

The role of student-related community engagement structures in mitigating social injustice in a Rural Based University in South Africa, Limpopo Province.

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DECLARATION

I, Mtsweni Lungile Ennie, hereby declare that this dissertation for the Master of Arts in African Studies degree submitted to the Centre for African Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education at the University of Venda has not been submitted previously for any degree or another university. It is original in design and execution, and all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

Student: Mtsweni L.E Date: 10 March 2022

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to God and all the social justice activists of the past, the current and those still to come. Every contribution to making the world a better place matters!!!

ABBREVIATIONS

UDHR:	United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
BMF:	Black Management Forum
CDC:	Centre for Disease Control
CE:	Community Engagement
CHE:	Council on Higher Education
COVID-19:	Corona Virus Disease (2019)
DoH:	Department of Health
FGD:	Focused Group Discussion
IASAS:	International Association of Student Affairs and Services
GBV:	Gender-Based Violence
HEQC:	Higher Education Quality Committee
JHEOESREB:	(Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement Southern Regional Education Board)
LGBTQI:	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersexed community.
SA:	South Africa
SAHECEF:	South African Education Community Engagement Forum
SAHO:	South African History Online
SRC:	Student Representative Council
TVET:	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UK:	United Kingdom
UNIVEN:	University of Venda
USA:	United States of America
WHO:	World Health Organisation

USRN: University Social Responsibility Network

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ABSTRACT

The University of Venda, just like many other higher learning institutions in South Africa and beyond is confronted with student-related social injustice. Among a myriad, student-lecturer abuses, bullying, discrimination against LGBTQI, sexual abuse and theft have been documented. To date, it is not very clear the precise policy and regulations put in place by the management to curb these challenges such that a safe and secure learning environment for the students is achieved regardless of gender, level of study and cultural background. There has been a rise in volunteer structures that use the community engagement approach, building on ubuntu to mitigate student-related social injustices within the University and beyond. The current study sought to explore how these structures (student organizations under community engagement) operationalise and suggest possible means of amplifying their engagement about societal issues within the context of the University. The descriptive and contextual designs were utilised. Purposive sampling was used to identify 25 participants from 5 organizations that participated. Data was collected through WhatsApp Focus group discussions. An interview guide was used to guide the discussions. A thematic analysis was applied. The student structures mitigating social injustice on campus are namely: Stop the Spot, Aphrodite Global, BMF, AIME and Enactus. The structures mitigate social injustice by raising awareness through hosting seminars and webinars where necessary. The challenges they face in their endeavours include lack of financial support and recognition from the management. Another challenge is lack of interest from general students. The findings of this study reflected that through financial support and legal recognition by the University the structures can achieve more social justice. This study collected data that will assist the university community uphold social justice and offer a less social unjust environment to its current and prospective students.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Social injustice is commonly used to explain unfair and unjust relationships between the society and individuals, as calculated by wealth distribution, social privileges and personal activity opportunities (Kaan, 2014; Clark, 2015; Smith, 2017). There is not yet sufficient evidence to prove that some societies in some parts of the world are entirely immune to social injustice. In other words, it is a global issue. However, there may be a disparity in the nature and gravity of social injustice that exists amongst communities. This explains negative practices being carried in the society most often relating to when the equals are treated in an unequal way, sometimes immorally and usually against the law. Social injustice is an emphasis on social mobility barriers, lack of security, safety nets and economic deprivation to some individuals (El Khoury, 2015; Smith, 2017; Rambiritchi, 2018). Social injustice limitations resonate with personal insecurity, lack of freedom, as well as rights responsibilities in the society, which permits individuals to live a normal and desired life (Lee, 2014; Moyn, 2014; Pérez-Garzón, 2018).

In a broader and more holistic context, social injustice explains unfair or unequal treatments of individuals in situations such as distribution of wealth, access to opportunities and privileges, as well as protection within a defined community (Van der Westhuizen & Swart, 2015; Clowes et al., 2017). Globally, people experience various forms of injustices. For instance, the survey indicates that international students in most universities isolate from local lecturers because they prioritize and favour students of the same cultural lines in terms of marks and opportunities (Ikeguchi, 2012; Lin and Scherz, 2014; Fokkema and Haas, 2015; Lee, 2017). Such experiences left some students with feelings of discrimination, disregard and unequal treatment. On the other hand, local students despise migrant lecturers for treating them with disrespect, making sexual advancements towards them and nepotism. South Africa is no exception to these issues.

To mitigate the occurrence of social justice, the South African government rolled out a framework that guides the protection of four essential principles namely: equity, participation, access and rights. However, concerns have been that the framework is lagging; failing to part take in the nation's contest to retrieve the fundamental ideology of humanity, work against racism and social divide introduced by the apartheid regime, economic inequalities, as well as educational issues (Subreenduth, 2013). This is in line with Tjabane (2011) who mentioned that there is a pressing need for revival of the efforts taken by South Africa to restore the social justice agenda. Lack of proper institutions to front is a major reason people still experience and live under the same unjust circumstances put in place by the apartheid era.

Students who are pursuing degrees at the institutions of higher learning are not exempted from social injustice. Globally, pursuing a programme in a higher institution of education generally comes with certain social issues. This comes in various forms and in different scenarios. Among many others, sarcasm, favoritism, bullying, sexual abuses, rape and theft have been widely documented (Mahnic & Zabkar, 2001; Okibo & Ochiche, 2014; Wanie et al., 2016; Iwara et al., 2018). Often, students in higher institutions of learning perform below expectation or even fail and drop out of their degree programmes because of these challenges. A study earlier submitted by Iwara (2018) is witness to the fact that the University of Venda is not immune. It is therefore important to dig deep into the concern and come up with leverage measures for a positive shift. An understanding of volunteer structures in mitigating student related social injustice will enhance a framework that could be used by the University to fight the challenge in a broader context.

Social injustice regardless of its typology is an important concern that should be deeply investigated to mitigation measures that can ensure the freedom of people. Within the context of this study, discourse centres on the use of community engagement pillars, specifically the student volunteer structures to militate against student-related social injustice in a rural-based University. This focus has not been sufficiently harnessed globally, especially in African countries such as South Africa, even though community engagement and social injustice are widely discussed areas. Thus, this study will provide

insight into how students use volunteer structures to manage social injustices confronting them.

In South Africa, social injustice was among other key issues that informed the pre-1994 democratic discourse for transformation with hopes of new life post-apartheid era (Boudreaux, 2010; Handmaker & Berkhout 2010; Van der Westhuizen & Swart, 2015). Both international and national role-players have engaged to provide a lasting solution to the issue. Yet, majority of South African citizens are exposed to social injustice daily. Statistics South Africa (2013:22) explained that the country was still suffering from lack of employment, hunger, inequality and poverty. This is consistent with Ipsos (2014) who indicates that most important issues that the government of South Africa should address include crime which was then at 57%, unemployment at 87% and poverty at 59%. These issues are predominant amongst vulnerable individuals in the country. Studies further indicate racial discrimination, molestation due to cultural lines, favouritism and unequal distribution of resources, xenophobic attacks, home abuses as well as rape concerns (Van der Westhuizen & Swart 2015; Lee, 2018; Masilo, 2018). The universities were no exception. To mitigate social injustice, the government strongly implores institutions of higher learning to launch a campaign through research, teaching and community engagement that speaks to the focal point.

The University of Venda, in its efforts to ensure social justice within its community and beyond has subsequently joined the struggle putting in place three key concepts as a road map. Firstly, the promotion of Ubuntu which is an integral concept for fostering unity and values for symbiotic support, mutual appreciation respect and dignity (Kamwangamalu, 2013; Waghid, Waghid, & Waghid, 2018). Unlike the Western world where conventional measures such as the Roman Dutch law are widely harnessed to mitigate injustice, traditional African communities use customary laws through community engagement to combat societal issues. This approach encourages people to take responsibility, live for one another, resolve issues amicably and live in harmony. 'Ubuntu' stems from an African maxim "*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" (which means an individual is an individual through other individuals or an individual is an individual because of other individuals) (Motseka, 2014; 545). It explains the existence of people due to fairness

shown by others, the understanding people have for each other, and sacrifices made by some people. Thus, reckoning on African concepts, specifically ubuntu and community engagement could be an ideal means of tackling social injustice.

A number of students' volunteer structures (student organizations under community engagement) have mobilised to address some of the social injustices in practice within the University. Lack of proper documentation could explain that there is yet ample attention on these structures even though they have demonstrated prominence in solving societal issues through community engagement. These gaps stressed the need for this study which seeks to profile these structures, single out the kind of social injustices they deal with, unveil the approaches used, identify their challenges and figure out possible measures that could be used to help them thrive in their endeavours. Whereas the focus is on the University of Venda, it is believed that the findings can be applied in other institutions of higher learning within the country and beyond to mitigate student-related social injustice.

The concepts of outreach and community engaged services differ from traditional research and teaching because they are focused on engaging faculties, staff and students in activities that are based on communities and are intentionally designed to offer service to the community that is genuine, (Bhagwan, 2017). Faculty engagement experts as consultants, staff volunteer programmes and as community service experiences of students. Community engagement conceptualization in South African Higher Institutions has remained a controversial topic in the agenda of transformation. The Indigenous Knowledge Systems of South Africa have been refreshed perennially and transmitted through the pedagogy of education that is characterized by spirit of ubuntu, sensitiveness to African philosophies and axiology, (Rajah, 2020).

It must thus be noted that community engagement as a role-player in bring about social justice work hand in hand with service-learning as a pedagogy, university social responsibility, corporate social responsibility and the constitution to bring about social change. The importance of community engagement as a part of the higher learning institutions is emphasized as one of the effective mechanisms to decrease social injustices especially in the institutions of higher learning.

The researcher in this study sought to understand the community engagement structures' characteristics, their motivation, practices and challenges they face when mitigating social injustice on campus and whether the university provides an enabling environment and support for the students to continue what they do. The researcher shared findings according to the respondents and literature reviewed as is on their data. Furthermore, the findings were discussed and recommendations were made to the necessary departments. The researcher does give her perspective of things in accordance with the findings of the study as well, which is how she concluded the study.

1.2 Statement Problem

Whereas the University of Venda is meant to be a safe space for academic activities with platforms where people can easily interact, network and socially integrate, many students live in fear of being violated either by their peers and/or lecturers. Amongst a myriad of issues, student-lecturer abuses, bullying, rape, physical attacks and theft have been reported (Dastile, 2004; Mukwevho, 2017; Thusego, 2020). This is consistent with Mukwevho (2017) who emphasised that the University of Venda students after the violent incidents of break-ins, robberies and muggings experienced by those in university residences and those outside now live in fear. Recently, six unsuspecting students were accosted in their rooms by armed suspects who broke in, raped, and robbed them (Review Your City, 2019).

Some students experience anxiety which affects their academic performance due to behaviours portrayed by their lecturers. While some experience sexual harassments, others see tribalism and favouritism being practiced in their classes (Iwara et al., 2018). Even though these issues are critical to students' wellbeing, the reputation and growth of the University, it has not been researched and discussed sufficiently for policy actions. It is not very clear the extent of measures put in place by the management to provide a lasting solution. Since it is not clear what the solutions are to this dire global plaque the

study seeks to address the concern for social justice on campus and come up with ways in which the social justice goal can be achieved.

1.3 Aim of Study

The current study aimed to establish the role of student-related community engagement structures in mitigating social injustice in a Rural-Based University in South Africa, Limpopo Province.

1.4 Objectives

- To profile student-related community engagement structures that mitigate social injustice on campus.
- To determine the approaches used by student-related community engagement structures to address social injustice on campus.
- To examine challenges confronting student-related community engagement structures in mitigating social injustice on campus.
- To identify possible measures of supporting student-related community engagement structures to be more active in mitigating social injustice.

1.5 Research Questions

- What are the student-related community engagement structures put in place to mitigate social injustice on campus?

- How do student-related community engagement structures mitigate social injustice on campus?
- What are the challenges confronting student-related community engagement structures put in place to mitigate social injustice on campus?
- How may student-related community engagement structures be supported for them to be more active in mitigating social injustice?

1.6 Delineation of the Study

The current study is mainly focused on the role of community engagement on the control of social inequality. Although community engagement is a broad concept, the current study will be limited to student volunteerism with its focus based specifically on the University of Venda, South Africa. Therefore, the student volunteer groups fronting the agenda for mitigation of social inequalities were the targeted sample.

1.7 Significance of Study

This study documented the African indigenous knowledge relating to community engagement and ubuntu as an African concept widely harnessed in traditional communities to address societal issues. Despite its relevance, there is yet substantive evidence on how it has been used in higher learning institutions. Firstly, the study has unpacked the role of community engagement, specifically using ubuntu in society building and development – showing how the University can use various students' platforms to achieve social equality. This is consistent with Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna & Slamati (2008) and Mapotse (2018) who emphasised that the goal of sustainable

development in the university and community can merely be reached by students' engagements and university stakeholders through Ubuntu and social responsibility.

Secondly, the profile of existing student volunteer structures could enhance awareness. Through this study, students at the University would understand various groups responsible in fronting their issues regarding social inequality. It also promotes recognition on the side of the structures. Students might therefore be motivated to engage more on volunteerism endeavours and be accountable for their every action. Thirdly, an understanding of challenges student volunteers face could help the management to come with support measures that can assist them thrive. Overall, the research is an addition to the body of literature as the study covers the profile of the community engagements structures, their approaches in mitigating social injustice, challenges they face and possible measures that can be utilised to assist them succeed. Community engagement is a widely researched field. Similarly, social inequality has been talked about in sufficiency. However, the relationship between student volunteerism as a component of community engagement and social inequality has not been harnessed in a rural-based institution of higher learning such as the University of Venda. Thus, conducting this study may set a stage for other Universities.

The population of the University of Venda students could benefit by the study as their needs with regards to the approach to social justice was examined and results were provided as to where they lack so that they can get relevant help from the management and relevant stakeholders. Other researchers may benefit as this is closing a gap of knowledge regarding the impact of community engagement structures on social justice issues and helps other researchers realise the loopholes with possible conduction of further studies to fill the loopholes. The community at large may benefit because if the social injustices are dealt with, they may have healthy children to lead in the community using the Ubuntu spirit. The study is the first master's study of its nature and the knowledge it brought has the potential to bring about tremendous positive change in the University and neighbouring communities. It further has the prospect to deliver difference in the relations of the management and students.

1.8 Assumption of the Study

The following assumptions were made:

Student structures that are active in community engagement are one of the pivotal parts of the University's ways of fostering the social responsibility role of the university. An understanding of how this community engagement is operationalised, the strengths and weaknesses could provide rooms for support and improvement. Furthermore, a proper student volunteer structure is capable of mitigating if not eliminating social injustices in the University of Venda and beyond.

1.9 Definition of Concepts

Community Engagement

Community Engagement is an informed activity wherein people with like minds convene to carry out a certain goal/goals (Mahlomaholo, 2010). It is a means through which people develop a working relationship between public bodies and community groups. Often, community engagement is geared towards social surpluses rather than personal benefits. This definition of community engagement is adopted in the current study. However, the community is limited to the University of Venda.

According to Council on Higher Education, Community Engagement refers to the solutions and measures applied by the university institution through research and teaching for the benefit of its community and surrounding communities. A central part of research and learning community engagement is, (HEQC founding document, 2001).

Social Justice

Social justice may be defined as fairness and justice in relationships between a society and an individual, as calculated by wealth distribution, social privileges and personal

activities opportunities (Kaan, 2014; Clark, 2015; Smith, 2017). This means that social justice is the exact opposite of social injustice for the purposes of this study.

Social Injustice

Social injustice refers to unfairness and injustice relationships between the society and an individual (Clowes et al., 2017). It is calculated by the tacit and explicit terminology for wealth distribution, privileges that are social and for personal activities opportunities. Contextually, social injustice refers to unfair treatment students' encounter from their peers, lecturers and management of the University. The treatment includes but not limited to class favouritism, sexual harassment, bullying and rape. Social justice approach takes recognition of complementing the change in attitude attempting to transform the oppressions aspects that are structural

Ubuntu

Ubuntu is an African maxim - "*ümuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" which in English translates as an individual is an individual through other individuals or an individual is an individual because of other individuals (Motseka, 2014; 545). It explains how people in a traditional African society live for one another, use social dialogues to resolve issues and make sacrifices to ensure stability in their communities. The current study will draw understanding of ubuntu from this definition.

Volunteerism

Volunteering is a motivation and willingness to serve with little or no benefit in return (Ryder, 2005; Kramer, Lewis & Gossett, 2013; Overgaard, Petrovski & Hermansen, 2018). It is an altruistic activity where someone or a group of individuals provide services for the betterment of others without financial or social gain. The intention is to promote goodness in the society and improve human quality of life. The current study will build on the understanding and definition of volunteerism given above.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

1.10.1 Chapter One: Background

The current study is introduced in chapter one by the setting of formulation of the problem, research objectives and research questions. This chapter further outlines the limitation of the study, its significance and expected outcomes.

1.10.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter two presented the literature in relation to social justice such as the students' and University roles in social responsibility and harnesses the application of one of the social justice theories accompanied by the place-making theory. The role of community engagement is also explored together with the role of Higher Education Institutions in bringing about social justice. Student-centred learning is discussed too together with supporting students towards the social justice goal. In summary, the chapter explored literature connected to social justice/injustice and the state of things now with regards to the fight for social justice within the vicinities of Higher Learning Institutions and on a global scale.

1.10.3 Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter furnishes the reader with the methods utilised to accomplish the objectives of this study. Here the research method is explained together with sampling method and procedure. The researcher thoroughly elaborated all the methods and approaches used and justified.

1.10.4 Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

This chapter exhibited the discussion, analysis, and presentation of study findings.

1.10.5 Chapter Five: Recommendations and Conclusion

In this chapter, the propositions of the study are assessed, and the outcomes of the other chapters are also brought to bear on the subject matter. The chapter also offers recommendations that has a potential to enhance social justice within the University.

1.11 Chapter Summary

The current chapter provided brief background of the study, the study objectives, and questions to the inclusion of the main aim of the study. The significance of the study is explained and justification. The problem statement of the research is also provided as a further justification of the study. A study hypothesis is given by the researcher as an imaginative and philosophical person. The delineation of the study is cleared, and the concepts of methodology and the structure of the study is briefly discussed. The researcher departs by unearthing the role of student-related community engagement in a place building for social justice. It is relevant given that the focus was specifically on student volunteerism as a branch of community engagement and its contribution towards mitigating student-related social injustice within the context of a rural-based university.

To achieve the objectives of the study the literature was reviewed purposively to find answers to research questions and some questions were answered by literature, and some must be provided by the respondents of the study due to the gap in literature. The study could make a remarkable contribution to the body of knowledge and sets a stage for other universities to be concerned about their student-related community engagement structures in line with mitigation of campus social injustices. The second chapter fairly contains the available literature as a strategy to find information that is already available on the topic of interest.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, literature synthesis focuses on a number of prevalent issues namely: community engagement in the institution of higher learning, constitutional context of social justice/injustices and social injustice in Institutions of Higher Learning, CE structures mitigating social injustice and their approaches; student volunteerism opportunities and challenges and supporting student structures towards social justice. An insight of student-centred learning including the incorporation of service-learning and how they inform community engagement towards social injustice was given with a highlight of epistemic justice. Consequently, the social justice and place-building theories were drawn to underpin this study.

2.2 Community Engagement in the Institution of Higher Learning

The concept of community engagement is well known, however, in terms of the application of reality, this concept seems to confuse some role players. It is usually known to be equal to the activity of the black societies or local township even though the responsibility goes beyond (Pandor 2006; Fourie 2006; Coetzee, 2012). As a result, community engagement lacks a precise definition. However, from the holistic point of view, scholars understood the concept as an informed activity wherein people with like minds come together to execute specific tasks for the betterment of a society (Lazarus et al., 2008; Mahlomaholo, 2010; Netshandama, 2010; Thakrar, 2018; Mapotse, 2018).

Community engagement is not limited to a setting, area or location. Thus, it applies even within a university community. This understanding is consistent with the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC, 2004) that community engagement is expressive in various ways such as activities that are not formal and without structure to those that are structured and formalized i.e. programmes that are academically recognized such as service-learning programmes. Some of these programmes assist with creating an environment that is better for engagement by the community and some are in relation to research, teaching and learning. Engagement by the community has been widely harnessed to approach and solve problems or influence development. In the USA (United States of America) for instance, Weerts and Sandmann (2008) in a study “BUILDING A

TWO-WAY STREET: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES” explained how the concept is appreciated to ensure robust research. In this context, public institutions mobilise used community engagement to research out and serve grassroots households.

Unlike the involvement of grassroots communities as research subjects, participatory methods which allow engagements were recommended to bring communities on board. This approach showed efforts of the institutions to keep track of their engagement work, in so doing structures that are flexible are made available for community and campus partnerships. This argument is congruent with Driscoll (2008) who emphasised that CE is higher education institutions collaborating with communities that are larger than them which brings about a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. Community engagement in this context is essential in involving institutions in a substantial process of self-assessment, reflection and inquiry and has those pursuing activities that ensure diversity.

Warded differently, Schutz (2006), in a study “Home Is a Prison in the Global City: ...” explained how the concept is vital in creating ties between educational institutions and their surrounding communities. The scholar emphasized that community engagement is a tool through which schools serve poverty-stricken families stuck in America’s urban ghettos. In this sense, schools set up structures that engross these societies over a period to explore and understand their issues from a specific point of view which helps them stimulate leverage measures. To this scholar, community engagement remains the most prospective effort to uphold genuine inclusive solutions to societal problems. In other words, institutions terribly interested in solving societal issues should be extra engrossed, acknowledged when it comes to community structures and be invested when it comes to strengthening organizations of the community (Schutz, 2006).

Citing further instance with Portland State University, the motto, “Let knowledge serve the city,” resonates with a strong partnership between the university and the grassroots community stakeholders; ensuring that the mission is aligned together with other values of the institution such as faculty development, traditions, marketing, budgetary support, strategic plans, traditions and recognition (Driscoll, 2008). The author in the paper of

Univen's strategic-plan 2021-2025 emphasizes the power of collective work. The new strategic plan embraces change, change of policies in favour of the students and community engagement. According to the 2021-2025 Univen Strategic Plan the new idea is that the stakeholders of the University can come together unitedly to push for a vision that's shared amongst them, goals that are common and working on finding solutions to institutional problems and define actions necessary to reach a positive outcome.

