational practices.
    f. <u>Boundaries</u> for educators, field supervisors and students are required. We are also preparing students for employment
    g. Cultural sensitivity and lack of boundaries
    h. Relook at whether our rules are or are not oppressive.
    i. Are university rules culturally sensitive?
    j. Are field placements sensitive?
8. Research on field instruction is required
    a. Are universities and field placements considering culture?

   b. Whose culture/religion is primarily considered?
   c. Where are rules?
   d. Whose freedom is protected?
   e. Practice research is essential ito cultural differences.
9. It is not easy to get field placements.

Research

1. There are no prescriptions on the types of research design that can/should be used or not used, though mixed methods and grounded theory were mentioned as potentially helpful for the decolonisation agenda.
2. Research should have global relevance and appeal, but with LOCAL knowledge.
3. African world views should infuse research (theoretically and conceptually) to critique and think about local contemporary issues. We can push students to do this already in their research proposals.
4. Local social practices must inform social work practice, teaching and curriculum. For this to happen, we need these practices to be documented, perhaps similar to case law in the legal profession.
5. Recognise the diversity of culture, practices and generations in research.
6. Structural barriers to decolonising research should be challenged, e.g. the charging of page fees and the exclusionary accreditation of journals.
7. We need more research collaboration (perhaps also mentorship) between social work scholars and HEIs.
8. There is so much material to write up, e.g. teaching philosophies and practices, students' work, and our own research interests.