In a study "Community Engagement: Participation on Whose Terms?" in Australia, the understanding of community engagement explains a move away from a management or up-bottom approach, so to work towards an energized reutterance of laying stable foundations between the government and citizens which is usually known as community, (Brian, 2007). The move will entail being relevant with foreign or rather an international way of doing things (bandwagons), working together to achieve societal, environmental, technological and economic projects. This involves the capacity to solve local political challenges and improve the stance of technology.

However, the process of achieving the above includes many citizenries' participation in engagement and consultations that are public in relation to political and social contexts; building effective capacity through inclusiveness of participation in relation to common perceptions and point of fascination, worked on through associations and groups; rather than single headed direct involvement of citizens. Community engagement in this context is a multi-stakeholder forum which requires some consideration of the motives, intentions and purposes of the three bodies: the government, business groups, and the community sector (Brian, 2007). Drawing from Ministry of Education (2001), a priority South African Plan for National Higher Education happens to be the magnifying of a responsive attitude to national and regional needs together, for research programmes and academia to the inclusion of CE. This is supported by the Department of Education (1997). Based on this priority, community engagement based on knowledge is isolated by the Quality Committee of Higher Education founding document engagement as key and amongst the three places (alongside research and teaching, as well as learning) to be considered measurement of assurance that comes with quality and accreditation of institutions of higher learning, especially universities.

Most significantly, it has been given importance that where CE is exercised using various programs, there should be a formal way of putting the larger community with the institution together in institutional policies and frameworks to the inclusion of procedures utilized by the institutions (HEQC, 2004; Coetzee, 2012). Infusing CE into the systems of national quality assurance explains that concept has been mounted as a focal point for grassroots development through the higher education institutions. Hence, community engagement has been widely harnessed to front interactive community development at dissimilar stages in the country. Kutame, Maluleke and Netshandama (2012), in a study, explained that community engagement is effective in the academic achievement of learners at a school; however, bridging the CE and pedagogy has been a huge gap. The scholars further emphasised that in general, researchers have no agreement as to what effective and school dysfunction is and that community engagement could play a vital role in unearthing this understanding beneath the surface and provide solutions.

Olowu (2012) suggested benchmarking universities in South Africa, to be precise: the CE (Community Engagement) to lift some of the limitations. Arguing further from Thakkar's (2018) point of view, current universities make a contribution in ensuring the agenda of national development and universities utilise the CE as an important value to achieve economic and social transformation. Drawing on notions of place-making to recall the University of Fort Hare history, the scholar emphasised the way the university perceives itself as a social actor within the praxis of community engagement to front social changes and societal well-being ascribed to its place is still unjust. This concern is not unique to the University as many others in the country are still grappling with the same issue. Much more should be done by universities through their community engagement platforms to scale up development of societies within their place.

In a study: 'Community development as an approach to community engagement in rural-based higher education institutions in South Africa', professor Netshandama (2010) reiterates that CE as a core part of social change, learning and teaching societal change, should be infused as a mechanism with a broader contextual sense, application and relevance in the University. Defining 'communities' as local partners or group of individuals with a collective interest to partake in activities of service-learning activities of

the University, Netshandama (2010) further mentioned that such communities “contribute substantially to the mutual search for sustainable solutions to challenges”. Acknowledging that there is no one way to define community engagement in higher education institutions given that it is a fashionable term and has been widely utilized differently in various contexts, its core values seek to advance social development and social transformation agendas (Netshandama, 2010; Kutame et al., 2012; Thakrar, 2018).

Johnson (2020) shared the survey results generated by Favish and Ngwelane (2013) for the establishment of what is regarded as drivers and barriers in a South African context in relation to community engagement. As cited in Johnson (2020), the survey indicated the challenges as follows:

- a) No support from the executive leadership to help understand community engagement, its potential and mandate;
- b) Mechanism development for the evaluation of community engagement quality;
- c) Lack of funding;
- d) Priorities that are competing related to academic workloads; and
- e) Mind-sets changing difficulties about the nature of community engagement in relation to research, learning and teaching.

According to Johnson (2020), the first man who was the first person to hold a position of a chairperson of SAHECEF (South African Education Community Engagement Forum) known as Dr Jerome Slatat having drawn from the Management and Governance Work Group of the SAHECEF in 2012 and 2011 served an argument that interconnected elements at institutional level should be supportive of engagement which will prove consistency with international literature. To be specific, Dr Slatat referred to support from management, a policy for community engagement, resources, a committee of the Senate, community engagement recognition, a support service that is meant only for the advancement of community engagement, (Johnson, 2020).

The scholars highlight funding as an essential role-player in implementing community engagement initiatives in Higher Education Institutions. Noteworthy is the fact that even though community engagement is a popular talk, the full conglomeration of community

engagement with innovation and research or in learning and teaching pedagogies in the institutions of higher learning in South Africa are not fully explored, (van Eeden, Eloff & Dippenaar, 2021). The scholars further submit that research has gotten better since the past two decades; however, there is lack in the integration of the aspects of teaching and research. Awareness and consciousness creation of disciplines with creatives with the needed multidisciplinary contexts for the enhancement of levels of social engagements, (van Eeden, Eloff & Dippenaar, 2021).

2.3 The Constitutional Context of Social Justice/Injustice

Looking at the filed all the infringement of social and personal rights is equivalent to social injustice as it is in opposition of a socially just environment for everyone and the supreme law of the country. According to Professor Thuli Madonsela, social justice is about enjoying all freedoms and rights equally, this has its reflection on distribution of privileges, opportunities, benefits, resources and burdens in the community amongst groups of people, (Peterson, 2019). Human rights are entrenched in the South African Constitution in chapter two named the Bill of Rights, (Constitution Act 108 of 1996). According to the Constitution (supreme law of the country), chapter two of the constitution is a democratic cornerstone. Chapter two of the Constitution makes provision for human rights based on the values of equality, freedom and dignity. Ozoena (2010) does assert that social justice may be referred to as implementing treatment that is dignified for all groups and people, equal availability of opportunities and services for development and equal access to services. Van der Westhuizen & Swart (2015) contribute that the state is obligated by the Constitution to take legislative measures and other available measures that intentionally ensure access to education, health care, water, electricity and social services (Section 27 of the Constitution). Social justice can only be achieved through the delivering of these rights, (Judge Theron, 2018). Therefore, social injustice is about unfairness regarding legal treatment, lack of access to justice, privileges and opportunities. Social injustices are a hindrance to transformation given the inequalities that were inherited by the nation from apartheid and the lack in cultivation of the values of the advancement of human freedoms, rights, dignity and equality.

The South African Constitution is primarily instrumental in integration that is social in consideration of the manifesting national division. The constitutional preamble provides that South Africa is a country that is united in diversity and thus belongs to everyone who lives in it. Based on social justice, fundamental rights and democratic values of the South African Constitution as the supreme law of the country, is being instrumental in healing past divisions and an establishment of a new society, (3rd Congress of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice, 2014). Not only socio-economic rights that are justiciable are provided in the constitution but also political and civil rights. Amongst the rights, are the rights to housing, sanitation, water, food and healthcare services, (3rd Congress of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice, 2014; Section 27 of Act 108 of 1996). These rights are availed to nationals that are foreign who live in South Africa too. The Constitution declared the exclusion of foreign nationals (non-citizens) from payable social grants unconstitutional.

Structural and discursive opportunity for the hegemony of the sector of civil society of social justice and the talk of social justice have been provided by the commitment of the constitution to the recognition and incorporation of the historically marginalized and disadvantaged groups through the social justice programme. The imagination of emancipating politics in contemporary South Africa as a master-frame was resulted in by the pursuit of social justice that is based on the foundation of the South African Constitution that is transformative, gets advancement from a community that is epistemic and consisting of state officials, legal advocacy organizations, think-tanks, cause lawyers, charity organizations and public interest litigation organizations. Social justice is also wrapped around human rights, (Madlingozi, 2017).

Policies are intended to eradicate inequalities and poverty by avoidance of harm that is undue and since their impact cannot be predicted, more attention should be paid to the usage of the predictive data that is disaggregated. Some of the directions, statements, guidelines, by-laws, statements and regulations of the Disaster Management prove to not have put into consideration the likelihood of some of the unequal and preventable impact that is adverse on groups that are disadvantaged on the design of the policy. The examples of the disadvantaged include rural economies, users of public transport who

are the townships' backbone and the livelihoods of the large number of the middle class. The impact they have on education, social cohesion, mental health and lives of families: parenting in particular was not considered too. The planning process did not factor the arrangements of child-care for the needy and the impact that the closure of schools would have on food security was not considered as well. Disparities of geography for access of the internet, inequality and poverty were not put into consideration on initial drafting of a policy to switch from standard to online education, (Madonsela, Nel & Lourens: Stellenbosch Think-Tank, 2018).

South Africa happens to be the most unequal country worldwide according to World Bank, (World Bank, 2006; Peterson, 2016). The World Bank report gave a hypothetical scenario of two South African births taking place in the year 2000. A black girl child named Nthabiseng is conceived into a family that is poor based in rural areas and Peter, a white male child conceived into a family that is wealthy and has residence in the City of Cape Town. Financial instruments access, historical backgrounds, expectancies of life, education level and generation of income possibilities result in a contrast in their respective experiences of life. This is manifested later on in life wherein Peter and Nthabiseng have equal votes for the purposes of influencing public policy yet only Nthabiseng continues suffering from the apartheid legacy of unequal access to political power and opportunities. Scholars submit that we are on a long walk to social and economic change that is fundamental, (Govender, 2016). The targets of development are said to be on track and the major achievements in developments are said to be vouched for by Unicef (2010). However, there are opposing views reported. The South African economy was severely affected by the depression of the economies world-wide following the crisis of 2008 according to a research body named AIDC (Alternative Information Development Centre). The 2014 Oxfam report warned South Africa of the growth in inequality as the media of South Africa has exposed the widening gap in wealth and income according to Sunday Times in New Agenda. The Market Research Bureau has reflected growth in concerns relating to tribulations of the country that are socio-economic made up of high levels of poverty that are persistent, the unemployment rate that is high, pressures from households' expenditure in South Africa and the increment in the gap between the poor and the rich, (Govender, 2016).

Out of all the stakeholders: scholars and statisticians, none could tie a certain blame or credit to one feature or actor amongst the various factors that are influential to social welfare. Basic several questions must be posed in regard to the behaviour of the courts so that their actions can be evaluated in the socio-economic rights area. The questions should be centred on whether social welfare is advanced by courts using particular social justice and whether harm is refrained from by courts relating to the rule of law and the financial stability of the nation. Supported as useful and appropriate is the court action that is compliant with this criterion of social justice advancement, (Christiansen, 2008).

2.4 Social Injustice in Institutions of Higher Learning

Social injustice refers to the suppression of a person's rights and civil rights which might obstruct their ability to realise their maximum prospect to perform and learn (Byrd, 2018). According to Byrd (2018), social injustices normally target individuals that are ostracised in a society based on their social identities. According to Clayton and Opatow (2003), the conduct of social injustices is psychologically charged with diabolical intentions to damage. Distributive justice can be used interchangeably with social justice. Distributive justice like social justice means egalitarian distribution of opportunities and privileges between members coming from different cultural, financial, racial, sexual and linguistic backgrounds, (Miller 1999, Mafumo 2011). Themane (2021) raised an argument that the shape, size and agenda of the current education system is not pushed by pursuing decolonization and social justice, but rather on flippant markets that are political and political pursuits, (Themane, 2021).

In the USA (United States of America), Quintessence (2020) explained social injustices in gender imbalances wherein the earnings of women in the society are less because they are only given a chance to identify with fields that have low earning potentials. In some instances where both genders join the same field, the male gets 7% more than their female counterpart. This is a gender-based injustice and equality. Another concern speaks to discrimination and social inequalities on the basis of culture, ethnicity, politics, caste, and religion. Similarly, there exists homophobia wherein people develop hatred

towards sexual minorities. Even though bisexuals and/or transgender forms part of the diversity in America, legalised and recognised, this minority still suffers from discrimination by the public. There are also tendencies of ageism where certain people are discriminated on the basis of their age. The issues discussed are evident in China and many other Asian countries (Qiao & Chan, 2005; Cinnamon, 2017; Fula et al., 2017; De Costa, 2018), Australia (Cotter, 2017; Henry, Powell, & Flynn., 2017; Kutin, Russell, & Reid., 2017), Canada (Levine, Muthukrishna, Chan & Satterfield, 2017; Reid, 2017; Hart, 2018) and societies across other countries in the globe. South Africa is not free from the issues.

In South Africa, social injustice was among other key issues that informed the pre-1994 democratic discourse for transformation with hopes of new life post-apartheid era (Boudreaux, 2010; Handmaker & Berkhout 2010; Van der Westhuizen & Swart, 2015). Both international and national role-players have engaged with intention to provide a lasting solution to the issue. Yet, majority of South African citizens are exposed to social injustice on a daily basis. Statistics South Africa (2013:22) explained that the state is now suffering from matters of unemployment, inequality, poverty and hunger. This is consistent with Ipsos (2014) who indicates that the main prevalent matters to be met by the government of South Africa are poverty at 59%, unemployment at 87% and crime at 57%. These issues are predominant amongst vulnerable individuals in the country. Studies further indicate racial discrimination, molestation due to cultural lines, favouritism and unequal distribution of resources, xenophobic attacks, home abuses as well as rape concerns (Van der Westhuizen & Swart 2015; Lee, 2018; Masilo, 2018). The universities were no exception. To mitigate social injustice, the government strongly implores institutions of higher learning to launch a campaign through research, teaching and community engagement that speaks to the focal point of the issues.

IASAS (International Association of Student Affairs and Services) is said to have acknowledged the difference between the developing and developed student affairs and opines that there may have been a rush in adopting the western forms of Higher Learning disregarding the cultural compatibility with these models, (Schreiber, 2015). Dlamini (2018) explains that the adoption of Eurocentric ways of Higher Education Institutions

promotes hegemony and that Higher Education Institutions are more organizational (about making money) than they are humanitarian. The scholar further emphasises the need for universities to seek critical comprehension of why some students never finish their studies timeously. He further argues that their affairs must be fair socially so to make sure that the benefits of higher education are shared fairly within the respective communities, to be precise amongst those who were disadvantaged historically.

Moja, Luescher, & Schreiber (2015) indicate that in the United States the “BlackOnCampus” riot was a call to address and be able to communicate about racial matters that are mostly ignored in hopes that they will disappear. These have caused a stir globally. They note further that racial politics will grapple with the affairs of the students considering that there are still exercised grounds for segregation such as race, religion, ethnicity, gender and etcetera. To ensure productivity and success of students in HEIs living as citizens that are critical, their learning environments should be friendly to a heterogeneous and inclusive education, Hlalele & Alexander (2012). The scholars postulate that programmes promoting access in the universities are made up of pull-out exercises and these pull-out exercises discriminate against African students, thus, denying them a rich engaging pedagogy. The authors further make a call for the elimination of institutional practices that are based on thinking that is deficit, cultural imperialism, low expectations and marginalization, (Kose 2009, Hlalele & Alexander, 2021).

Scholars named Sawyer and Waite highlighted the perversion of white privilege having an impact on the structures of leadership and proposal steps of initiating the procedure of taking power from firm racism structures. In pursuit of an answer, the scholars further make a call for the leadership of Higher Education to unweave the progeny of structural fragility, privilege and racism, (Okhremtchouk, Turner & Newell, 2021). Social justice presents a serious challenge to access programmes of Higher Education Institutions as personal experiences might be shaped by oppression issues, (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012).

Engagements that are collaborative are explored for the identification of practices that are effective and ongoing necessities for the development of cultural competence that is

inclusive in in-service and pre-service training programmes in higher education institutions. The scholars assert that the prevalence of the continuing engagements that are collaborative between local communities that higher education institutions intend to serve and institutions of higher education should not be underestimated. Though inequalities that are institutional remain, the work to combat and single out higher education institutions' challenges should not end as it is war against racial and social injustice, (Okhremtchouk et al., 2021).

Ntombela & Setlhodi (2021) share that in Southern Africa, the higher education institution offering learning programmes via ODeL is the University of South Africa. Institutions with ODeL are being more common amongst students that are prospective resulting from their convenience when it comes to implications of the costs to enroll with a residential and in contact higher learning institutions, (Rammutloa, 2013; Ntombela & Setlhodi, 2021). Studies in an institution with ODeL are distant and there is distance between the students and the institution which result in challenges due to technology and socio-economic factors. There is a prospective view that ODeL institutions can address technological, policy, political and economic factors that are perpetuating issues for students coming from backgrounds that are disadvantaged. In cases where there is a limitation of access to certain people transformation does not take place, thus, interlinking transformation and higher education massification. How to handle a population of students that is diverse (gender and ethnicity) and how to get expansion funding are challenges that massification bring about due to its interrelatedness with transformation. The author speaks for recruiting staff that may be useful for the catering and acknowledgement of the needs of learning of the student population that is diverse. In a nutshell, the author is for social justice and doing whatever it takes to achieve it.

Considerable are the challenges confronting TED (Teacher Education and Development) in South African universities. These challenges give no access to TED offerings that are based on qualifications, infrastructural developments, and facilities from the role of a potential teacher, specifically, people that are susceptible to academic opportunities who are disadvantaged contextually, (Strategic Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011). There must be optimized effective TED rendering

that is expanded and extended for universities to give more access, (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012). University access programmes are now found in satellite campuses and Further Education Training (FET) colleges. Students cheering university access programmes are not at the centre of the practices of the universities which further delinks ecojustice and social justice, (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012).

HEIs have endured criticism for their narrow interpretation of community engagement which is exclusive of leadership knowledge engagement through the lens of a community with a focus that is transformative in mind, (van Eeden, Eloff & Dippenaar, 2021). Themane concurs with Jansen (2017) that transformation of the curriculum needs a will that is political. Themane (2021) submits that the current measures/ways of cancelling structures that are Eurocentric and colonial in the education system lack courage. The scholar further demonstrated that the “structure-oriented curriculum theories” have limits and are therefore not effective in curriculum decolonization. Furthermore, according to Themane it is important to select, organise and sequence the curriculum in order to achieve a diverse and decolonised curriculum, (Themane, 2021).

The illegitimate discourse of higher education pedagogy has positioned students individually to be responsible personally for their success in academics. Success in higher education institutions is characterised by race and the perpetuation of this discourse makes an allowance for the universities not to be moved by their failure to tackle racism and classism challenges that are still operating in African universities post the apartheid political demise. The fact that the practices of universities are still contributing to social injustice status quo is a hard to digest pill, (Luckett, Summary of Boughey & McKenna, 2021)

Languages being one of the challenges of the education system, students bear the blame for not being able to eloquently assimilate into the dominating culture and failing to acquire the colonial dominating English language. The scholars argue that for as long as the construction of students as disadvantaged and deficient is accepted, HEIs will present failure in offering them linguistic, pedagogical and cultural resources necessary to learn the distinct knowledge making practices of professional and disciplinary fields. (Luckett, K., Summary of Boughey & McKenna, 2021)

2.5 CE Structures Mitigating Social Injustice and their Approaches in HEIs

Student-related community engagement is the participation of students in local community-related projects, Netshandama (2010). This initiative may be included in the curriculum where the students work for selected community organisations as a way to benefit the community and it also allows the student to learn from the experience therein (Millican & Bourner, 2011). Higher Learning Institutions have adopted an approach to equip their students with the desire to personally and professionally commit to making the universe a safe space, using CE. As such, professional development opportunities to enhance knowledge and other competencies have been incorporated. Doberneck *et al* (2017) unveil an approach where Michigan State University introduced a competency-based postgraduate certification in Community Engagement as a way to address the professional development of students who aspire to be community-engaged.

Student related community engagement structures come up with community-engaged research and creative activities. This is when they link the theoretical or conceptual frameworks with research activities that address social injustice on their college campus. Community participatory action research is an example of an approach that can be used by student-related community engagement structures. This involves a process of a selection of participants, the clarification of roles for researchers and participants, research team education and management of the project (Nhamo, 2012). By so doing, the students' engagement structures get to interact with the affected campus communities who are likely to or are facing any kind of social injustices.

The academic sector has seen a shift in its approach to higher learning as universities and colleges are injecting funding into various departments to promote community-based research and other forms of engagement as a way of addressing various social challenges. According to Millican and Bourner (2011), community engagement can be grouped into two groups which are research partnerships and those that are practical. Nicotera, Cutforth, Fretz and Thompson (2011) attest that in the USA (United States of America), an increase in community engagement structures which provide programmes,

community collaborations for research and these programmes are supported by large organisations. These programmes focus on various issues which affect communities and can be tackled through collaborative work with students and academic scholars. Nicotera et al., (2011) articulates that if these partnerships involve various institutions, they might attract funding even from federal agencies like the Centre for Disease Control among others.

According to Bhagwan (2017), the initiation of engagement as a community in South Africa has redirected higher learning institutions towards civic engagement which creates more democratic and socially just systems. Hall (2010) suggested that South Africa can deepen and refine their approach through initiatives like Columbia University's Millennium Villages Project. The project involved a holistic package of interventions applied by governments, students and communities working together to alleviate poverty and other forms of social injustices. With such examples, this could also be implemented in other structures on a smaller or larger scale. The government is held accountable by the millennial students to doctrines of equity and social justice accompanied by their claims of state development, which is a different call. The students of the University of Cape Town with the #RhodesMustFall campaign were requesting decolonization of higher education and its curriculum for a culture of an institution reflecting their blackness and for advances in inclusivity and equity.

Unfortunately, there is little in-depth literature on the details of the community engagement structures both nationally and internationally which is the gap the study seeks to fill. Student community engagement structures can also come up with community-building activities such as a project that will bring students from various walks of life together. This will create a platform for students to know each other and build relations through dialogue or other forms of communication. This deliberative dialogue projects help gather people in order to bring about harmony across any kinds of differences. Also, the structures can provide services that are instructive to teach the campus communities about socially unjust situations in a non-partisan way. It is also essential for student-related community engagement structures to work together with representatives of communities suffering from injustices on campus. People from

vulnerable walks of life are quite sceptical of outsiders as they are mostly used to organisations breaking promises to provide and produce fruitfulness. Failure to establish channels for communities and faithful intermediaries to engage has a way of limiting and delaying progress in getting communities to partake in the programs. This can be facilitated by the University management representatives who may pledge commitment to assist in making sure that these organisations are fully supported.

2.6 Student Volunteerism: Opportunities and Challenges

A volunteer structure is a branch of community engagement that speaks to social responsibility and ubuntu - a process for identifying tension for change which comes with sacrifices and willingness (Steenkamp-Nel, 2018; Mupedziswa, Rankopob & Mwansa, 2019). Volunteerism is a concept long known as a measure for other than producing active citizens, place development (Ryder, 2005; Kramer et al., 2013; Overgaard et al., 2018). Just like any other volunteering, volunteer structures are pivotal instruments often harnessed at a low cost to facilitate positive change in a society. The core benefits of volunteering are twofold: firstly, communities enjoy human services with little or no cost at all (Grimm & Dietz, 2018).

Secondly, increasing interest on community engagement helps volunteers harness skills that are soft so to smoothen the change from one stage of life to another and better social connections (Wilson, 2015; Overgaard et al., 2018). This is mostly important to young people because it prepares their mindsets about the realities of life. Engaging with individuals exposes one to various challenges and coping measures. Essentially, experiences that come from volunteer engagements are more factual and practical rather than theory. It is on this background Grimm and Dietz (2018) emphasised that Community engagement and the general volunteerism paths are paved for by other social institutions such as schools, religion and families. These institutions play an important role in paving that way to CE and volunteerism for individuals. The scholar further stressed that students believed that helping others in difficulty and/or becoming part of community engagement

that addresses issues was an essential to their personal objective and important to their development.

Globally, it is not well documented how many individuals volunteer annually. However, using data from Australia, Canada, England, Germany and USA, Wilson (2015) estimated that between 36 to 39 percent of these countries' population volunteer annually. In terms of the USA, 63 million volunteers in a year; Germany had 24 million people, England recorded 20 million people, Canada 13 million, while Australia recorded 6 million. The passion to make a contribution utilising one's time and resources without monetary expectations for the better good of the society as a collective is rarity as doing things for one's own personal benefit is a natural thing to do.

Despite the benefits that come with volunteerism, it has several challenges. Among many others, rapid burgeoning of volunteering programs; money and time sacrifice as well as personal discomfort; lack of funding; poor support from the management; lack of community support; public critics; molestation; workload and attacks are some of the challenges (Bregnbæk, 2016). In China for instance, Sum (2017) narrates experiences of summer 2009 participation in a mission that's humanitarian based on volunteerism and was organized by one University based in China. A public library was set up by the 6 volunteers who were students in the rural area of China; this took them a month to do. The group of volunteers (students) dedicated months of their time gathering the said books before the trip to the rural place happened which made it easy to accomplish their goal. Good for the team was the opportunity to mingle, interact and play with the school children; eating with teachers in the school canteen; as well as the curiosity encountered when people asked to know reasons for their volunteerism. However, converting a school storage room into a dormitory where the team sleeps was an unpleasant experience.

Volunteers often encounter challenges mobilising resources to carry out a mission. Even though their institutions in many cases invest very little or non-finance resources to their efforts, they tend to hijack and claim their successes (Wang & Yu, 2015; Zulhaimi, Abd Halim & Ahmed, 2018). As also noted by the scholars Handy, Cnaan & Hustinx, (2012), sometimes the interference of the management or the state in student volunteer programmes can be elucidated as a facade to seem like it is concerned and it cares for

the society. Sometimes, parents disagree with students having intentions for volunteerism especially in cases that involve travelling. This often resonates with family crisis. The concern is that students may not cope with their academic workload, financial obligations and security measures that are likely to pitch. Unfortunately, the challenge confronting student volunteers in rural-based universities in South Africa has not been sufficiently explored.

Scholars argue that volunteerism stems from human altruism but can also be motivated by personal attributes gains from association to volunteering whereas other scholars argue that there is overlapping of motivation in ways that are multidimensional and that no certain categorized motivation can explain the behaviour of giving more than others, (Compion, Cnaan, Brudney, Jeong, Zhang & Haski-Leventhal, 2021). Drawing from Clary et al (1996), motives of volunteerism should be a study that is a collection of forces that are driving to action guidance. According to the scholars, motivation is shaped by social status, group affiliations, beliefs and values, (Compion et al., 2021).

According to Bhagwan (2020), increased social capital, educational experience that is enriched and socio-political experience that are deepened and skills portfolio that is increased are what students benefit from volunteering. The challenge posed by an engaged higher learning institution to departments of academia is to reconsider their role of teaching for the creation of opportunities that are greater for the advancement of social responsibility and community engagement for students. The author provided an enlightenment of how new relationships are formed by community partnerships for academics and students and the importance of evolvement of a relationship between the community and the university, (Bhagwan, 2020).

Gains from volunteerism reach the national level too and not only the organization or the person in volunteerism. A suggestion was made by African scholars that continental volunteerism has power that is life changing and, social and economic worth to achieve regional priorities and goals development at a national level, (Compion et al., 2021). Research conducted by Compion et al in three different African countries suggested that volunteerism that is episodic has the potential to achieve continued volunteerism and other forms of civic engagement. The authors further indicated that the analysis of

episodic volunteerism increases civic engagement and produces an increase in the emphasis regarding participation of citizens.

In countries such as Canada and the United States, to employers it is a meaningful message whether or not someone part took in volunteerism, this results in the youth in these countries having career building as a priority and being more pragmatic when it comes to volunteerism. There are three distinguished motives of volunteerism by higher education students and these are: the value-driven (altruistic) motive, the career-building motive and the social (influential) motive, (Bhagwan, 2020). Noteworthy is the fact that the motive of career building is not really egoistic but a demonstration to potential employers that are suitable of the job and career conscious than those who have not done any volunteer work.

Additionally, amongst career-building volunteers there are those who as values-driven in motive: in other words, volunteerism motives are mixed when it comes to young people, (Bocsi, Fenyés & Markos, 2017; Bhagwan, 2020). Scholars also make space for the unmotivated group of volunteers that mostly volunteer for the mere reason that they want to be of assistance to other people, there are also those who do it just to learn new things and those who intend to gain work experience through it. To some people motives of volunteerism are equally prevalent and for some volunteerism mattered not and whether or not it was included in their CVs matters not because it did not count when it comes to their employment, (Bocsi et al., 2017).

Students are supportive of community engagement in Higher Education Institutions and its initiatives inclusive of community service. A scholar named Musil (2003) argued in favour of the students' support for community engagement initiatives. The scholar opined based on his findings that universities must be responsible and plant community volunteer centres within the university and civic engagement that have their roots on academic courses, faculty work and research. The scholar further indicated that engagement that is civic must be based on academics, (Bhagwan, 2020).

The findings of Bhagwan's study indicated that volunteering spaces of the community serve as learning spaces exposing students to various knowledge regarding culture, belief systems and different ways of doing things. According to the scholar students are

able to gain transferable skills that they can further transfer to communities they work with or for. There was also a dire need uncovered of the university to provide supportive resources to student volunteers so that they can deliver to the communities they are held accountable for as volunteers, (Bhagwan, 2020). This is yet another way of combating poverty.

Jiranek et al, (2013), discovered that there are volunteerism motivations based on social justice, the scholars submit that it is more of a moral obligation instinctively based on values. This volunteerism motive is more self-motivated as it is grounded on the internal moral expectations of individuals. However, the motive can also be based on the desire to promote equality. There is lack of studies that ran an investigation on volunteerism behaviour and intention in relation to social justice. There are variables of justice that are dispositional such as predicted responsibility with internal ascription and the belief of notion that the world could be a just world. Self-reported volunteerism is predicted by these variables and this serves as proof of the importance of social justice volunteering motives, (Jiranek, Kals, Humm, Strubel & Wehner, 2013).

Thus, like other institutions of education and private organizations the University of Venda also has student volunteers and the specifics of the study rely on the students under community engagement volunteerism. The literature just makes it known that the only way those students can continue volunteerism they need support from the institution leadership and this finding is consistent with the data collected from the sample chosen for the purposes of this study.

2.7 Supporting Student-Related CE towards Social Justice.

Community engagement involves a lot of active participation of both the structures and the communities they are working with. In this instance, to support these structures, it is important for the University management together with the student representative committees to allocate funding that is internal for the development of projects of community engagement. Students and their leaders can be motivated by rewarding their

efforts to end social injustices through promotion or tenure. However, this in the academic sector requires a catalyst of research production and publications than is permitted by community engagement work (Nicotera *et al.*, 2011).

The involvement of faculties in community engagement structures can also facilitate the successful working of these structures in mitigating social injustice. According to Dunning *et al* (2005), there has been concerns that CE results in an addition of labour to the schools which gives an implication that it is clear-cut from the common teaching and research professional work. Community engagement forms an integral part of learning, research, scholarship and social integration. The learning procedure of the act of inquiry is changed and redirected by community engagement. Recognizing and rewarding such scholarship as learning that is civil and at the centre of the professional work of the faculty. Through this, faculties also play a role in identifying students or members of the staff that are vulnerable to various forms of social injustices.

Student related community engagement structures may for the purposes of mitigating social injustice proactively implement programmes that unite students, faculties and communal organizations. There are infrastructural needs for the University to attend to while the University works on strategizing on how to help with creation and sustainability of relationships between students and the management. By providing a helping hand and working in togetherness with the student structures, presence can be built by the university through the implementation of different parts of projects led by students to alleviate the challenges of social injustices within the university communities.

Mafumo (2011) contended that the Ministry of Higher Education should minister assistance to its institutions for the purposes of equity promotion by utilization of funding levers to maximise participation, access, and fair black success, prioritizing disabled students and women. This is supported by Moja *et al* (2015) who maintain that in order to attain social justice the HEIs must demonstrate seriousness and persistence in tackling inequalities. To achieve this Moja *et al* suggest that these institutions need not just say so but should rather apply practices that showcase their intents. According to the above latter scholars, transformation can be solidified by a well-structured design and the creation of solutions that are lasting to eradicate continuous issues including inequalities

in Higher Education Institutions. This design must include tutorship in its values, counsel, and support with the intention to ensure support (Lewin & Mawoyo, 2014).

Values that can be used to support students' structures are given by Ntombela & Setlhodi (2021) and Lewin & Mawoyo (2014) and these are counsel, mentorship, and tutorship so to help signify the prevalence of supporting students; especially disadvantaged students. The values are a way to give formal recognition to student support. According to Ntombela & Setlhodi (2021), mentoring entails transference of experiences about life, knowledge and skills through the mentor and mentee developed relationship, thus the values given by Ntombela & Setlhodi are an integral part of a student support system. This is in line with Lewin & Mawoyo (2014) who also made a submission that students have to be mentored and be given psychological support in Higher Education Institutions. The context of this study has an implication that the support must be further extended to disadvantaged students such as those discriminated against based on disability, socio-economic factors and other grounds of discriminations.

The realisation of the right to adequate housing and food, the right to education, health and social security can be done by social protection systems (Sepúlveda & Nyst, 2012). The authors contend that countries wherein social protection programs are already in place and protected by the Constitution and legislation under the framework of human rights are enjoying the benefits of their rights due to the recognition of these rights. Mafumo (2011) further contends that the success rates in inequalities are quite obvious due to the failure of higher learning institutions in allocating their scarce resources accordingly with the intentions to do away with inequities above the threshold of opportunities specified. For example, this is seen in lecturers compensating students who fall short due to apartheid era for the affirmation and development of the threshold of competence and knowledge that is promotive of social justice and the insurance of fair successes and university enrolment amongst black and white students.

Empirical and theoretical research can also serve as support for student volunteers for the purposes of promotion of equality through behaviour that is pro-social. The scholars hoped for better research that can better prove the contribution of the social justice motive of volunteering as a support for students in volunteerism so they can gain better

understanding and cognizance of the motive so they can be further motivated to continue the good work of mitigating social injustice, (Jiranek et al., 2013).

Lewin & Mawoyo (2014), the structural initiatives taken by the institution must be to advance development of relations between student academic support and psychosocial needs. To offer relevant support these institutions have to comprehend the holistic needs of students which seems to be integrated in other areas of studies. In response to one of the questions asked, one of the respondents asserted that if they cannot study students have no roofing over their heads and their stomachs are empty and asked how such a problem is addressed. The respondent then said that a solution would be to get the whole package in order by getting NSFAS, the registrar's division, financial aid, and the people in residences to communicate and play their respective roles accordingly. Ntombela & Setlhodi (2021), social justice is derived equality and equity values. Ntombela demonstrates how guidance, higher education access and support can result in change. Steps have to be taken by HEIs leadership to ensure a truly inclusive environment. ODeL institutions have inequalities that need to be addressed too in order to provide social justice for everyone.

According to Goswami (2013), a role played by education massification is quite important as it is a catalyst to transformed society that is functional by providing people from different places with education through systematic democracy in all areas of the system. According to Ntombela & Setlhodi (2021), massification is, however, not the only aspect that can bring about a transformed environment in higher learning, the country has to be supportive of a larger number of students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds pursuing higher education qualifications so to make a way for them to lead decent non-impooverished lives. Supporting students in higher learning institutions must be pursued in a holistic manner that upholds unconditional inclusivity. The concern of the authors is that though massification is transformative with lack of participation that is inclusive of individuals from all backgrounds to the inclusion of remote and rural areas, systematic transformation cannot be achieved, (Ntombela & Setlhodi, 2021).

Generally, students need motivation to carry out about any task and there is a deep relationship between obligations engagement and motivation. The correlation between

engagement and motivation calls for support in students' personal interests and ideas as that determines the goals that students can achieve based on what is intrinsically and externally motivating them. Academics make an argument that the extent of support and guidance given to student determines and motivates self-direction and advancement of development, (Ntombela & Setlhodi, 2021). Ubuntu, with humanity actions such as sympathy, kindness, respect and love for work in solidarity and ideology is what becomes of loveless education. Different strategies are used by higher education institutions teachers but, in cases where they are without love, students are unlikely to be inspired, (Ngubeni & Makua, 2021).

Through careful analysis, the authors report that in their study the black participants' parents and elders racially socialised them to be self-sacrificing leaders by using values, respect, and honour to preserve Black culture, people, and traditions. Likewise, these racial socialization processes influenced these Black collegians to become leaders who built and sustained Black college communities by being resilient. The authors also highlight the added value in practicing racial resistance, which exposes racially threatening opposition and identifying acts of racism menacing in higher education circles, (Okhremtchouk et al, 2021).

Throughout, the literature points the power to the University to cover and push students in the good work of social injustice mitigation through enough resources provision.

2.8 Student-centred Education in Higher Learning

Learner-centred education in institutions of higher learning, also known as student-centred learning, broadly covers a teaching methodology that is focused on the student being taught than the lecturer doing the teaching (Johnson, 2013; Fach, 2016). The theory and practice of the concept are grounded on the fact that the students as learners have to construct meaning/purpose from knowledge received and their previous experiences to the betterment of their learning environment (Crumly, Dietz & D'Angelo, 2014). Palmer and de Klerk (2020), after having considered Boal's theory argued that ongoing professional development should persuade in-service teachers to have

cognizance of the emergence of school contextual changes and the advancement of digital learning technology. According to the scholars the education policy of South Africa is entangled in unfavourable structural realities.

Fronting student-centred learning in an institution of higher learning plays a significant role in the liberty and confidence students possess to front community engagement initiatives that stand to either transform or mitigate their challenges such as social injustices. Students gain skills to transform the neighbouring communities through community engagement. In reality, a student-centred learning approach helps students develop acumen, independence and autonomy to act (Jones, 2007). This is because students are also saddled with certain learning paths responsibility, equipped with requisite skills and rights to demonstrate their civil power towards academic excellence (Pedersen & Liu, 2003; Hannafin & Hannafin, 2010), hence, they can always voice out their grievances and/or device means to jointly fight inequalities through engagements.

Learner-centred education focuses on skills and practices that enable students to be independently problem-solving (Young & Paterson, 2007). Besides, the system of learning is said to be central to students when it echoes the students' authentic voices and their interests as a priority. This often informs policy reforms towards providing a better and safe learning environment. Unlike a teacher-centred system in a traditional education where teachers possess the autonomy to choose what the students will learn, student-centred learning institutions are positioned in a way that students choose what they will learn, the way it should be learned and how the learning should be assessed (Hannafin & Hannafin, 2010; Crumly et al., 2014). Such development implies that it brings about liberation, self-belonging, self-esteem and relaxed minds to students which help them pursue their studies in the right state of mind. In light of these benefits, many institutions of higher learning are driving towards student-centred learning; the University of Venda is not excluded.

According to Fach (2016), it is mandatory for an institution to focus on approaches that put students at the centre as it affords an institution with the opportunity of adapting transformation when it comes to demographics of students, globalized universal mobile labour force and their requirements. The scholar further explained that institutions of

higher learning have a responsibility that is social and moral for the encouragement of students to be innovative and be transformation leaders. This is in line with Bromley, Meyer and Ramirez (2011) who maintain that increases in student-centred educational foci promotion of actively participating students, their interests and capacities of the students. The complex society with its rapid transforming markets of labour demands people to possess practical and apprehensive skills for environmental adaptation or transformation.

Student-centricity is one among other arms that an institution of higher learning can harness, given that it focuses on the development of the entire student and takes recognition of the fact that students' transformation is not limited to management but includes professional, cultural and social aspects of the landscape of a student. The varying students' life experiences spread richness to the concept of student-centrism for the creation of apprehensive structures that are based on people, (Fach, 2016). It is on this background that there exist numerous student initiatives positioned in the University to amplify the voices of the students that will, in turn, help the management to front transformative decisions.

Ngubane & Makuwa (2021) proposed a pedagogy of ubuntu as a method of teaching that is alternative drawing from indigenous values of the ubuntu philosophy. The scholars further argued that students can be reconnected with their cultures and values and that the idea has a prospect of cultivating the values of self-recognition, active participation and inclusion based on social justice, (Ngubane & Makua, 2021). Lewin and Mawoyo (2014) submit that a pedagogy that is student-centred is an encouragement of large learning participators and is a reduction to the gap of articulation. The authors here indicate that the role of the lecturer is to make a contribution and direct a student towards their desired goal instead of making that goal for them. In other words, the lecturer should serve as a mere supervisor and not a controller of the students, this is what student-centred learning is about.

Blignaut and Koopman (2020) submit an argument that teachers cannot turn a blind eye to issues of education level social injustices as they are prevalent role-players in curriculum enactment. The scholars put an emphasis on the fact that failure of teachers

to be intentional about addressing social injustice will result in a production of students that perpetuate inequalities, racism and stereotypes therefore promoting the social order made of injustice and inequity, (Ngubane & Makua, 2021).

The kind of education offered to students can determine the kind of human beings they become, thus it's important to centre education around the students so that they can learn comfortably and in a manner that is convenient to their being and not depend on the teachers' perceptions. This is proven by the reiteration of the good results generated from scholars who have experienced and studied about student-centred learning.

2.9 The Incorporation of Service Learning

Service learning refers to a type of learning that involves community engagement and is rich in experience, (Feyt & Mwalemba, 2021). It serves as a learning and teaching way that is connecting practice and theory by making an allowance to students' participation in service that provides for the needs of the community and exercise a reflection on the experiences gained in classes with the intention to gain understanding of the course content that is deeper and heightened civic engagement, (Benício, Dias, Dima, Duarte, Gadeikienė, Neuhold, Knapp, Kontautienė, Menezes, Pais, Pilinkienė, Resch, Slowey, Schritteser, Vasauskaitė, & Zubrzycki, 2021).

During a time wherein institutions of higher learning face many demands when it comes to meeting the needs and demands of its disadvantaged populations, the popularity of service learning is heightened and comes in as a rescue to close the gap between development of innovation and caring for the needy, (Ntshandama & Mahlomaholo, 2010; O'Brien, 2012). To reduce the normalised individualistic self-serving way of living caused by the current education system risking democracy, the incorporation of in-service learning is of utmost importance as a measure to tackle selfishness and make a provision for the preparation of engaged citizens, (Dewey, 1916; Mortari & Ubbiali, 2021). Empowerment that is professionalised can make a great impact on programs that are educational, methodologies of teaching as well as the commitment of the in-service

teachers in interacting with the students/learners, (Changwong, Sukkamart & Sisan, 2018; Palmer & de Klerk ,2020).

Through service-learning students can do more for the community in large. Berry & Workman (2007) stated that students are led by responsibility to be aware of their duties as citizens. Students grow to use their talents, knowledge and skills for the betterment of the communities they work for and live in. These assist students understand the responsibility they have to themselves in the future, their society and organizations, (Berry & Workman, 2007). According to van Eeden, Eloff and Dippenaar (2021), in response to the agenda of the policy of post-apartheid meant for higher learning in South Africa, the introduction of service learning was applied for the creation of the sense of responsibility for the community in higher learning institutions students as a measure for the acknowledgement of education as a good of the public and dealing with apartheid inequities. Mtawa and Nkomo (2020) elucidated that students' social values that are critical and developed citizenship are achieved through service-learning. Additionally, there is an emergence of research scholarship on service-learning and community engagement wherein the part/role of universities is transformed from an academic isolation tower to service to society and partnership, (van Eeden et al., 2021).

Centrally, service-learning is about opportunities creation for the application of theory learnt in class to real-life challenges and necessities by students. This opportunity causes the students to reflect on the contributions they make in their own lives and those of others, (Berry & Workman, 2007). According to the authors service-learning is inclusive of doing instead of theorizing, as students march out to go be of good service to their communities and surrounding communities. This is done through academia and beyond. There is however a lack of central co-ordination when it comes to institutional service-learning activities, which is a hindrance to the incorporation of service learning as part of the school curriculum. Scholars such as Hinck and Brandell (2000) have made a suggestion that service-learning institutionalization must be processed by a central office that is funded with adequate staff members within the academic affairs division. Service-learning is necessitated by being a location that is central to make provision of institutional information. This is to the inclusion of offering advice to faculties who have interest in the

enhancement and development of courses based on service learning, providing students with new opportunities, supporting and exploration of connections with mutual interest in service learning such as community partnerships with the University, (Maphalala, 2013).

Maphalala (2013) recommended that to achieve the service learning inclusive curriculum: universities have to establish service-learning responsible offices, give incentives to students and lecturers partaking in service learning activities, development of service learning policies that are separate from the community engagement policies, make service learning a prerequisite or criteria for promotion to the next level, have service learning advocates at the level of faculty boards and commit to making resources available for the promotion of service learning.

In the lenses of Mouton and Wildschut (2005) service-learning should be a central part of university policies, philosophies, and practices for there to be a condition of life wherein Higher Learning Institutions of South Africa can have service-learning courses in their curriculum. Frankly, the institutionalisation of service-learning courses as part of the general research missions, learning and teaching is necessary for service-learning ownership in Higher Learning Institutions. The scholars here make it clear that no matter how much support higher learning institutions get, if they do not take the responsibility of designing, implementing and maintaining service-learning courses as part of normal academic processes they will be setting themselves up for failure, (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005).

Stanton and Erasmus (2013) submitted that service learning can be used by universities as a strategic plan to cultivate their engagement with the community and the connections thereof. The JHEOESREB (Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement Southern Regional Education Board) has a service-learning definition as accomplishing tasks for the satisfaction of the needs of people and educational growth that is conscious. Literature regarding service learning as a drive for justice or social justice emerged soon after this definition, (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013). Scholars make an assertion that the initial service-learning proponents distinguished the practice of service-learning from a service of volunteering, in questioning the nature of service as an action the concept of reciprocity between the served and the server. This exchange embraces other approaches other

than that by a group of people or a person who is more than resourced and can give charity to those who lack, (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013).

The nature of the provided service is determined by community needs in service-learning. A character oriented by values was developed by service-learning and the community philosophy that was developed for reciprocal learning integrated with reformed curriculum goals, orientation of social change to the society and an activist. In service-learning, everyone that is learning and everyone that is being served is a learner as it's a reciprocal relationship, (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013). Quick and dirty methods will cause more harm when it comes to turning service-learning into a catalyst for institutional community engagement, however it is possible to do it the right way. The planning, resourcing and managing of service-learning in a developing manner that is cognizant of what the staff needs, community and students without the quality of provision being compromised is important, (HEQC CHE, 2006). In the contextual arena of a country that is developing, the service-learning role is inclusive of shaping students' values that are civic or making an allowance for students to be graduates that are civic-minded and soft skills development support.

Service-learning is presumed to be a tool that can be used for higher education transformation by the people who advocate for it. Additionally, there is an assumption that service-learning is a strategy that is cohesive and coherent in pedagogy, it is further assumed to be flawless and in pursuit of agendas that are liberatory which is not entirely true, (Butin, 2006). Service-learning is made of a movement of an amalgamation of critical theory, action research, adult education, experiential education, constructivism, social justice education, multi-cultural education, community-based research and undergraduate research. Service-learning is perceived as a methodology of pedagogy, orientation of social justice, community service, as a cultural awareness and competence strategy and a world view that is philosophical, (Butin, 2006). The scholar engages that there is an assumption of service-learning as a neutral, coherent and universal pedagogy and that there was lack of service-learning criticism in then literature. The scholar emphasizes that the service-learning pedagogy is one that should be applied carefully as

it is not free of faltering, thus Butin encouraged scholars to carry out studies that investigate the limitations of service-learning or shortfalls

According to Pacho (2015), Dewey espoused a distinction between experiences that are mis-educative and educative. He made a claim that interaction that is continued between what is learned and the learner is what sound education is. According to Dewey, this sound education is about meaningful connections with the world and figuring things out. The theory can go through judgement through examining whether it provided growth or not to the participant, whether it gave the community some benefit and whether purpose and desire was strengthened together with the initiatives and whether it is intellectually stimulating. Experiences that are authentically educative are an addition to a power of control and direction that is subsequent by which a person's ability and level of perception can be increased, (Pacho, 2015).

Relying on Pacho (2015), service-learning proponents have put an emphasis on intentional and purposeful reflection as a feature specified as a link between learning and the service and this differentiates service-learning from other services that are community-based. The theory of experiential learning by Dewey (1938) is based on ideas of his that he acknowledged as action and thought that is reflective. For the service-learning pedagogy to stay authentic to its roots, scholars must remember Dewey's ideas that he based the theory of experiential-learning on, and that the pedagogy of service-learning can take application in disciplines and contexts that are diverse. The theory avails a model that service-learning can operate within. Contemporary academics have given support to service-learning; however, there are challenges and critiques to the service-learning approach. The theorist himself acknowledged the tendency of humankind to think in opposites that are extreme (Dewey, 1938; Pacho, 2015). There are questions as to whether learning through experience is a learning source that is appropriate. The founding principles of the notion of service-learning are Dewey's ideas, despite their criticism and one of them is the linkage between the university and the community as a foundation, (Pacho, 2015).

Service-learning is affiliated with various theories of learning namely: constructivism, behaviourism and cognitivism, (Botha & Bezuidenhout, 2020). Constructivism refers to a

situation wherein students are enabled to complete a puzzle of knowledge to a unit that is systematic. Contrary to cognitivists, constructivists are of the perspective that knowledge is dependent on a mind and mapping can be used to instil it to a learner/student through activities of learning and scaffolding, and lastly, they believe that the founding of our knowledge is based on how we interpret our experiences. Behaviourism may be defined as a situation wherein students make decisions based on different environmental stimulus, thus getting exposure to change in observations after the justification of their response to situations. As another one of Botha & Bezuidenhout's (2020) learning theory, behaviourism is more like knowledge application in a contextual sense that is new and is a symbol of new learning and prior learning. Interaction with communities that is based on service learning, reflecting, executing, preparing and planning is an enabler to students to construct meaning of, understand and ultimately change their behaviour. Cognitivism is focused on students' conceptualization of the processes in association with learning: the way that information is deposited, received, retrieved and organized to the inclusion of language usage, problem-solving and reasoning. Interactions with members of the community that are reciprocated for social learning make up learning that is cognitive, (Botha & Bezuidenhout, 2020)

All staff and students should pursue the development of awareness of social injustices and inequalities and collaborate with members of the community for the purposes of producing good change so that service-learning on an international level can achieve the accomplishment of its goal of engagement that is civic. For one to engage in engagement that is civic globally, service-learning on an international level advises for the examination of personal values, country and culture. The desires of students to experience change in the society with familiar communities conceives engagement that is civic which also shows that service-learning does not amount to mere community engagement, (Mckee, 2016). Service-learning on an international level manages to have students put up to learning that is transformational by having them partake in projects that are aimed at changing their view of the world.

A model providing students with an opportunity to imagine that their society is the one going through the problem they are assisting with in a different community. This model

has been of great assistance to service-learning internationally on exploring an implication that it is a pedagogy that is transformative. Learning outcomes that are transformative can be gained through programs of service-learning that are integrated well and focused on reflection, are the voice of the community, put emphasis on community placements of good quality and diversity. Widespread across disciplines is service learning on an international level that is developing at a rapid speed.

Should its implementation be correct, international service-learning has the power to make a positive impact to students on a global scale. There are currently numerous service-learning programs on an international level that are gaining implementation in many countries that are different. Studies show that though reflection that is critical is useful, service-learning must have more than projects that are intellectual in order to show effectiveness. Partnerships emphasise between the communities and the project and the understanding of students and their roles in the enactment of change in the society so that effectiveness can be demonstrated in the projects and goal of service-learning on an international level

Caspersz, Olaru & Smith (2012), argue that service-learning participants do not only benefit from the career-building reward (instrumental and practical to their learning of prospective work) of volunteering, but they are offered the kind of service-learning that embraces reflections that are intersubjective on an interpersonal level that service-learning has offered to their self. The scholars claim that most students are receptive to service-learning. Furthermore, the authors speak of service learning that is about the enhancement of desire that already exists to create change that is social and act pro-socially, this also teaches knowledge and skills that can be utilized in order to do this, (Caspersz, Olaru & Smith, 2012).

These scholars through their study unveiled the fact that service-learning implementation is strained and hindered by non-recognition by faculties which is usually justified by there not being enough time for all activities and the possibility of it affecting their productivity negatively when it comes to their assigned professional responsibilities, (Olagoke-Oladokun, Mokhtar, Yusof, Ali & Hashim, 2021). The findings from Olagoke-Oladokun et al., (2021) showed that service-learning comes with its own challenges as a noble

phenomenon in Higher Education Institutions in Nigeria: the challenges that came with it were not all anticipated and although service-learning participants cannot solve all the problems in their jurisdiction, they do solve those they can get solutions to.

Their study's findings are applicable to South African Universities even though there is little literature regarding that, this is consistent with Butin (2006). Recommendations of authors have also confirmed the ideas from service-learning experts that have been advocating for it for too long, that counting on reflections from students who participate in service-learning can assist with the formation of partnerships with members of the community, (Baker, 2019). According to Baker, service-learning fosters engagement that is civic and students get in better understanding of the roles as related to the society at large, identity, political activism and taking up issues of social injustice.

In data comparison from 62 studies, demonstration was given by students who participate in service-learning that they benefit significantly from it in five areas: social skills, civic engagement, attitudes toward self, academic performance and attitude toward learning and school. This is in support of perceptions of teachers who argued that service-learning has various benefits for students at different levels of education. Included in those benefits are self-esteem, increment in service-learning participation, enhancement of self-efficacy and gains in social skills relating to empathy and leadership, (Celio, Durlak, Dymnicki, 2011). The scholars here advocate for service-learning as it has proven to be effective when it comes to heightening the attitude of students and helps them perform better in their academics. They further postulate that a practice of reflection was recommended by scholars, and it is in association with outcomes that are better. The findings produced by the scholars must serve as an encouragement to scholars/teachers who are incorporating service learning as it fosters growth for students.

The variety in conceptualization of the field of service-learning finds reflection in the ambiguity of its definition. Advocates of service-learning have also not reached an agreement as to whether the learning service should be introduced as a curricular tool, philosophy, an enrichment activity or an educational reform, (Billig & Eyler, 2003). The lack of framework that is unifying and a clear foundation theory is what can be criticized

by service-learning. The scholars elucidated that the lack of clarity in theory reflects what service-learning itself is.

Speck (2001) submits that like any other initiatives of pedagogy service-learning has numerous risky and rewarding pitfalls and barriers. The scholar emphasizes that professors must focus on the investigation of both rewarding and risky consequences of service-learning equally before making a commitment to service-learning. Additionally, the scholar is of a suggestion that professors must have cognizance of the impulsive drivers of service-learning due to the fact that practice is driven by theory.

Drawing from the literature that already went through investigation scholars prefer that the program of service-learning be infused in the course's curriculum in universities. It was discovered as more like pre-service training when used as an objective to link community service to the academic content of the university, (Copaci & Rusu, 2016). Noteworthy is that the investigated literature consisted of pre-service teachers and the activities were mostly focused literacy and teaching. Copaci & Rusu further indicate that the one semester approach of service-learning is reasonable considering that some of these service-learning activities will be embedded in the curriculum courses. Additionally, service-learning activities must be inclusive of tutoring, assistance of children variously institutionalized with homework and other tasks given at school

2.10 The role of the University in social responsibility in HEIs

Ethical, legal and economic expectations about discretion that the society has towards organizations at a time given at any point is what defines corporate social responsibility, (Asemah, Okpanachi & Olumuji, 2013). The corporate social responsibility concept is basically organizations having philanthropic, ethical and moral responsibilities which are an addition to their duties to be compliant with the law and earn a return that is fair for investors. The responsibilities referred to by the definition of corporate social responsibility are the expectations of the society that needed goods and services should be produced by organizations. The organizations must even sell what the society wants not necessarily needs on a price that is reasonable. Efficiency and profitability are what

organizations should be offering in order to meet the needs of their stakeholders, (Asemah, Okpanachi & Olumuji, 2013).

According to the scholars there are challenges and changes faced by the university operations that were discussed by a scholar named Vukasovic (2008) namely: the decrease in expenditure that is public, higher education commercialization and diversification, increase in accessible higher education and the Information and Communication Technologies' (ICT) impact. The question how USR connects to the university and what measures are put in place for effective management of the USR is necessary. University social responsibility is a new concept that Universities are working on incorporating through exemplifying it in their mission and vision statements. According to Asemah et al., (2013), some scholars highlighted universities' corporatization and a wider call to become a corporate citizen that is good. The USR has made an impact on quality education delivery, academic freedom and notions of autonomy. Thus, adapting to its transforming focus and having responsibilities towards the society too.

Universities and schools need to take advantage of regulatory requirements and, the federal and state laws to improve efficiency and profitability and not just do it for the sake of complying with the laws. In all interactions and transactions of stakeholders, universities and school must stress behaviour that is ethical. On University World News, Africa Edition Brink (2021) makes an admission that University Social Responsibility Network (USRN) has been sermonizing and practicing its perspective that Institutions of Higher Education have a responsibility to collaborate to mitigate cultural, environmental, economic and social challenges globally and to strategize on ways to ensure more justice in the society, promote inclusion, peace and sustainable development.

The USRN has put a responsibility to work towards social cohesion and ensuring responsibility that is social on HEIs on the type of research and citizens they produce in their environment (Brink, 2021). Chris Brink further points out that Higher Education Institutions should through their research do make an impact on the communities around them by conducting studies that are beneficial to the greater good of the community. According to Mafumo (2011), perceptively, a normative notion of social justice is promoted by South African institutions of higher education instead of the substantive

notion. Mafumo defined the substantive notion as a notion that is for the development of a fully prepared citizen who can take on their role without fear and hesitation in the society whereas the normative was defined as one that produces a citizen who is not well prepared to be a good citizen.

The University of Venda is playing its part in encouraging research studies that address current social issues through platforms and funding schemes such as the NRF. All South African Universities are committed to responding to the third core function of engagement in their various ways because of higher education legislation. Greater emphasis is placed on institutional accountability, responsiveness the development of graduate attributes and citizenship. Universities are expected to contribute to local and regional socio-economic development. It is no longer “business as usual” as factors such as massification of higher education, global shifts in how knowledge is produced, rising financial constraints, transformation and the FMF movement highlight the challenge facing universities to fulfil their public good role and social contract with society (Bank et al 2019).

In her article with others titled “*Students’ Reflections On The Benefits Of Community Engagement Programmes In A Rural-Based University, A Pursuit For Social Justice*” the Community Engagement Directorate asserts that social responsibility programmes are chaired by mostly students and that she liaises with the structures through their leadership/ mentor /advisor at a school level, (Netshandama, Maluleke & Kutame, 2011). Furthermore, the scholars here argue in the affirmative of social capital and argue that it is prevalent to hear from the students if they are appreciative of their learning environment or not so to find ways to enhance their learning experience together with the environment.

Social responsibility knowledge in formal academics is prevalent because it ensures the production of world citizens who are ready to participate in cultivation of social welfare by responding to societal needs of modern economies with efficacy, (Vázquez, Lanero & Licandro, 2013). This causes enough of a stir to find out from students’ structures exercising social responsibility by fighting against social injustice in the University to answer the what, who, and the how questions. Denoon-Stevens et al (2020) indicate that the planning is always easier than practice. With that being said, I am of the belief that

though these structures plan programmes and service delivery their plans do not always come to fruition due to certain coded reasons that raise a need for further exploration.

Fach (2016) reiterated that the institutions of higher learning hold a responsibility that is social and moral for the encouragement of students to be innovative and architects of change. The University of Venda, in its efforts to ensure social justice within its community and beyond has subsequently joined the struggle putting in place three key concepts as a road map. One of these happens to be social responsibility which is referred to as an ethical framework which defines obligation of citizenry to act for the benefit of society (Bond, 2008; Jordaan, de Klerk & de Villiers, 2018).

Committed are the effective learning communities to freedom, justice honesty, civility, equality and responsible citizenship (MacMaster, 2015). One of the core objectives of communal education is the genuineness of the link between citizenship and the university and this has an influential impact on how students actively play a role in the life of the community, society and globally. The scholars further submit that students are offered assistance by universities through being given platforms to problem-solve, leadership programs based on community leadership skills seminars, co-curricular tasks and many other opportunities for active participation of students in the just governance of their respective institutions. Students are further given platforms to articulate theories on how students can develop communally, (Rehman, Naz & Majoka, 2018).

Chen (2015) asserts that there has to be a futuristically realistic and strong strategic plan otherwise the potential of strategic planning will not be understood. For the global community, society and the education institution, the strategic plan must be strongly detailed around how the implementation of reform will be done along with the realization of the impact made by USR. Madiba (2014) made a submission that role-players surrounding higher education are guilty of perpetuating inequality structurally and that there is an alarming need for a meticulous scrutiny and an overrunning of agency to cease the perpetration and contribute. According to this scholar the success of students is strongly linked to matters of equity so role-players should examine their point of views on the practices of the affairs of students and guilt identification of perpetuating structural inequality so that they produce measures to rectify their conduct.

Electronical-learning has made it necessary for students to have gadgets and internet in order to part-take in online studies. The digital learning gives students the choice to learn at a convenient place and at a convenient time. Students from impoverished settings may struggle to connect due to lack of data, Wi-Fi-routers and modems, it being a hassle travelling to spots where they can get signal and this will be a limitation to their learning abilities, (Ntombela & Setlhodi, 2021). The University of Venda has been allocating data to students since covid-19 so ensure that their students are able to proceed with their online studies. What is not known is whether the allocations are at the satisfaction of the students what criterion is used in order to select students to allocate data for.

Dlamini (2018) touched on the fact the attempted efforts to achieve a high level (iconic) status in the ranks of universities is not aligned with the achievement of social justice and providing access to the majority of the black population that was in a historically disadvantageous position due to the policies of the apartheid era. Dlamini further sheds light on how higher education institutions corporatization is undermining the newly set out structures created by the South African Constitution for the allowance of equitable access to tertiary institutions and social justice at large. The author argues that the culture of institutional higher education does not consider human experience, nor does it strive to correct past injustices. This is due to the discourse being influenced by people who live miles away from South African realities of living, with that being said he noted that Principals and Vice-Chancellors of universities are “becoming managers of the existing bureaucracy”.

Moja et al., (2018) also opined that the fact that Higher Education Institutions are worked up by the challenges that they are confronted with means that they have to re-strategize in order to achieve the values they have portrayed as creation of equality and injustice eradication. The role of University Venda and its students towards Social Responsibility is established and clear yet there are still social injustice cases reported within the University of Venda (Dastile, 2004; Mukwevho, 2017; Thusego, 2020). This harsh truth justifies the investigation of the structures mitigating social injustice on campus so to see how far they reach students within the university through their community engagement programmes and volunteerism in addressing social injustice.

Differences in culture and the adverse impact of affordability on the learning of learners resemble trouble in social justice for those coming from deprived backgrounds. As they need to be supported in their endeavour to access higher education for the transformation of their lives, (Minnaar, 2011; Ntombela & Setlhodi 2021). Hlalele & Alexander (2021), point out that seeing that students are not even ready for higher learning education where much is expected, a to be asked question is: as a way to demonstrate a committed front to developing communities that are disadvantaged in context, have universities offered their expertise in physical infrastructure and human resources in the context of South Africa? (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012).

With the obvious uptake of corporate responsibility by companies that are progressive over the years which had their focus on business challenges that are critical and encompass relationships that are complex. Consequences of the broader system was resulted in by the silo approach that is unintended of corporate social responsibility and the failure of some policies to address challenges of sustainability and rather causing these challenges, (Johannes, 2016). The implementation process is the stage wherein challenges are mainly encountered, and this is an indication of formulation of policies that is poor. Lack of, management and interpretation, alignment of weak policy and co-operating with stakeholders that are relevant are what the challenges are. Developmental legislative frameworks must be utilized to address the said challenges through company regulations and the Companies Act.

Johannes (2016) contributes that social responsibility has a potential that is great to assist with sustainability challenges sorting and to meet the goals development of nation that is developing. The agenda of corporate social responsibility and its practices are confronted by many challenges that have worked against the realization of their objectives of the corporate social responsibility that were stated effectively. Challenges confronting corporate social responsibility are inclusive of lack of co-operation with stakeholders that are relevant, poor evaluation and monitoring of the projects after their initiation, weak policy alignment with development plan that are key official and lack of co-ordination. Thus, the scholar submits that corporate social responsibility mechanisms that current

might not be suitable supporting of development plans that are sustainable and addressing social problems in an effective way.

There are noticeable differences between the scholarly definitions of corporate social responsibility. For this reason, most scholars contextualize their definitions in their studies, thus, corporate social responsibility has various acceptable definitions. Many scholars indicate that the many definitions of social corporate social responsibility are an indication of a multidimensional and complex nature of corporate social responsibility. Other terms that corporate social responsibility can be referred to are corporate giving, corporate philanthropy, community affairs, corporate societal marketing, community relations, corporate community involvement, global citizenship and corporate citizenship. Some definitions are sourced from the legal and ethical point of view whereas some are sourced from the business and economic viewpoints. Chazireni (2017), having digested all the different perceptions stated that there is need for scholars to commonly agree that corporate social responsibility is concerned with conducting a business in an ethical and sustainable way including showing responsibility in addressing and treating the concerns of stakeholders.

Chazireni (2017) defined corporate social responsibility as an entity's commitment to its environment, community and its employees with the intention to maintain living standards that are sustainable. The author's definition is embracing the included elements in corporate social responsibility such as prioritization of employees, human rights, the environment and the community. Some elements are related to dimensions that are social, stakeholders. Furthermore, the definition of corporate social responsibility was reviewed from 20 various definitions what is common with the majority is social dimensions and stakeholders, (Chazireni, 2017).

In accordance with Venske (2016), scholars have argued that there is lack of understanding on how to go about the incorporation of corporate social responsibility so that the exposure to the context of the students can be achieved. Integration of corporate social responsibility to the curriculum of undergraduates is a necessity as the corporate social responsibility is bound to play a role in the futuristic business strategy globally. The companies' ethics and true motives are questioned and the initiatives of the corporate

social responsibility have had to deal with greenwashing accusations, (Venske, 2016). Student engagement with projects that are real and university-industry partnerships such as the greening initiatives and fundraising were highlighted to engender and develop skills amongst the vocational business graduates and knowledge of corporate social responsibility. The scholar argues for collaboration for university-business that is enhanced. The curricula embedment of corporate social responsibility that will interest both practitioners and academic is presented practically

2.11 Epistemic Justice

From the reviewed literature with regards to epistemic justice I have learnt that one can never recognize epidemic injustice as an injustice till they look deeper into justice as a concept. From the perspective of Giladi (2017), the most distorted acts are that of epistemic injustice. The scholar here defines epistemic justice as a situation wherein a certain social group/individual is done wrong in respect to their position as an individual who knows. Epistemic Injustice can take place in two forms i.e. testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice.

Testimonial injustice according to Fricker (2007) is when the victim's words are discredited due to bias. Since testimonial injustice is an injustice that disqualifies a person as an agent of knowledge contribution in the society which represents a core human capacity, this equates to unjust personal dismissal of the victim. The wrongfulness of the act of epistemic injustice can be a trigger to harmful secondary effects even though it is an injustice that is intrinsic (Fricker 2007; Schmidt, 2019). Hermeneutical injustice is a condition wherein a certain social group of people is rendered powerless by a social structure, rendered by a social structure as a group that does not have resources that are apprehensive in order to make recognition of the lack of power. On the other hand, testimonial justice merely occurs wherein an individual's views are discredited because of the status of the social group he is a part of being regarded as powerless (Giladi, 2017; Schmidt, 2019).

Anderson (2012) suggests that to address epistemic injustice, large scale systems of inquiry can be used as a structural remedy. The same way individuals are accountable and responsible for the way they act, structures should be responsible for their actions as a collective. Anderson further indicates that for institutions, epistemic injustice's virtue is known as inquirers' participation that is universal and equal and epistemic democracy. According to Mafumo (2011), tight regulations were enforced for the purposes of inclusion of black previously disadvantaged people as students and human resources of the Higher Education Institutions. The scholar indicates that epistemic justice just like social justice advocates for the all-inclusive Higher Education that is not discriminative based on gender, disability and especially racial background. This means that all Higher Education Institutions students should be able to learn and teach without bias based on racial background and should be treated equally fairly with their white fellow students.

Drawing from the observation of a scholar named Berggh, student-related community engagement as a service-learning opportunity with experience and the pros of having community engagement in HEIs should not be underestimated, (de Villiers et al., 2017; Hlalele & Alexander, 2012).Curriculum improvement that is informed can be complementary to the vision strategy of the faculties and community engagement activities beneficence, (Hlalele& Alexander, 2021).The University of Venda, being a rurally based university dominated by black students, it is called for that its definition of community engagement be inclusive of indigenous knowledge systems of the students and its surrounding communities. Dr Surversperi Suryakumari Rajah (2020) asserts that South African universities suffer from indigenous epistemic injustice as their knowledge systems are not pushed by the current educational pedagogies, the author was writing in respect of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Higher education access programmes are criticized for assuming that the deficiency of black students is inherent. Access programmes are created as intervention strategies through academic preparation for the purposes of promoting higher education access. The scholars put an emphasis on the fact that labelling black students deficient creates a

stigma for black students and hinders the higher learning institutions from taking necessary steps to ensure that the curriculum is more, (Hlalele & Alexander 2012)

Epistemic injustice has become a politically and practically urgent challenge in institutions of higher learning and the epistemic crisis is also a part of the University crisis at large, (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018; Khoo, Mucha, Pesch, Wielenga, 2020). Dealing with the university crisis of epistemic injustice requires that testimonial injustice which is injustice that discriminates against certain groups of people as knowledge contributors and hermeneutical injustice which hinders the society from experience understanding of these groups of people, (Fricker, 2007; Khoo, Mucha, Pesch & Wielenga, 2020). According to Khoo et al., inequalities of structure that are faced by the marginalized and poor students as they work towards succeeding in institutions of higher learning form part of epistemic injustice. Critical is the support of students for the purposes of ensuring epistemological access according to Moja et al (2015). This interlinks with the perspective of Lewin and Mawoyo (2014) who furnish the public with the acknowledgement of a need for fair epistemological access. The authors, Moja et al., (2018) contend for epistemological access and submit that special support must be afforded to students especially first year students.

Historically, education scholarship that is traditional silenced or excluded knowledge from communities that are disenfranchised and are impacted deeply by research education, practice and policy making contribution to the epistemic injustices experienced, (Quantz, Buell & the Editorial Board of The Assembly, 2019).The scholars argue that public universities that are intensive when it comes to research must showcase commitment to address epistemic injustice utilizing platforms that are digital to voice out knowledge from the silenced/oppressed and uphold research based on that knowledge. Epistemic justice requires an academic attitudinal move to recognize the value of the knowledge rooted in communities regarding their realities. Maistry & Lortan (2021), submit that epistemic justice refers to giving the historically silenced/subjugated knowledge systems a platform in research together with the knowledge rooted in communities. The scholars raised a

concern for the value-lacking development other knowledge systems, (Maistry & Lortan, 2021).

Indigenous philosophies like ubuntu are undermined as assumptions that are false and an African thinking that is illegitimate by pedagogical practices of higher education that draw from Eurocentric western perspectives, (Letseka 2014; Ngubane & Makua, 2021). Students from African cultures are made to feel inferior in higher education by such negative assumptions of their indigenous knowledge systems, (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018). Scholars bring to light the importance of the pedagogy of ubuntu so to promote social justice. These scholars make a proposal of the social justice theory conglomerated with the ubuntu theory as a way of achieving social justice, (Ngubane & Makua, 2021). These theories are seen as a catalyst to informing other cultures of the African practices such as ubuntu and how its application can better the social injustices issues in higher education institution. This would further achieve the oppressed knowledge indigenous systems' awareness and their equal contribution and distribution in higher institutions of education, (Ngubane & Makua, 2021).

Ngubane & Makua (2021), argue for the inclusivity, equity and access in the current South African lecturer halls in higher learning institutions. Like other scholars, Ngubane and Makua further make a recommendation of Ubuntu as a socially and culturally egalitarian pedagogy for transformed classrooms in higher education. These authors found that at the intersection of social justice and the ubuntu pedagogy are classrooms wherein the students' rights to be treated equally and their right to dignity are respected/not violated disregarding their social status. The authors put emphasis on epistemic injustice as curriculum level violence whose perpetrator is the alienating untransformed landscape of higher education, supporting Heleta (2016), the scholars concur that epistemic injustice is oppression formed against the marginalized indigenous students so to create inferiority complex in them and feel they don't deserve higher learning, (Ngubeni & Makua, 2021).

Cross and Govender discerned that social justice cannot be achieved lest the point of departure be that of dealing with epistemic injustices and therefore achieving the

decolonization of Higher Education Institutions, (Themane, 2021; Cross & Govender, 2021). The scholars submit that listed amongst the crimes the West committed to Africa are linguisticide (indigenous people's languages killing) and epistemicide (indigenous people's knowledge killing) and culturecide (indigenous people's culture killing), therefore there is lack of epistemic freedom in institutions of Higher Education, (Themane, 2021; Cross & Govender (2021).

Themane further sheds light on how complex the issue of curriculum decolonization is, stating that mitigating epistemic injustices when the curriculum change is presented and still stirred in foreign languages such as English and Afrikaans is quite ineffective. The decolonization of methodologies intends to distract the relations between indigenous researchers and non-indigenous researchers, between communities and institutions including indigenous communities, between values and theories that are academic, lastly, between the colonial institution of education and the victims of colonization with subjugated knowledge, (Smith, 2012; Cross & Govender, 2021). Smith inserted that the research institution should be challenged when it comes to its practices, values and their dynamics of power regarding the invisibilities, silences, absences of the content of other people's ethics, practices in the knowledge and community of research. Smith argues that the methodology of research must be in alignment with the context, intentions and participatory nature of the systems of indigenous knowledge and the communities' implications, thus many other scholars just like Smith vouch for an Afrocentric way of doing things, (Cross & Govender, 2021).

Ngubeni & Makua (2021), in support of Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) make a declaration that perpetual oppression and neglecting values and African belief systems brought by African students in Higher Education Institutions equates to epistemic violence/injustice and that Higher Education in South Africa lacks transformation. The practice of pedagogy in South Africa is based on world views and philosophies of the West disregarding the fact that African students make up the majority of students in Higher Education Institutions, (Ngubeni & Makua, 2021). Scholars advocate for epistemic freedom through effective

decolonization of pedagogies, (Maistry & Lortan, 2021, Cross & Govender, 2021, Ngubeni & Makua, 2021).

Scholars such as Oron and Blasco (2018) note that there is an existing curriculum that is hidden and that this hidden curriculum had its presentation as a better curriculum whereas it is a perpetrator of epistemic justice and is promotive of social inequalities, (Oron Semper & Blasco, 2018). The scholars posit that students do not only learn from what their teachers have to teach in class but learn from their state of personal being as well, which is called the hidden curriculum.

2.12 Theoretical Framework

This study draws from two broad theories, namely social justice and place making theories, they both fit in perfectly to cultivate a social injustice free environment for students.

In this study, these are outlined as follows:

2.12.1 Social Justice Theory

In this study the theory of social justice employed is Rawl's redistributive theory of egalitarianism. This theory acknowledges social justice as fairness in distribution of wealth, access to opportunities/privileges and equal rights. Social justice is a push to authorization of people for the participation in life as partakers in social life and disable inequality while at it so that people can operate as agents of transformation (De Klerk & Palmer, 2020). For the University to be a just environment, people's rights should be respected and opportunities availed to all students equally. Students must not face segregation due to their social status, gender, family background, nationality and everyone's rights should be equally prioritized.

Theories of redistributive justice may be transactional or structural. Social justice can be measured against three distributive theories to be brief on. Knight, (2014), in his study titled the “*Theories of distributive justice and post-Apartheid South Africa*” breaks down the theories into the below, however the one applied in this study is the distributive theory of egalitarianism.

i. Rawl’s theory of justice as fairness

Thus, three concepts are identified by Rawlsian as justice, not furnishing them in an orderly manner but they are as follows: that in the case economic equality, the most disadvantaged groups should have the arrangement of equalities at their upper-most benefit, everyone should be afforded fair access to opportunities and that everyone should be afforded basic needs and freedom. (Rawl, 1999; Knight, 2014)

ii. Utilitarianism.

This theory dates to the 18th century and was first expressed by Jeremy Bentham in 1770. The utilitarianism suggests that something is good for as long as it does not deplete the welfare overall and bad if depletes it. The controversial thing about this theory has been that the scholars who are for it have different measures of welfare (Kelly, 1990; Davids & Gaibie, 2011; Knight, 2014). However, the majority agrees that welfare is measured by wealth (Davids & Gaibie, 2011). With some welfare pertains to the resources one owns and with some welfare pertains to being able to satisfy your physical wants. The common view is that those with wealth are the ones who get access to better health, living conditions.

iii. Egalitarianism.

According to this theory, injustice occurs when others are well-off in comparison to others provided that it is not by choice, nor is it because they are at fault. This means that where a person has a hand in being in the living conditions they are in, then no matter how bad their conditions are: there is no injustice. Having been built from the social fairness concept equalitarianism or egalitarianism is a thought derived philosophy of politics putting in priority all people at an equal measure. The doctrine of egalitarianism gets its

ideations from the notion that all people are morally and fundamentally equal (Knight, 2014).

This is the theory applied in this study since the student structures fight against unfairness and unequal distribution of opportunities in the university according to the findings. The investigation of the role of student-related CE structures with the purposes of finding ways to support them is so to promote social justice and provide ways with which the social justice course can be improved. It is of paramount importance for students to receive equal treatment and equal distribution of resources disregarding their social status, sexual orientation, financial status, religion, sex and disability status. They further should be afforded equal respect of their fundamental human rights.

However, according to the scholar Brighouse there is a need for a social justice theory that covers the education life, (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). According to the scholar the theory's purpose should be to be informative of people's rights and what should qualify a person to be protected by the government. In so advocating for this needed theory, Brighouse suggests two principles that are to serve as guidance to social justice in education and those being: equality of condition and fair equality of opportunity, (Nieuwenhuis, 2010; Smith 2017). The adopted social justice theory is accompanied by the place building theory below.

2.12.2 Place-Building Theory

This study further drew from the Place-building theory to explain the degree an organization harnesses community engagement to address social injustices in a society. The theory is an ideal for the study because it deduced dimensions with evaluation and a description of organizational contributions to their societies through community engagement (Kimball & Thomas, 2012). The place-making theory's mission is partly to ensure social justice in any place by building the place with principles of inclusivity and safety (Strydom & Puren, 2016; Knight, 2014).

The prescription, evaluation and description compass of the university's settings regarding community engagement is not merely what the theory has to offer but it also offers a process for identifying tension associated with social injustice for change and envisions the commitment of the university to social responsibility. It assumes that community engagement structures represent a type of place-making exercise outcomes embodying beliefs that intrinsic and engagement motivating values strategies (Kimball & Thomas, 2012). The place-building theory was derived by the scholars: Thomas and Cross (2007) from the labour of researchers who are organizational such as the likes of Morgan (1997) advancing towards it utilizing a grounded theory. In this context, a place is described as geography and a social stance, and its organization revolves around the definition groups or persons in its location (Rodman, 1992). Therefore, it could be argued that the place is not "discrete" or merely local (Kimball & Thomas, 2012). It is understood as events that occur regardless of the settings and their account is made of human intentions, goals and values.

"Place" within the context of the theory also explains social relations attached to space only secondarily to people (Staehele, 2007). According to Thomas and Cross (2007) also emphasized that Place is a platform that mediates between social groups, individuals, political structures that are wide and organizations. Durable are the meanings shared by these entities as a collective and noteworthy is the fact that they were generated from history. Thus, in this sense "place" is described as an environment for a collective mission. Any structure or an organization that consists of group of individuals in its own ways can make an impact to any setting for social transformation through change and look forward to certain developments. This is consistent with Entrikin (2000:6) who maintained that places share meanings or interpretation frameworks of incidents for varying work and it further makes provision for action resources.

It could therefore be emphasized that place is a social phenomenon that is constantly developing as an everyday experience of life, it does not have a psychological existence (Kimball & Thomas, 2012). Within the contextual parameters of this research place is described as a structure that mobilizes individuals who shared similar goals and values towards a problem. In a more specific context, it refers to student community engagement

organizations fighting against social injustice at the University. Using the “Place-building” framework, scholars such as Kimball and Thomas (2012) refer ‘building’ as a procedure used to process for recognizing stress for transformation. It is a procedure that defines, debates, and envisions commitments. It gives room for a set of individuals to join ideas and efforts, serve a community by participating in a mission that seeks for a positive change.

Thus, in the study’s contextual basis, “building” refers to the institutional social responsibility in ensuring a positive shift and stability in the community. It explains the struggle student organizations made or are making through the university to combat student-related social injustices. In a broader context the Place-building theory is used to explain how student community engagement structures evolve in this period, mobilize and combat social injustices at the University with hopes of promoting equality, social cohesion and simple coherence, as well as ensuring a safe and peaceful learning environment. Like in the current study, the “Place-building” theory has been referenced by social scientist different matters spanning from entrepreneurship and sustainable economy, community and systems development, corporate culture, organizational behaviour, as well as peacekeeping (Schneider, Brief & Guzzo, 1996; Schoenberger, 1997; Hudson, 2001; Gans, 2002; Thomas & Cross, 2007). This makes it diverse and multidisciplinary in nature.

However, in the study’s contextual basis, the theory is limited to community engagement and social injustice. I chose to approach this from the theory framework of place making theory which is a framework for accessing and upholding community engagement in HEIs and society. In the study’s contextual basis, the theory explains the degree to which student community engagement initiatives address social injustices on campus thereby contributing as a place maker in a society.

Furthermore, the place-making theory is an applicable theory to use to underpin the study because it reflects what community engagement is about. In its endeavours to provide an environment for students and other stakeholders that is safe and allows for academic freedom the University has Community Engagements that has structures registered under it who are persistently fighting to ensure social justice for everyone. The place-

making theory applies in this study in such a way that it allows for the efforts of Student Related structures to be perceived as strategies that build the university by driving programmes that raise awareness on social issues and support to those who are needy of it.

Drawing from Strydom & Puren (2016), the place-making theory has three dimensions namely and discussed in a summary below:

a) Procedural dimension

Procedural dimension refers to the procedures taken into account when making decisions that are related to the place for the purposes of growing the place. My submission is that the procedures should be inclusive of the values of the University and psychological values of its stakeholders. That way both the University and the students will be equally served by the decision taken in attempts to make the University a better space for all.

b) Psychological dimension

The psychological dimension happens to be the conglomeration of spatial dimension and procedural dimension. Place-making is a multi-dimensional concept depending on what kind of place making is necessary in a place. Should it be necessary the dimensions should be applied equally to address the social injustice dilemma in the University environment.

c) Spatial dimension.

Spatial dimension makes an insinuation that in a process of re-making or making a place, community plays a vital role. Due to its nature of inclusivity a participatory approach can be applied in this dimension. The intention of this dimension is to create a new identity or a new image for the place. In this dimension a positive outcome/result can be drawn from the participation of the student structures and their efforts to mitigate social injustice.

Place-making in its entirety serves as one of the most applicable theories to this study as there is a need for betterment of the place in this case as there are persistent social injustices calling for effective measures of eradication. The scholars here argue in the affirmative of social capital and argue that it is prevalent to hear from the students if they

are appreciative of their learning environment or not so to find ways of enhancing their experiences of learning together with the environment. The best way to confront challenges in a university space is through the theory of place-building.

2.13 Chapter Summary

Crystallising discourse from extant literature, it can then be concluded that the definition of community engagement may differ swiftly from areas and disciplines, however, its roles in a place building are closely related. It remains an initiative and process through which the expertise of the higher education institutions applies to address issues relevant to their communities. The researcher in this chapter reviewed the literature she read and supported her need for research with application of two theoretical frameworks. The researcher opted to go for two theories because they are both applicable and relevant to the study. The theoretical frameworks work hand in hand and with literature to best figure out how to better the social injustice epidemic with the employment community engagement in the institution of higher education. The following chapter develops the study further by breaking down the methodologies the researcher employed to collect and analyze data.

The scholars make compelling contributions to the body of knowledge. The number of injustices in institutions of higher learning is appalling, and disappointing is the fact that most of them are suffered by the previously disadvantaged groups. Injustices are so broad that she even familiarized herself with epistemic injustice and how dangerous and subtle it can be. The literature reviewed exposes how we have a long way to epistemic freedom and how it derails social justice in higher education institutions. There is little literature regarding community engagement student-related structures in both the national and internal contexts. This chapter provided solutions for social justice as service-learning, a student-centred education. The literature or the lack thereof proves that there was a dire need for a study of this nature. Community engagement structures

are essential role-players in bringing about social justice thus, there being no information on them is a blunder that needs to be addressed through research and innovation.

To be brief, the literature reviewed does not answer all the research questions. Firstly, the literature does not provide names and the make-up of community engagement student-related structures in higher education institutions; neither does it describe ways in which they mitigate social in justice. The literature offers in detail social injustices suffered in higher institutions of education including the subtle ones; there is more discussion on ways in which social Injustice can be eliminated in higher learning institutions not in respect to student-related community engagement structures.

The literature proves that there is a lot of scholarship based on community engagement, social justice, and higher education institutions but there is lack thereof in how community engagement through student-related community engagement structures, indigenous knowledge systems and ubuntu can be managed for better results in the pursuit of social justice. Most is being done by the government and the higher education policies but there is little transformation in higher education institutions mainly because there is hidden curriculum and curriculum based on past inequalities that has not been fully erased in higher learning institutions. The literature is a revelation when it comes to navigating higher education environments for the purposes of achieving social justice, it also provides gap which call for further research and knowledge contribution in the field.

The literature is the portrait that it was made of examination all the existing elements or factors around social justice and how they can work together to mitigate the rampant social I justices in higher learning institutions and beyond that can push social justice in higher education institutions and their contributions are dissected by scholars. Some of the concepts in this literature are complex in a sense that they have multidimensional with noticeable differences.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction.

This chapter discusses the methodology applied in this study in detail.

3.2 Research Design

This research is qualitative with exploratory-descriptive and contextual in nature. The design of the research is defined as a framework that is structured based on how the researcher is going about conducting research, (Babbie and Mouton, 2009). It is a plan according to which participants are determined for data collection, the nature of data that should be collected and analytical approaches that should be harnessed to arrive at conclusions (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2015). The choice of this design resonates with the fact that it can be used successfully in the description of groups, community and organizations (Welman et al., 2015). It is best in describing the phenomenon associated with community development (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2010).

3.3 Exploratory Study

Studies that are exploratory focus on exploring an area that is not known. Reasonable research is conducted in order to explore the topic of the study so as to make a contribution to the familiarity of the topic (Cresswell & Plano, 2007). The methodology utilized in this study includes reviewing of relevant literature that already existed before the commencement of the study and the one that surfaced during the research; questions were presented to the focus groups (people who have experienced and have had to deal with the problem) and further performed an analysis of the results.

3.4 Descriptive study

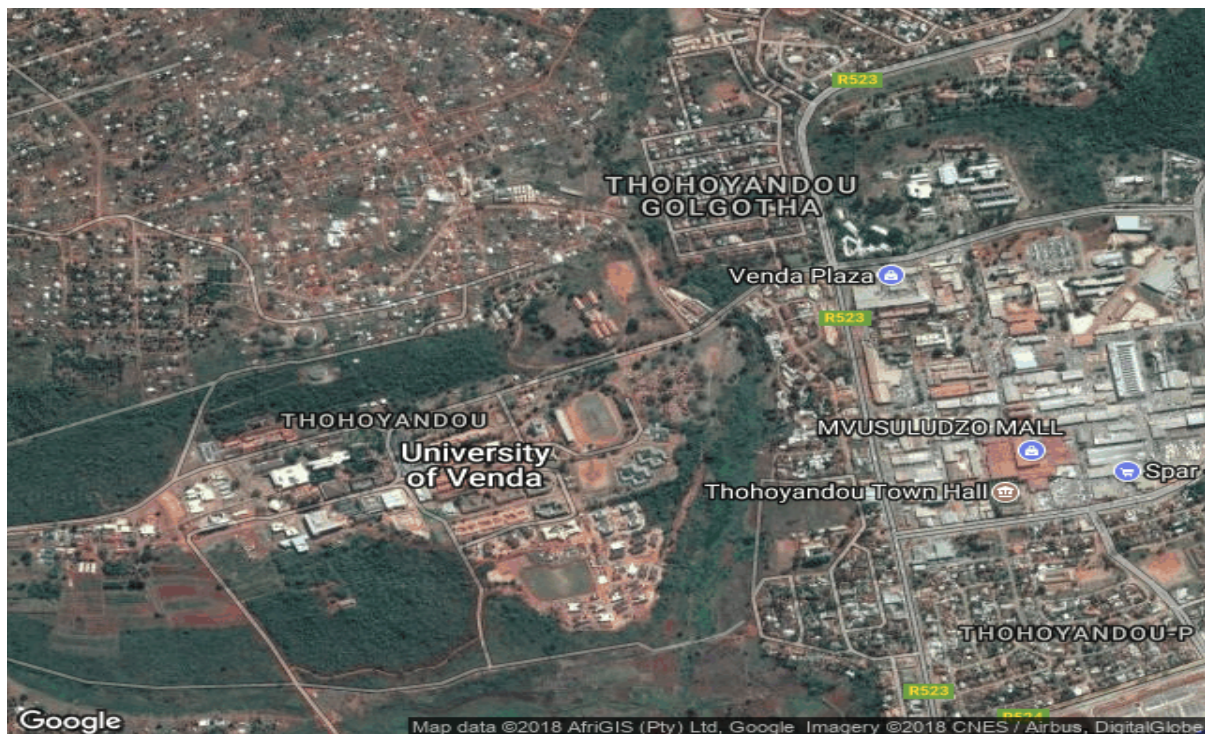
The research involves both secondary and primary analysis of data as its nature is empirical. This kind of research has compelled the researcher to utilize data that already exists to answer research questions that are key (Willman, 2006). The reason behind the descriptive study is to identify possible measures of supporting student-related community engagement structures to be more active in mitigating social injustice. The researcher observed and explained what she has observed from the field and has as well analysed the responses given by the participants.

3.5 Study Setting

The University of Venda is a place where the study was conducted as it is the area selected by the researcher for the study. The area of the study is a geographical location wherein data collection and analysis are done or based (De Vos Strydom et. al., 2010; Welman et. al., 2015). The University of Venda is an institution of higher learning situated in Thohoyandou town in Limpopo Province, Vhembe District Municipality, South Africa. It is a rural-based and historically black institution of higher learning, which was established in 1982. It accommodates a student population of about 15,000 cuts across provinces of South Africa, with about 300 international student capacities (UNIVEN Report, 2016). Majority of local students in the University are from various places such as KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Limpopo, while the international students cut across continents such as Asia, Europe, America, Africa and beyond. These cultural backgrounds were represented in the sample of the study.

According to Ddungu (2009) and Iwara et al., (2017). The Limpopo province found in the northern part of South Africa, there is a black University previously disadvantaged due to its location and the majority of students' race; it is mostly situated in the skirts of Thohoyandou CBD (Central Business District). The location of the University is 70km away from Makhado or Louis Trichardt and is found in the local municipality of Thulamela

which is in the district of Vhembe in Limpopo. Is also located 50km away from the National Park named Kruger. The global system's co-ordinates for the position of Thohoyandou are; East 30° 27 32 90 and South 22° 58 26 13. The university borders the newly situated municipality named Collins Chabane, Musina, the local municipality of Makhado and the local municipality of Mutale. Tar roads R523 and R524 are connected with Thohoyandou, (Edwin 2002; Census SA 2011; SAHO 2016). "The University had about 15,000 students enrolled in 2017 and 10% (appx 1,500) were postgraduate students", (Ddungu, 2009 & Iwara et al., 2017),



3.5.1 Figure 1: Geographical Map of the University of Venda

3.6 Population of the Study

The University of Venda is the population of the study, specifically students who participate in community engagement initiatives. Bless and Higson-Smith (2010) define population as the study subjects, consisting of an organization, products, and individuals that will be used to collect data and its analysis as necessary to derive conclusions about

a phenomenon. The total student population of the University of Venda is estimated at 16 000. Of these, roughly 3000 participate in community engagement initiatives. However only 25 students participated as respondents in this research and these students were made up of five different structures.

3.7 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Actual sample refers to a smaller, more manageable unit extracted from a pool to represent the population (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2010). Community engagement student structures that are involved in initiatives of the University are where the population of the study was drawn. Such students have organised structures that work with the community engagement office.

3.8 Purposive sampling

Creswell (2009) submits that purposive sampling means being purposeful about who or what you want as your object of question by having a criterion of certain characteristics to help you single out your object(s) of question. With this kind of sampling, a lot of measures are used to locate the relevant respondents with all the information you need to answer your research questions (Creswell, 2009). Purposive inspecting also called judgmental or subjective examining was adopted in order to determine selected participants for this study.

A purposive sampling technique was followed to identify participants. Currently, interviewed structures are depicted in table 3.8.1.

Table 3.8.1: Student structures participating in community engagement

Name of Structure	Number of Active Participants	Actual sample of participants
Aphrodite Global	88	5
AIME	60	5
Univen Enactus	113	5
Stop The Spot	100	5
Black Management Forum	45	5
Total	406	25

As indicated in table 3.8.1 the structures interviewed are made up of 406 participants of which, only 25 people volunteered to partake in the study. The number of participants from each group consisted of 5 members from 5 different structures. Having the representatives and oldest members of the structures as respondents was one of the requirements. This is a non-probability sampling technique that allows selection of samples based on judgements about the knowledge of the population and the study purpose sampling technique (De Vos Strydom et. al., 2010). It is most ideal considering its approach which allows selection of participants from the University student population that are most qualified and informative about the topic of interest.

3.9 Data Collection Method

Bless and Higson-Smith (2010) defined the data collection method as an elucidation of the kind of tool used to collect data and this is included in any kind of research design. Data collection within the context of this study is: to profile student-related community engagement structures put in place to mitigate social injustice on campus, as well as distil the approaches used by student-related community engagement structures to address

them. In this, used was the questionnaire that is semi-structured to engage with the participants. Due to the restrictions of covid-19 status and the consideration of the regulations of lockdown, electronic methods (e-methods) were used for the structures' interviews. In this case, I have relied on sending the questionnaires and following the responses with WhatsApp focused chats.

3.10 Semi-structured questionnaire utilised

According to Barret & Twycross (2018), a questionnaire that is semi structured is a mixture of arranged and unarranged questions. As the researcher asked arranged questions, there, unplanned for questions come in for better understanding and clarity as the collection of data continues. A questionnaire that is structured can be identified by questions that are standard and fixed with words that are precise for information gathering purposes.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted a semi-structured questionnaire to conduct focus group discussions which contains both open-ended and closed ended questions with a view to profile student-related community engagement structures put in place to mitigate social injustices on campus, as well as fractionate the approaches used by student-related community engagement structures to address them.

3.11 WhatsApp Focus Group Discussions

In the case of this study, the researcher was faced with the problem of finding a suitable way of interviewing the selected participants due to the COVID-19 restrictions and regulations. The initial plan was to host face to face Focused-Group discussions but due to the covid-19 restrictions the researcher had to adopt the e-interviews route. When data was collected the country (South Africa) was in level 3 of lockdown, the respondents had to be protected still as the pandemic had not ended. Another challenge which compelled

the researcher to adopt the use of WhatsApp Messenger instead of a traditional face-to-face method of interviewing is the issue of time constraints as other participants are not staying within the vicinity of the University of Venda.

With this aim in mind, the researcher administered the questionnaire and interviewed participants via a smartphone. To be specific a "WhatsApp Messenger" was used as it is a flexible technological platform for conversing and it allowed the researcher to receive quick feedback from respondents. For the purposes of questionnaire administration, smartphones happen to be perfect instruments to people because people always have their phones in their hands or a few rings away (Raento et al., 2009). There is however little information on studies wherein interviews were held telephonically or administered through online questionnaires in the historical and current qualitative literature, this is in accordance with Lechuga (2012).

In Social sciences, smartphones have not exercised broad usage as the instruments of research (Raento et al., 2009). The researcher found no information of research conducted using smartphones in social sciences literature as well, especially via the administration of a questionnaire through the WhatsApp application. However, WhatsApp is similar to interviews conducted online as it has the feature that permits you to get immediate feedback. Online interviews are quite common as they have been used broadly as a method of data collection. There are scholars who believe that the usage of online interviews is a mitigation to distance politics and allows for international research to be conducted without having the incurrence of travel costs and simplifies things in situations wherein the research respondents are hard to reach physically (O'Connor et al., 2008). I concur with this view as having collected the data via an e-method I learnt how easy it can be as compared to other data collection methods I have heard of and witnessed.

The researcher contacted the leadership of the structures and asked them to gather 5 members of their respective structures (preferably members in leadership positions and those who have been part of the structures for longer). The contacts of the leadership of the structures were collected from the Community Engagement for the purposes of the

study. The group leaders of the respondents had to confirm at what time and day the group would be available for the task of data collection.

Once the group was created on WhatsApp, the researcher furnished the participants with the consent forms and fairly explained to them what the research is about. After getting consent from the respondents the researcher furnished each group with a questionnaire and awaited answers from the respondents. Answers were not given in any order; everyone typed and recorded their answers as they wished but most respondents opted for typing. This was done to ensure that the respondents were comfortable and able to start giving answers to the questions they instantly had answers for. However, respondents were given enough time to familiarise themselves with the questionnaire prior the interviews.

3.12 Pilot Study

According to Welman et al (2015), the pilot study may be defined as testing of the methodologies of the research on a small digit of respondents just to ensure that the questionnaire is compatible with the respondents before the actual data. Shortfalls in the processes of measurement and other shortfalls are realised through conducting a pilot study. Through this, survey questions were tested on other voluntary participants to see how flexible they might be, challenges associated with data collection and what might be missing in the tool for refining. Given this, 5 individuals were selected for the test. Two weeks prior the actual data collection, a pilot study was carried out. The pilot study helped the researcher figure out if the questionnaire would answer the questions of the study as had been envisioned and whether the respondents would be flexible enough to answer open ended questions. This pushed the researcher to make the actual respondents as comfortable as they could be and make follow up questions where it was necessary which was not part of the researcher's initial plan.

3.13 Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed systematically aligned with the objectives of the study. Data analysis is the process of transforming raw information consolidating it into a meaningful stage, understandable and interpretable to the masses (Welman et al., 2015). A thematic analysis for this study was performed. The sections of the data collection tool were used as themes that have thematic subheadings as well. The data was conducted in English so there was no need for any translation. The intention behind contextual comparisons was development of classes and to identify different themes for the data (Boeijie, 2014). The data was displayed in formulated tables with relevant thematic codes that make it easy for the reader to comprehend. The researcher further compared the consistency between the answers provided by the respondents from the questionnaire that is semi-structured used for the collection of data in the WhatsApp focus group discussions and used the answers to code the themes of data for better understanding of data

3.14 Ethical Considerations

The Research Ethics Committee of the University furnished the researcher with an ethical clearance for the conduction of the research: see annexure 2. The ethical clearance number is SHSS/20/AS/07/0212. An informed consent form (letter containing a brief background of the study and profile of the researcher invented to get permission of the respondents to partake in the study via a signature) were sent to the participants requesting their voluntary involvement on the study before data collection was conducted. This is consistent with Hennink, Hutter & Bailey (2011) who maintained that several ethical considerations must be considered when conducting research. This includes informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation and minimization of harm. All respondents got information about voluntary participation and that they were not compelled to participate in the study. In this study, the researcher informed the participants about the research in a manner that was understandable to them and further informed them that they are not bound to participate in the research.

To ensure confidentiality in focused WhatsApp groups, all participants drawn from various structures were requested to sign individual consent forms. A detailed explanation on the importance of confidentiality was emphasised to all group members such that participants may not disclose issues discussed to outsiders. The WhatsApp group discussions were conducted in reclusive locations on WhatsApp so that persons outside the group cannot identify the participants. With reclusive locations I mean that each group had its own WhatsApp group where it held discussions

3.15 Online Research Ethics: Key Concerns and Solutions

Online research ethics are guided by the same regulations that are applied in the physical research where individuals meet in person and their rights, beneficence, justice and autonomy are taken into consideration (Kitchin, 2007). Drawing from Flicker, Haans, & Skinner (2004), dignity and the right to privacy of people being protected is the meaning of what autonomy is. In simple terms, Kitchin (2007) indicates that it means protection was afforded those who had no desire to participate in the research and those who did engage voluntarily.

According to the World Medical Association (2017), Helsinki, reiterated the importance of the principle of ethical autonomy that is utilized through the procedure of receiving consent after provision of detailed clear information, this is in line with Flicker, Haans, & Skinner (2004). Gelinas et al., (2017) specify that in the online contextual research, the identities of the respondents and their personal information should be protected from third parties. According to Kitchin, the justice principle covers fairness and equality when it comes to the treatment of participants and nobleness during the data collection procedure. As the World Medical Association (2006) states, the burden for protection of participants is also partly posed on those participants to have themselves protected from being exploited in the name of knowledge progression and research. For this purpose, the researcher identified herself to her respondents and explained the methodology and reason for the research transparently to all participants and treated them fairly and equally during the data collection procedure till the end.

The beneficence principle comes in to ensure that participants are all protected from medical, social, physical and psychological risks and harm during data collection. This principle advocated for the benefit of the participants and disdains their harm according to Kitchin (2007). In the online contextual research harm may be caused by disclosing the respondents' identities including information that is personal, harm may be caused through damage of one's reputation, humiliation and legal proceedings against the respondents (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). To adhere to online research principles the researcher put all the principles in contemplation when collecting data and is confident that no participant has been maltreated or experienced harm in any way.

Bender, Cyr, Arbuckle & Ferris, (2017), suggested that every online research should be attended to ethically in proportion to its demands and uniqueness. How respondents are put first and protected should be dependent on the amount of risks the study comes with and the consequences thereof. In other words, all should be done to ensure that whichever e-method is used the respondents still feel the same protection as when the research is not done online. Considering that studies have different interacting stages dependent on the contexts and nature this is bound to form implications for the protection of the participants. Additionally, there are varying challenges when it comes to approach of this privacy issue concerning online research and each country uses what works for it as long as the participants' privacy is maintained and their protection ensured according to Bender et al.,

The initial plan as stated was to conduct focused group discussions but since the national lockdown regulations hindered such to happen face to face the researcher had to twist the plot by using technology to get the data. The researcher took the route of social applications and used WhatsApp focused discussions to collect data therefore conforming to the fourth industrial revolution.

3.16 Interactive Research Involving Engagement with Participants

In this online research type of study, the participants were contacted personally by the researcher intending to get their WhatsApp numbers so she could create groups for data collection. The researcher initially contacted group leaders and informed them about her intention of data collection and the number of people she would need to collect data from each group. Some of this online interaction involves adding a person(s) on a social network application, social networks group joining (Moreno et al., 2013). Hine (2008) and Kitchin (2007) have identified this kind of research as ethnography that is visible/virtual. The scholars further suggested that treating the research as human research where communication was to be made to the individual(s) directly and that such research should be subject to ethical reviews of the respective institution

As an online ethnographer, the researcher was considerate of the participants' expectation of her and has had to not only be protective of the participants but also be protective of the space wherein the data was collected (WhatsApp groups) as suggested by Hine (2008). This was done through not coercing the participants and gaining consent that was informed and making room for the participants' withdrawal of participation should they have wanted to and fortunately none of the participants withdrew.

The researcher has interviewed one group of 5 at a time and a set of rules were set for the participants after they were added to the group. The rules included: not sharing the contents of the group with anyone else outside the discussion and respect for fellow participants including the researcher. The most important rule that had to be adhered to is not discussing anything in the group other than what the group is intended for. The researcher further answered to the questions of the respondents regarding anything related to the study and addressed further disturbances as they came.

3.17 Measures to ensure trustworthiness

Trust worthiness is the degree of confidence of qualitative data in qualitative research. Trustworthiness of a research study is important in evaluating its worth, validity and reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1995: 216). It is usually assessed with a set of criteria such as

credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity (Polit & Beck, 2010:). 'Credibility' explains the confidence in the 'truth' of the findings. This can be achieved through prolonged engagement, persistent observation and member checking during primary data collection, especially qualitative data. 'Transferability' shows how the findings can apply in other contexts.

'Dependability' means that findings are consistent and could be repeated. To ensure dependability of findings, in this study the primary data was coded, validated by recording and was subjected to a thorough analytical process to achieve clear results. Confirmability refers to the determination of how neutral the findings are as opposed to being infused with bias from the researcher, the researcher's interest nor motivation. These concerns were adhered to during data collection and analysis to ensure validity and reliability of the study.

Qualitative term	Strategy employed
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Refutational data analysis was adopted. ◆ Data from both the literature review and respondents was compared in chapter 4.
Validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The researcher presented the findings from the respondents as they were provided and analysed them without any bias attached to the final outcome. ◆ The researcher kept a neutral stance to the data provided by the respondents when collecting data to avoid encouragement of bias on their side.

<p>Credibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The researcher spent sufficient time (8 months) in the field getting to learn the culture of community engagement structures. The researcher further created the WhatsApp groups for the interview a month before conducting the interviews. ◆ Member checks were done and the majority of the participants were satisfied with the outcome of the data analysis and interpretation. These checks were conducted through phone calls and WhatsApp texts soon after data collection as well as after data analysis by the researcher asking the respondents if they are satisfied with their data contribution. ◆ Time sampling consisted of unlimited time per group as the researcher wanted the respondents to take their time answering the questions. However, the structures were done with the discussion each between 30-40 minutes and some members came back to add on the information in the groups after initial member checks.
<p>Transferability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Transferability of the findings is possible because the kind of social injustices explored are experienced in other universities by students. Furthermore, all universities do have a community engagement structure with programmes; this ensures the transferability of findings to the community engagements of other universities and students in general.
<p>Dependability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is an audit trail of how the whole data collection process went. ◆ The study was solo work; the researcher had no research assistants at all as she deemed it unnecessary.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ The respondents were all given a chance to voice out their opinions and were all given thorough attention without segregation.
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3.2 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on describing and elucidating the methodology employed and how the researcher went about collecting data. The researcher provided a detail of what the data collection process was. The following chapter presents the findings of the data collected. The methodology proved to be affective as data was collected just as the researcher had anticipated and the data was further analysed thematically which makes it easier for the reader to comprehend and make reference to. There is not a better explored methodology that has proven to be better than the methodology employed by the researcher in this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study from the investigation of the role of student-related community engagement structures in mitigating student-related social

injustice in the University of Venda, South Africa. The performance of data analysis was actioned in line with the study objectives introduced in chapter 1 and as follows: the profile of community engagement structures, their approaches in mitigating social injustice, challenges they come across and possible measures to support them. Data was collected through WhatsApp Focused Group discussions using a qualitative questionnaire that was administered amongst 5 selected participants from 5 structures. The number of structures that participated is 5, making the overall number of individual participants 25.

This selection initially presented the profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustice in the University of Venda, presentation and discussion is of the findings based on the information gathered from respondents through WhatsApp group chats. It discusses approaches student volunteer structures use to fight social injustice, challenges confronting student volunteer structures and possible measures to mitigate the identified challenges.

Soon after the data collection phase was done with, the analysis phase followed. Both data collection and analysis were done after review of available literature, however, the researcher continued with literature review till she was done with the last chapter of the study. The analysis was themed in accordance with given responses by the representatives of the student Volunteer structures through a qualitative questionnaire administered via WhatsApp group discussions.

This chapter is arranged as follows:

- Section A: Profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustice
- Section B: Approaches student Volunteer structures use to fight social injustice
- Section C: Challenges confronting student volunteer structures fighting against social injustice
- Section D: Possible measures of supporting student volunteer structures fighting against social injustice

4.2 Section A: Profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustice.

In view of the COVID-19 restrictions and regulations, the researcher adopted an Internet-based data-collection procedure. The researcher conducted WhatsApp focused group chats and interviewed the respondents according to the study objectives.

A role that is important is being played by the youth in ensuring the country's development in future, Kim (2014). The important role played by the youth is the pursuing power of societal transformation and is competitive in promoting and bettering the society (Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network, 2003).

Participants were probed to respond to the questions regarding the profile of their volunteer structures. The researcher aimed to probe the following information from the participants of 5 selected student-related structures mitigating social injustices in the University of Venda:

- Name of the student volunteer structure
- Year founded
- Size of the group
- Composition of the group
- Membership criteria
- Missions
- Essential benefits

The findings on the profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustices in University of Venda are presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.2.1: Profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustice.

Name of the structure	Year founded	Number of volunteer	Composition of the group	Membership criteria	Mission	Target group	Essential benefits
Stop the Spot	2018	100	Advisory board, Directors, General executives, general members and donors	No specific criteria, members join willingly	To eradicate all spots which hinder one's success through community engagement functions	Youth and minors	Leadership skills, referral letters, exposure to different places and people, certificates and recommendation letters
Aphrodite Global	2020	93	Chairperson, Secretary, Project officer, Deputy chairperson and general members.	Be a registered student, have interest in volunteering and be willing to commit on issues of women empowerment and GBV.	Student volunteerism in building better rural communities	Women and men	Attending educational programmes that cover concepts such as as GBV and entrepreneurship, leadership development and a certificate of service.
BMF	1976	80+	Committee of 4 members and general members.	Only UNIVEN registered students.	Advancing community development through student volunteerism	Business owners and people who want to start business	Business exposure, networking, businesses funding through SEDA and NYDA and mentorship
AIME	1871	Responders did not answer this question, they were unsure.	Two hooded scholars (Male and female)	One should be student to be a member of AIME	Providing rural high school students with skills, opportunities and confidence through mentorship and learners support programs	Learners from rural high schools	Leadership and mentoring skills
ENACTUS	2001	67	2 faculty advisors, 2 business advisory board and	Be a student at the university, have time to volunteer, and have	UNIVEN ENACTUS is a community of students, academics and business	Students and emerging entrepreneurs	Exposure to business world and leaders, service certificate,

According to the tabled results above Stop the Spot was founded in 2018; Aphrodite Global in 2020; MBF in 1976, AIME in 1871 and Enactus in 2001. The number of registered volunteers in Stop The Spot was 100; Aphrodite Global 93; BMF did not give an accurate number but indicated that the number of volunteers it had was 80+; AIME did not give an answer to the question and submitted that they were unsure of the number and lastly Enactus had 67 registered student volunteers. The Stop The Spot structure

was composed of the advisory board, directors, general executives and general members and donors. Aphrodite Global was composed of the chairperson, secretary, project officer, deputy chairperson and general members. BMF was composed of 4 committee members and general members. AIME's composition was of two hooded scholars (male and female). Lastly, Enactus was composed of 2 faculty advisors, 2 advisory board members and general members.

Four of the structures seemed to have the same requirements for joining i.e. to be a University of Venda student and voluntarily want to help people; these requirements resulted from data collected from all the structures except Stop the Spot which had no criteria meaning that any interested person could join the structure. Stop The Spot went by the mission: "to eradicate all spots which hinder one's success through community engagement functions". Aphrodite's mission was "student volunteerism in building better rural communities". BMF's mission was "advancing community development through student volunteerism". AIME's mission was "providing rural high school learners with skills, opportunities and confidence through mentorship and learners' support programmes". Enactus failed to give its mission, they only mentioned that they are a group of students, academics and business entrepreneurs.

Stop The Sport targeted youth and minors, Aphrodite global targeted men and women, BMF targeted business owners and prospective business owners, AIME targeted learners from surrounding rural high schools and Enactus targeted students and emerging entrepreneurs. Benefits received by Stop the Spot members included leadership skills, referral letters, exposure to different places and people, certificates and recommendation letters. Aphrodite Global listed attending educational programmes that cover concepts such as GBV and entrepreneurship, leadership development as benefits, including a certificate of service. BMF listed business exposure, networking, business funding through SEDA and NYDA and mentorship. AIME mentioned leadership skills and mentorship skills as their benefits. Enactus closed by listing business exposure and leaders' certificate of service as benefits.

4.3 Section B: Approaches the structures use to fight social injustice.

The researcher further sought to analyse primary data collected from the participants on the approaches student volunteer structures use to pursue their course of social justice. Table 4.3.1 below presents the responses from the representatives of the 5 selected student volunteer structures against social injustices in the University of Venda.

Table 4.3:1 Response on what student volunteer structures have done to eradicate social injustices.

Name of the structure	In an attempt to eradicate social injustice within your stream, what have you done?
Stop the Spot	We have hosted multiple awareness campaigns and webinars which aimed to educate people on issues of morality and social justice. Most of our student volunteer work has been mainly addressing issues such as crime, GBV, mistreatment of students and we have held several awareness campaigns and also provided post-trauma counselling to victims of crime and GBV amongst the student community. When it comes to students' maltreatment by the people in charge, we always followed a chain of command to go all out and defend the students by supporting them and accompanying them to the offices.
Aphrodite Global	We have been able to operate during lockdown by hosting series of webinars about mental health, vision boards, financial education, GBV etc. We have worked with other students' organisations such as ENACTUS and Youth Evolve in bringing about social justice. In that partnership that we established, we have organised a Mandela day, donated sanitary towels and conducted a feminine hygiene drive at Marude Secondary School. We have also hosted dialogues

	through community outreaches and a social entrepreneurship exhibition in campus and its surrounding communities.
ENACTUS	ENACTUS UNIVEN has identified and adopted sustainable projects within different communities surrounding the University of Venda. Some of the operational projects include; Mamokgadi pottery project, Green-Life project and the MTN ICT project. These projects aimed at reduction of poverty, creation of employment, advocating for environmental well-being etc.
BMF	BMF has hosted business seminars which focus on capacity building and sustainability means of small businesses. Doing community engagements which address small businesses, business plans, business sustainability and also leadership and management programmes.
AIME	We have achieved gender-balance within the ranks of the leadership of our organisation. In AIME, we do not have a chairperson, instead, we have hooded scholars and our hooded scholars comprise of both males and females which share equal responsibilities. The issue of gender-balance has also been central to our community programs in primary to secondary schools.

4.3.2 Response on measures structures have used to address issues under their cover.

Another question was also posed with an intention to draw respondents' view on the best measures student volunteer structures have used to successfully address issues of social injustices. The findings or responses from the representatives are presented by Table 4.3.2 below

Table 4.3:2 Response on best measures used to successfully address social injustices

Name of the structure	Response on best measures student structures have used to handle and successfully address issues under their cover
Stop the Spot	<p>Communication as a structure, self-commitment to our mission, common goals, and collective commitment with other structures in the fight against social injustices have been the pillars of the organization (structure).</p> <p>During lockdown, we received various cases from Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in campus, COVID-19 cases in campus and unfair treatment of students by staff and management. The organisation responded to those challenges by approaching relevant authorities that deal with such cases. We also intervened on the issues of GBV in campus by accompanying victims to the police station and also got them counselling services.</p> <p>We have also offered medical guidance to beat the corona virus as recommended by WHO and DoH. We also ensure that our members and the UNIVEN student populace in general adhere to COVID-19 safety practices such as masks, sanitizers, and social distancing in classes and public spaces.</p> <p>As the STOP THE SPOT youth organization we have managed to identify underprivileged high school learners from rural areas and we assist them with clothing, food donations as well as offering counselling and tutorship support. The COVID-19 pandemic limited our social outreach programmes as schools were closed due to lockdown, we therefore hosted several webinars as a way to keep the organisation running.</p>

ENACTUS	We had a student entrepreneurship exhibition that gave a good platform to entrepreneurs to showcase their products. This took place in November 2020.
Aphrodite Global	Conversations, dialogues and engagement. I think what has worked for our organization is just opening up a platform for people to learn, to talk and share ideas. Community outreaches also seem to be working out for us. A dedicated team of students from other organizations have also assisted us in addressing issues under our cover.
BMF	Hosting seminars and engaging in community engagement. Any function or awareness programme that takes place on campus we involve ourselves with and literally partake in any social justice promoting event as we deem fit.
AIME	Assigning roles: every member can freely participate, express themselves, contribute ideas and provide a platform to carry out objectives of the organisation. Weekly meetings to plan our programs are regularly held. Decisions are made as we meet.

4.3.3 Issues the structures have addressed that bring fulfilment.

Conceptually Section B was a question of issues that the student volunteer structures have addressed that bring the feeling of fulfilment or achievement to the structures. Table 4.3.3 below presents responses as recorded from the WhatsApp focused group discussions between the researcher and the representatives of the student volunteer structures.

Table 4.3.3: Response on issues addressed by the student structures and brings them a feeling of fulfilment.

Name of the structure	Response on some of the issues the student volunteer structures have addressed that bring the feeling of fulfilment
Stop the Spot	<p>Stop The Spot managed to host an event which was focused on students who are going through different levels of depression and stress. What was even more significant is the fact that such an event was fully funded by the organisation, meaning that it was organised and hosted without any funding from the University's SRC, we managed to fund the event through our fundraising drives and members' contributions. That felt like a great achievement to us. The organisation managed to confront a case of tribalism which was happening at Makwarela TVET college. We received several complaints from various students studying at Makwarela TVET college citing that due to the fact that the college is situated in the Vhavenda people dominated area, lecturers tend to assume that all students understand Tshivenda and give lectures in Tshivenda, meaning that those who do not understand Tshivenda were experiencing serious difficulty as far as learning is concerned. We, therefore, strategized as a group and sent a delegation to Makwarela TVET college and addressed the issue with the management of the college. The issue was resolved internally, and all lectures started being given in English</p>
ENACTUS	<p>As an organisation, we have had a great success over the past few years. Some achievements include the cleaning of the water polluted stream at Thohoyandou Unit C. This intervention enabled the community to access safe and clean water which is free from</p>

	life threatening pathogens. We have also assisted various projects in finding markets for them to sell their products.
Aphrodite Global	<p>The organisation is still new but has already fulfilled some positive outcomes in its few months of existence. We co-hosted a student entrepreneurship exhibition that gave a good platform to entrepreneurs for their products to be known. This took place in November 2020.</p> <p>Another achievement is that the organisation managed to submit NPO registration documents to the Department of Social Development. We have also run a social media campaign against rape in the institutions of higher learning. We created a website too.</p>
BMF	Collaborating with organisations such as Stop the Spot, LAS, ENACTUS and hosted one big event which sought to address a range of social justice issues. This event ran for two to four days so that the issues being addressed could be attended to.
AIME	We conducted a sanitary towel campaign donating pads to young girls at Marude Secondary School. The event was successful and all involved stakeholders expressed their satisfaction.

4.4 Section C: Challenges confronting structures fighting against social injustice.

Table 4.4.1 below presents data collected from the 5 selected student volunteer structures regarding the most threatening challenges the structures have confronted in the process of fighting social injustices at the University of Venda Campus and its surrounding communities.

Table 4.4.1: Response on the most threatening challenges.

Name organisation	Response on most threatening challenges you have confronted in the process of fighting against social injustices confronting students
Stop the Spot	Fear of suspension due to management confrontation, conflict of interest amongst members as others are puppets of the management and lack of confidentiality within the structure are primary challenges that we are faced with.
ENACTUS	The effects and consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic makes it impossible for us members of ENACTUS to gather and share strategies on how best we can continue making positive impact in the community. We are also not allowed to run businesses on campus due to COVID-19 restrictions and regulations. These businesses are essential to our organisations as they are part of our fundraising strategies.
Aphrodite Global	Some of the activists from our organization have faced violence in campus (University of Venda), Some have reported that they have been cyberbullied and threatened while carrying out the mandate of the organisation on social media networks such as Twitter and Facebook. Male students have been reluctant on actively participating on the fight against GBV (Lack of support from general students). It is also our collective view that the university management and staff are apologetic or in sense of denial when dealing with issues of rape and GBV in campus. We have also been hit hard by lack of financial support to run some of our programmes and sustain our organisation. Our organisation is determined to use intellectual resources as well as legal processes in order to ensure that we confront such social injustices through writing and research.

<p>BMF</p>	<p>We are always excluded in the meetings which take place between the SRC and the university management concerning budget allocation.</p> <p>Students lack support in terms of funds, mental health and opportunities that lie within the business categories and are mostly focused on excelling only in their academics. Students who do small informal businesses in campus are intimidated by the management as the university requires them to have certification, which I believe as organisations we should be able to provide them with. This tempers with the promotion of social entrepreneurship on campus.</p> <p>Other challenges we face are that the support structures of the organisations are limited in terms of financial backup and they also do not have tools such as banners, posters, tents etc. to use during recruitment campaigns due to lack of finances.</p>
<p>AIME</p>	<p>Due to the obvious fact that we come from different cultural and upbringing backgrounds, we tend to solve problems and also create some in the process mostly because our approaches in tackling issues of social injustices and bringing about social change vary. In some instances, we get to a point of solving a problem but also stepping on the toes of other students or members because as members we do not always see eye to eye.</p>

4.5 Section D: Possible measures of supporting structures fighting against social injustice.

Participants were also required by the questionnaire to provide answers on measures that could be solutions to the identified challenges. Primary data was collected from the representatives of the group and table 4.5.1 below presents findings on what the participants suggested as solutions to the challenges they have encountered in their respective student volunteer structures.

Table 4.5.1: Response on possible measures to support student volunteer structures fighting for social justice.

Name of the structure	In line with each challenge mentioned in section c, what would you suggest could be the solution? Also indicate what you believe should be prioritized
Stop the Spot	Management can help by giving us power to be independent from the SRC to run our activities, programs and functions. For instance, we fail to host some of our planned events because SRC members did not sign our requisition letters due to SRC members being unavailable. SRC signatory members give us problems when they do not sign our documents because we would have refused that they be hands-on on the financial operations of the planned events. Management can also help through developing a stream with which the social structures do not have to depend on political structures (separating community engagement from the SRC's jurisdictions).
ENACTUS	The best measures which can be considered to address aforementioned challenges may involve allowing ENACTUS to perform entrepreneurial actions inside the campus, as long as COVID-19 regulations and safe practices are followed during lockdown. As ENACTUS, we would like to be included in the university's annual budget and be recognised as a student structure and be supported with enough budget to support our projects,

	<p>transportation, as well as protective equipment amidst the pandemic.</p>
<p>Aphrodite Global</p>	<p>As part of the solution, we have been working hard to reach out to the UNIVEN student community and loggerheads on robust debates, dialogues and awareness campaigns against GBV.</p> <p>On the issue of funding, I would say we keep on applying for available funds in a form of sponsors and donors and also contribute as members of the organization on a voluntarily basis.</p> <p>We are also working on the new strategies to lure in male students and change their mind-sets because they are a significant group in the vision of the organisation as we believe that by working with men in the fight against GBV it would lead to a better approach in decreasing the rate of GBV in campus and South Africa in particular.</p>
<p>BMF</p>	<p>All BEC members should be provided with a leadership seminar for at least three days every year wherein we invite guests and experts to tackle the following points;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The qualities of good and innovative leader. • How to handle pressure as a leader; and • How to establish partnerships and collaborations with other structures. • Policy education.
<p>AIME</p>	<p>Student-related community engagements should be included in the university's annual strategic planning and budgeting. The university should create a cohort budget for the student-related NPOs so that those organisations can have money to operate</p>

	<p>because community engagement work done by student-related organisations also promotes the name of the university and attract sponsors for the university.</p> <p>It is our common view that the university needs to take student organisations which fight for social justice very seriously and must be involved on the curriculum planning and also on the transformation planning.</p> <p>For instance, the university offers Post Graduate Certificates in Education which aims to produce teachers on a single academic year (6 months in class, and 6 months of practical work), and that has evidently created learning problems to learners that those educators are teaching as they are not fully trained teachers. Such a problem can be resolved by involving student-related organisations such as AIME which constantly interacts with communities which the university aims to serve with skills.</p>
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4.7 Discussion

Discussion of the study's findings below shed light on the state of things with regards to the social justice approach of the community engagement student structures and feedback.

4.7.1. Profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustice.

Structural Formation

On these findings one first learns that the structures had similarities in all their endeavours to address social injustice. The structures have the same criterion when it comes to who can become a part of the structure and that is 'be a Univen registered student'. One of them "Stop the Spot", however, differed by making allowance for any interested party to join and part-take i.e one did not have to be a registered student to join the organization.

The number of memberships of each group is however proof that only a small number out of all the University population participates in community engagement initiatives: which stood at plus or minus 3000. The number of registered students under these structures stands at 340 excluding AIME as the structure said to be unsure of its registered members.

AIME approaches social injustice by presenting itself as an organization that has achieved gender balance and has no hierarchy but hooded scholars: both male and female to share the responsibilities of the structures equally. The structures targeted different populations and have other different benefits from what is common. A common target was entrepreneurs.

Origin and mission

The structures were all founded in different years, some way long ago and some recently. The researcher also witnesses a tendency of the community engagement structures to emerge from already existing either national or international structures that address social injustices on any level possible. The only independent new coming structure is Stop the Spot according to the data provided, see table 4.2.1. The structures come with differently worded missions but they all are about betterment of the community and social harmony. In other words, their mission is to eradicate social injustice respectively. The structures target women and children, emerging entrepreneurs, both genders, high school learners and general students.

Beneficial rewards

The structures also prove to have the common benefits and that is exposure (network with important people who can open opportunities for them later on depending on the circumstances), be it to powerful businesses or public speakers or their sponsors. AIME happened to be the only one that mentioned nothing about exposure. The structures all have other different benefits from what is common.

According to Aphrodite Global, benefits include “attending educational social events that cover concepts like entrepreneurship, GBV, women empowerment, leadership development, a safe space (for survivor/victims of GBV) and a certificate of dedicated membership”.

According to Stop the Spot “Being a member of Stop the Spot youth organization was not really about what you get but what you give to others”, that was a sign of altruism though it may not be explicitly expressed.

For some of these structures benefits were not even that important as they seemed to be merely fulfilled by being able to offer a helping hand to others. Considering that students lacked financial support and had no tangible things except certificates to gain, we can agree that indeed the students acted out of compassion rather than gain. To relate this to literature, historical research indicated that participation in volunteerism was brought about by certain factors given meaning to by the contextual basis of research (South et al, 2014).

According to Bhagwan (2020), increased social capital, educational experience that is enriched and socio-political experience that are deepened and skills portfolio that is increased are what students benefit from volunteering. Finally, other research showed that people engage in volunteerism freely out of empathy and compassion (Ali, Russ, Grarib, & Hadrami, 2014).

4.7.2 Approaches student volunteer structures use to fight social injustice.

Raising awareness through seminars/webinars.

Most of the student structures seem to be going all out to mitigate social injustice that they have employed the virtual way of doing things by hosting webinars to spread the awareness and also a couple of them share the Gender based Violence focus i.e. Stop the Spot and Aphrodite Global.

“BMF has hosted business seminars which focus on capacity building and sustainability means of small businesses”, submitted BMF.

Enactus contributed “Enactus has identified and adopted sustainable projects within different communities surrounding the University of Venda.”

On the same pattern Stop the Spot said “The COVID-19 pandemic limited our social outreach programmes as schools were closed due to lockdown, we therefore hosted several webinars as a way to keep the organisation running”.

Stop the spot also hosted webinars educating people about morality and social justice whereas Aphrodite Global hosted webinars on mental health and many other issues affecting the student populace.

Collaboration

Aphrodite stated, “We have worked with other students’ organisations such as ENACTUS and Youth Evolve in bringing about social justice. In that partnership that we established, we have organised a Mandela day, donated sanitary towels and conducted a feminine hygiene drive at Marude Secondary School”.

On the other hand, BMF said, “we involve ourselves with and literally partake in any social justice promoting event as we deem fit” and “Collaborating with organisations such as Stop the Spot, LAS, ENACTUS and hosted one big event which sought to address a range of social justice issues. This event ran for two to four days so that the issues being addressed could be attended to”.

This is indicative of the fact that all these structures value collaboration and utilize it to achieve their common goals.

Fronting students' concerns to relevant bodies.

Stop the spot mentions having had to protect the students from the maltreatment of the management. It also indicated, "The organisation responded to those challenges by approaching relevant authorities that deal with such cases". In other words, the management abuses of the student population are confirmed here from the problem statement of this study.

Stop the Spot contributed "When it comes to students' maltreatment by the people in charge, we always followed a chain of command to go all out and defend the students by supporting them and accompanying them to the offices".

"When it comes to students' maltreatment by the people in charge, we always followed a chain of command to go all out and defend the students by supporting them and accompanying them to the offices", still contributed Stop the Spot.

Two structures are on gender balance being Aphrodite Global and Enactus (both these structures emphasize the participation of the male gender and fighting for gender equality). In dealing with rape cases, general student grievances of students on campus and other mentioned social injustices against students it proves to play a pivotal role in fighting against social injustice of various natures. Aphrodite offers counselling and helps victims report cases just like stop the spot. So, these latter structures face the police to help with reporting cases and the university management where harm was caused by the university itself.

Social Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in closing the gap between social justice and social injustice in the society at large. This is so because to close the gap between the rich and the poor one needs a source of income. Resulting from the scarcity of jobs the gap keeps on increasing. However social entrepreneurship also plays a pivotal role in mitigation of poverty. Stop the Spot proves to prioritize GBV and general human rights whereas the

three others (Enactus, Aphrodite Global and AIME) have their focus on social entrepreneurship too as a priority.

BMF stated, “Doing community engagements which address small businesses, business plans, business sustainability and also leadership and management programmes”.

“We had a student entrepreneurship exhibition that gave a good platform to entrepreneurs to showcase their products. This took place in November 2020”, said Enactus.

“We have also hosted dialogues through community outreaches and a social entrepreneurship exhibition in campus and its surrounding communities”, stated Aphrodite Global.

All these structures somehow seem to share less or more things with other structures reading from their profiling. Enactus has identified and adopted sustainable projects in the communities that are aimed at poverty reduction and sustainable development. Social entrepreneurship is one of the concepts that are for mitigating social injustice and supporting social justice initiatives.

4.7.3 Best measures student structures use to address issues under their cover.

Opening of communicating channels.

Aphrodite Global uses dialogues, conversations and engagement to cover issues under its cover. Giving a platform for people to speak out and generally communicate issues that are faced by the populace is what Aphrodite Global does. Enactus only highlights using an exhibition to reach out to people only, the structure obviously needs help raising awareness and better strategies to reach out to people. It must get on social media platforms too.

Aphrodite Global contributed, “Conversations, dialogues and engagement. I think what has worked for our organization is just opening up a platform for people to learn, to talk and share ideas. Community outreaches also seem to be working out for us”.

Stop the Spot said, “Communication as a structure, self-commitment to our mission, common goals, and collective commitment with other structures in the fight against social injustices have been the pillars of the organization”.

AIME deal by “Assigning roles: every member can freely participate, express themselves, contribute ideas and provide a platform to carry out objectives of the organisation”.

From these responses from the structures, it is clear that opening of communication channels is what almost works for every structure uses to address issues under their cover. They use the communication channel to receive and impart information so to run their missions successfully.

Availability and outreach programmes.

Stop the Spot asserts that it has attended to a number of GBV cases during lockdown, it further discusses that it ran charity drives for rural schools and the poor in the neighbouring communities.

It clearly stated, “As the Stop the Spot youth organization we have managed to identify underprivileged high school learners from rural areas and we assist them with clothing, food donations as well as offering counselling and tutorship support”.

The structures are going all out to make a difference out there. BMF highlights that it hosts seminars and engages in community engagement in order to successfully deal with issues under its cover. Whereas AIME assigned roles to its members and brainstormed as to how to tackle things then go carry out the objectives of the structure. All the structures have ways to reach out to people and they seem to work except that they can be bettered by funding which is bound to stretch their reaching out strategies and raise awareness on their availability and what they do as a structure to students.

4.7.4 Issues addressed by student structures that bring them fulfilment.

Ability to fundraise for programmes

Stop the Spot was proud to share that it managed to host an event on mental illness and helped many students without any funding from the university or the SRC. The structure claims to have had fundraising strategies and that they make their own contributions to ensure success in the endeavours of the structure.

“What was even more significant is the fact that such an event was fully funded by the organisation, meaning that it was organised and hosted without any funding from the University’s SRC, we managed to fund the event through our fundraising drives and members’ contributions”, said Stop the Spot.

Successful events and campaigns

Aphrodite Global prides itself in having ran a social media campaign against rape, having co-hosted the entrepreneurship exhibition with Enactus. BMF also prides itself in having part-taken in organizing a four days long big event hand in hand with other structures under community engagement, the event sought to address social injustice. Enactus is proud of having cleaned a stream of polluted water in Thohoyandou Unit C which made it possible for the community to access clean water.

Stop the spot has also dealt with a serious tribalism case that was a bother for students who attended at Makwarela TVET. AIME prides itself in having conducted the sanitary pads campaign and donated to female students in a rural based University. This place show that the structures have succeeded in one or more than two projects and passionate about bringing about the change they want to see in the community. The structure also assisted with certain entrepreneurship projects by providing a platform for students to sell their products.

AIME added, “The event was successful and all involved stakeholders expressed their satisfaction”.

Aphrodite additionally commented, “Another achievement is that the organisation managed to submit NPO registration documents to the Department of Social Development”.

The structures take pride in making impact and positive contribution within the university and surrounding communities. Looking at what fulfils them, I am convinced that they have good intentions and with the provision of necessary resources and support they can do much better than they have done thus far.

4.7.5 Challenges confronting structures fighting against social injustice.

Lack of funding

As per the findings on this matter Enactus amongst other structures here sheds light and sadness as they explain how COVID-19 affected their fundraising success. It said, “These businesses are essential to our organisations as they are part of our fundraising strategies”. The lack of funding for Enactus seems to be a block for higher participation and also a hindrance to success. This on its own emphasises the need for financial support from the University as an institution. The structure was not even able to communicate since beginning of lockdown started. Would it have been better had the students had laptops and enough data to have their mission achieved even during a global pandemic. It sure would have made a difference!

Aphrodite Global lists, moreover, lack of funding as one of their challenges. BMF dishes out its challenges as being excluded from budgetary meetings between the SRC and management; this is the most emphasized issue from all the structures. Lack of funding and mental health support is also an issue of the structure.

One respondent from Aphrodite global said, “We have also been hit hard by lack of financial support to run some of our programmes and sustain our organisation”. Looking at the data, the structures mention lack of financial support throughout their responses

which an indication that this could be a leading challenge for them as structures under community engagement.

Fear of management and consequences from those in power

Stop the Spot mentions fear of suspension as one of the challenges, conflict of interest and lack of confidentiality. The structure commented, “conflict of interest amongst members as others are puppets of the management and lack of confidentiality within the structure are primary challenges that we are faced with”.

Aphrodite has reported attacks for the course of social justice and cyber-bullying. This information was expressed like this: “Some of the activists from our organization have faced violence in campus (University of Venda), some have reported that they have been cyberbullied and threatened while carrying out the mandate of the organisation on social media networks such as Twitter and Facebook”.

As stipulated by BMF, “Students who do small informal businesses in campus are intimidated by the management as the university requires them to have certification, which I believe as organisations we should be able to provide them with. This tempers with the promotion of social entrepreneurship on campus”.

Dlamini (2018) submits that universities need to seek comprehension of why some students never finish their studies timeously. He further argues that their affairs must be fair socially so to make sure that the benefits of higher education are shared fairly within the respective communities, to be precise amongst those who were disadvantaged historically. Scholars further argue that for as long as the construction of students as disadvantaged and deficient is accepted, HEIs will present failure in offering them linguistic, pedagogical and cultural resources necessary to learn the distinct knowledge making practices of professional and disciplinary fields. (Lockett, K., Summary of Boughey & McKenna, 2021).

Lack of support from fellow students and differences amongst members.

AIME amongst the other structures only mentioned conflict within the structure due to varying perspectives and conflict of interest. Aphrodite as a structure further reports reluctance of men to join the GBV, men are pivotal partakers of fighting GBV as one has to become the change they want to see if they want to change the world. The number of individuals registered under these structures on its own is an indication of lack of support from fellow students, the same way the whole given number of active student related community engagement structures is giving that only a small number of students take interest in community engagement student-related programs.

BMF expressed, “In some instances, we get to a point of solving a problem but also stepping on the toes of other students or members because as members we do not always see eye to eye”. Nothing is said in the reviewed literature regarding support from general students and the relationship dynamics of student volunteers in general.

Lack of moral support from the University and management.

A respondent from Aphrodite expressed how their working environment as a structure is somehow demotivating as they feel unappreciated or unwelcome at times. The university is doing the structure no favour as they seem to overlook serious issues such as GBV and rape within the campus as reported by the structure. This can never in a million years be a recipe for success from the side of the university as problems acknowledged are the only problems that can be fixed. If the University is turning a blind eye to such issues, then the university is not for social justice in action but only in theory. Students cheering university access programmes are not at the centre of the practices of the universities which further delinks ecojustice and social justice, (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012).

“The management and staff are apologetic when it comes to dealing with the issues of rape and GBV in campus” said one respondent from Aphrodite. This statement raises eyebrows as to what the management and staff are doing mitigates social injustice or fuels it rather? The fact that the practices of universities are still contributing to social injustice status quo is a hard to digest pill, (Lockett, Summary of Boughey & McKenna, 2021). Themane (2021) raised an argument that the shape, size and agenda of the

current education system is not pushed by pursuing decolonization and social justice, but rather on flippancy markets that are political and political pursuits, (Themane, 2021).

4.7.6 Possible support for structures fighting against social injustice.

Structural Independence

The researcher discovered that the structures interviewed mainly indicated independence from the Students' Representative Council (SRC) as a possible measure that can be used to support them and ensure activity.

A respondent from Stop the Spot stated: "For instance, we fail to host some of our planned events because SRC members did not sign our requisition letters due to SRC members being unavailable. SRC signatory members give us problems when they do not sign our documents because we would have refused that they be hands-on on the financial operations of the planned events".

The structures further emphasised that they should be included in the University's yearly budgetary plans. Enactus also expressed its dire need to be afforded a space on campus to carry out their businesses even during lockdown as long as lockdown measures would be properly adhered to.

BMF as a structure, expressed a need to be afforded "... a leadership seminar for at least three days every year..." where they can learn about leadership skills, how to make connections and maintain relations, etcetera.

According to van Eeden, Eloff and Dippenaar (2021), in response to the agenda of the policy of post-apartheid meant for higher learning in South Africa, the introduction of service learning was applied for the creation of the sense of responsibility for the community in higher learning institutions students as a measure for the acknowledgement of education as a good of the public and dealing with apartheid inequities. Mtawa and Nkomo (2020) elucidated that students' social values that are critical and developed citizenship are achieved through service-learning.

Financial injection

According to the provided data, students are only asking for the minimal when it comes to support from the management. These structures being the populace behind social injustice mitigation they sure deserve funds to carry out their tasks. The need to be recognized for the impeccable work as they help the University maintain healthy standards and meet up with the expectations of the Higher Education Sector. Student-related community engagements should be included in the university's annual strategic planning and budgeting.

“The university should create a cohort budget for the student-related NPOs so that those organisations can have money to operate because community engagement work done by student-related organisations also promotes the name of the university and attract sponsors for the university”, said a respondent from AIME.

Another from Aphrodite Global said “On the issue of funding, I would say we keep on applying for available funds in a form of sponsors and donors and also contribute as members of the organization on a voluntarily basis”.

What the students are saying is that it is impossible to function as structures without financial injection. The literature is in agreement with this finding because scholars indicated that volunteers often encounter challenges mobilising resources to carry out a mission. Even though their institutions in many cases invest very little or non-finance resources to their efforts, they tend to hijack and claim their successes (Wang & Yu, 2015; Zulhaimi, Abd Halim & Ahmed, 2018).

Necessary support from the University management.

The researcher foresees an increase in the number of participations should the structures be formally recognised and funded. Here the benefits of part-taking in this great fight should be rewarded enough because it does the University better. The researcher should not forget that recommendation letters, experience and exposure should not be the only

things students benefit from doing such a great thing, they deserve to be seen through in the endeavours to mitigate social injustice for both the sake of the surrounding communities and the University of Venda community. Blignaut and Koopman (2020) submit an argument that teachers cannot turn a blind eye to issues of education level social injustices as they are prevalent role-players in curriculum enactment. The scholars put an emphasis on the fact that failure of teachers to be intentional about addressing social injustice will result in a production of students that perpetuate inequalities, racism and stereotypes therefore promoting the social order made of injustice and inequity, (Ngubane & Makua, 2021).

As expressed by AIME “It is our common view that the university needs to take student organisations which fight for social justice very seriously and must be involved on the curriculum planning and also on the transformation planning”.

Aphrodite Global contributed, “we have been working hard to reach out to the Univen student community and loggerheads on robust debates, dialogues and awareness campaigns against GBV”.

Doberneck *et al* (2017) unveil an approach where Michigan State University introduced a competency-based postgraduate certification in Community Engagement as a way to address the professional development of students who aspire to be community-engaged. According to Bhagwan (2017), the initiation of engagement as a community in South Africa has redirected higher learning institutions towards civic engagement which creates more democratic and socially just systems. The structures are doing quite great outreaches according to this data. It clearly makes a great impact in promoting equality in the university and surrounding areas which is enough motivation to have it supported by management in all ways possible.

The challenge posed by an engaged higher learning institution to departments of academia is to reconsider their role of teaching for the creation of opportunities that are greater for the advancement of social responsibility and community engagement for students. The author provided an enlightenment of how new relationships are formed by community partnerships for academics and students and the importance of evolvment of a relationship between the community and the university, (Bhagwan, 2020). It is on this

background Grimm and Dietz (2018) emphasised that Community engagement and the general volunteerism paths are paved for by other social institutions such as schools, religion and families.

4.7.7 Discussion Summary of Study Findings

The role of the student-related community engagement structures in mitigating social injustices in a rural based university was investigated by the researcher. To fulfil the first objective which was to identify the profile of the student structures, the data furnishes the study with names of the structures, the years were founded, the number of members each structure has, the criterion used to join each structure and the benefits of being a member of each structure. This information makes it safe to say that the first objective was met. The second objective being the determination of the approaches that student structures use to mitigate the social injustices was also achieved as the students indicated in the data that they hosted seminars and have had to move to webinars due the covid-19 regulations limitations. The structures further indicated that they created opportunities for female students to part-take in leadership roles in the structures for the purposes of addressing gender imbalances. The structures mentioned how they use social entrepreneurship as an approach as well. To fulfil this objective the structures further provided information on the best measures used to mitigate social injustice and work that has been done that bring them fulfilment. The third objective which is the examination of challenges confronting student structures in mitigating social injustices was met as structures share their challenges amongst others being: lack of male participation in the structures, lack of financial support and lockdown regulations as limitations. The challenges are given in detail in the tables above and explained in discussion. The last objective: identification of possible measures in which the structures can be supported was met as the structures all share their needs from the university management, most of these needs arise from the challenges that make it difficult for them to perform at a high speed and make great impact. This study provided a valuable answer to what can help these students perform better in mitigating social injustices which would solve or reduce the rampant social injustice cases on campus. The recommendations given, pose a

positive impact on the state of things in the social justice mandate of the University as a whole.

The report of Council in Higher Education (2016) and the survey produced by Favish and Ngcwelane (2013) are in agreement with the data provided by respondents of the study in indication of the challenges below:

- Measures development for evaluation of community engagement quality.
- Lacking funds; (iii) competitiveness in priorities concerning workloads in academia.
- Difficulties in mind-sets transformation concerning community engagement as related to research, learning and teaching.
- Leadership (executive) shortfall when it comes to being supportive of community engagement, its potential and mandate

Thus, having analysed the data fully the researcher is convinced that the data provided aligns with the data sourced from available literature. This means that the study is magnificent and reliable considering that it has also created room for further research, it can be said that the study delivered remarkable results and makes a necessary contribution to literature.

4.8. Further Discovery

Some structures point a finger at the management, the question that raises is “What is the role of the management in mitigation of social injustice” as that is not very clear and also the nature of offenses, they have had to protect students from when it comes to lecturers bullying students is not unpacked. This study profiled and figured out the approaches of the structures to mitigate social injustice, the challenges they face and possible measures that can be used to support the structures, but it does not give detail of the kind of social injustices dealt with it also does not consist of all community engagement structures but only those who volunteered to participate after being cordially

invited. Another loophole is that the study does not provide account of the victims of this social injustice being mitigated by the community engagement structures, nothing is heard from the people who have been rescued or protected or supported by the structures. Research on that would come in handy. Further discovered was that if the university can manage to provide the structures with the mentioned solutions in order for them to work at success, then they would be honouring the place-making theory alongside the social justice one as they were employed by the researcher for the same reason.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed, presented, and interpreted data on the approaches used by student volunteer structures to mitigate social injustices. This data analysis was done to probe primary information pertaining to student's approach to community engagement initiatives concerning social justice. The analysis was subdivided into 4 themes or Sections with thematic subheadings. Data analysed in Section A enabled the profiling of student volunteer structures involved social justice initiatives at the University of Venda. Analysis done on Section B relates to the approaches harnessed by the student volunteer structures, Section C presented data about the challenges while Section D sought to identify support measures for the structures. The presentation of data is in line with the study objectives. The following chapter provides a substantial description of the finding's summary, evaluation, implications, limitation, and recommended action by the researcher.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the evaluation of the study, its implications, limitations and the recommendations which are outlined according to the set objectives. The researcher discussed whether the objectives of the study were achieved; the extent to which the study supplements available literature and whether it is a new study of its nature and whether the study adds to the body of knowledge. The researcher unveiled information that could help design University policies through findings and implications. Furthermore, the current study made recommendations on funding, leadership commitment, capacity building, resources, univen students and management support as well as areas for future research. These recommendations were informed by the findings of this study.

The researcher sought to solve the problem pertaining to the increment in social injustices reported by previous studies in the University. Moreover, the researcher is familiar with

the knowledge of community engagement and its student-related structures and further sought to investigate the role of these student-related community engagement structures in mitigating social injustices. The data provides answers to all the research questions and makes available possible measures with which they can be supported. Amongst these measures, financial support; recognition as structures, platforms to perform their duties as structures and support from general students are mentioned as key of findings. The results assist with an impactful solution to the global pandemic of social injustice that is tormenting the rural based University of Venda.

5.2 Evaluation of Findings

The results indicated that all the objectives of the study were attained. A number of students' volunteer structures have mobilised to address some of the social injustices in practice within the University. Lack of proper documentation could explain that there is yet ample attention on these structures even though they have demonstrated prominence in solving societal issues through community engagement. These gaps stressed the need for this study which sought to profile these structures, provide understanding of the nature of social injustice they are involved in, examine the approaches used, distil their challenges and suggest possible measures that could help them thrive in their endeavours. The findings of this study made a provision of pointers of what is necessary to support the structures. This made the study significant as it provides a clear indication of where the University management can begin with pushing the social justice mandate, what changes they need to make and what further contribution they can make to ensure a less socially unjust environment for its students.

The current study's findings provide some knowledge that is not yet encompassed in the literature that was reviewed. Students do fight against social injustices in other universities in different ways but there is limited information on community engagement structures and their role in social injustice mitigation. This is the first study in the South African context that brings about information that can empower community engagement through student structures under it. The current study findings unveiled a gap in

knowledge concerning the role of the general student community in mitigating social injustice. This further demonstrates a need for a study investigating the role of the university in mitigating social injustice as there is no study documenting this important information. The suggested study has the possibility to address matters from the point of standing of the management and it be known what the management needs as supportive possible measures that could be used to tackle social injustice in all levels in university within the vicinity of the university.

Some of the findings of this study are aligned or have similarities with reviewed literature regarding the mitigation of social injustices world-wide, in the literature scholars present a need for financial support of student structures (community engagement) and or volunteerism in order to address social issues within the university environment and the structures also mention this in confirmation of provided literature review. As said, the results do present data that is scarce in the literature review such as the approaches used by students to mitigate social injustice. Noteworthy is the fact that there are no studies at all that shed information on the community engagement structures of the University of Venda. The reviewed literature presented students who mitigate social injustices through riots (marches) whereas the data generated from the study's respondents furnishes us with other unique or undocumented ways of mitigating social injustices. The respondents mainly reported that seminars and webinars in the case of lockdown regulations have been used to raise awareness and offer knowledge regarding social justice to general students through presentations and artistic performances electronically. In this case students further reach out to institutions of lower learning (secondary schools) to share knowledge and make impact regarding matters that are a result of social injustice.

The assumptions of the study, one being that understanding the role of the student-related community engagement structures (strengths and weaknesses) will provide room for support and improvement is satisfied because the findings of the study made it possible for the researcher to know exactly what can be done to better the mission of social injustice mitigation. The results indeed provide room for support and improvement and more so in detail. The other assumption was that the student structures are a pivotal part of the University's way of fostering social responsibility. Indeed, it is so, the students

are doing the most that help put the University in good books of social responsibility and the structures do not only cater to the University but surrounding communities as well. The researcher is satisfied with having reached the objectives in their entirety and is grateful for the methodology she chose as it proved its relevance by producing the results intended to be realized by the researcher. The findings of this study are fundamental as they are a catalyst to betterment of the University and pave a way for the University to start supporting CE and its structures at their exact point of need to the subtraction of assumptions. Even though the study was focused on the University of Venda, the findings of this study are transferrable to other institutions of higher learning that share similar profiles within the country and beyond to mitigate student-related social injustice.

5.3 Implications

Noteworthy is the fact that the findings imply that the management has not been doing enough to support the community engagement structures or the community department as a whole and that the management in its negative behavioural tolerances with its staff is a cause of the social injustice on campus as well. Further implication of the findings is that motivation is needed to increase participation in the community engagement structures, and that students participating in these structures earn more than university degrees after their graduations. They earn emotional intelligence (empathy) and compassion which are the highest form of intelligence according to my perspective.

Another unveiled implication is the University not playing its role in ensuring social justice by not vilifying staff members that act against the intents of making the University a safe space for students and retaining such staff members. Should the staff members and all stakeholders of the University be intentional about pursuing social justice and not only for themselves but for students too, the University would be a better place to live, learn and teach in. The findings of this study revealed that the respondents are plan-driven, goal-directed, and purposeful i.e., the findings of this study revealed that student volunteers participate in voluntary programmes for the purposes of satisfying personal and organisational goals. Profiling youth engagement and participation in voluntary activities

in the University of Venda is important as this informs the stakeholders of the stance of prevalent matters in the university therefore making room for necessary intervention.

Furthermore, it can be drawn from the study data that different student volunteer structures may do similar things or engage in similar programs with the intentions to mitigate social injustice but do it for different reasons and sometimes in different ways i.e. student volunteers volunteering under the same structure under the same program do so for differing reasons. Members of student volunteer structures grapple several challenges in the University of Venda, the worst one being not being recognized by the university's system as a pivotal part of its functions as if community engagement is not the third mission of the University accompanied by learning, research and teaching.

Given the generated new insight, what can be done differently is as the structures explain; structural recognition by management, financial support including incentives should be provided. Literature does state that incentives have been proven to maximize participation in extra-curricular activities from students. Methodology wise the findings of the study imply that the researcher chose a relevant research design being the exploratory-descriptive in nature. Purposive sampling helped generate data from experienced and pioneers of social justice which cannot be doubted as they are the only people who would know better who they are, how they mitigate social injustice, their challenges and possible support measures that can be used to support their mandate. The thematic analysis tool applied also succeeded in bringing about answers to the questions asked by study objectives and aim.

5.4 Study Limitations

The main limitation presented by this study is the fact that data was collected online and not in person since covid-19 lockdown regulations had to be adhered to. Another limitation stemming from this one is that the researcher was not able to read the body language of the respondents as the interview took place through chats and voice notes/calls. The

study was not broad enough to accommodate the side of the story of the victims and that of the university leadership as it did the student volunteers of the social justice. However, addressing the question of the side of the story of victims and university management was not part and parcel of this research. The last limitation of the study is the fact that out of all the community engagement structures which are more than 8, the researcher only managed to get voluntary participation from 5, this means that the findings could have been denser had more structures been interviewed and findings could have possibly posed a difference in the current outcome of this study. There is little literature reviewable based on student-related community engagement structures in university settings.

5.5 Conclusion

According to the literature as reviewed in the second chapter of the study many scholars emphasize the need for financial support for community engagement and its student structures as that is one limitation from the achievement of a more socially just environment within the vicinity of the University. The structures also indicated the lack of financial assistance from Univen as an institution at large as a challenge. The results are a key pointer as to what needs to be rectified or practiced in order to escalate the reality of a socially just environment for students. Lack of financial support means that the community engagement itself may have no budgetary plans for the structures which gives an implication that it may have been neglected by the University management. Community engagement is an African concept that needs to be harnessed especially in dealing with African social injustices. The literature review further singles out the adoption of western culture in African Universities as an issue, scholars submitted in this regard that the way in which our universities together with their missions are carried out is not always in alignment with the needs of Africans. There are thus suggestions of curriculum change by scholars so to rectify what seems to be the blunder of the system in adopting the hegemonic Eurocentric measures of achieving social justice or addressing social injustice. This will inevitably promote community engagement as an African concept of

dealing with matters in communities and the spirit of Ubuntu in an original and untainted form from the experience and perspectives of Africans. This would further encourage the execution instead of preaching of these concepts as the values of the University of Venda by the management for the good of the students. This finding urges the University to conduct an inquest as to which of their dealings need to change and align with African values for the sake of building the place in accordance with the needs of its students not western assumptions. The inarguable truth is that the desire to make it to the top of the rank of best Universities has indeed pushed most African Universities to competing with western Universities with their own measures or tricks disregarding that we are based in different areas and operate under different conditions. This move is equivalent to running a race with a person who is running on a different field and different time zones and thus unreasonable except for the purposes of maximizing profits. Voluntary programs have grown in numbers recently and they are mostly driven by both the private and the public sectors (through policies that advocate for social justice and mentorship from the private sector). Stepchild of higher education is what community engagement is known as to CE professionals; noteworthy is the fact that there are also related successful drivers of higher education. Student volunteer structures fighting social injustices are not seen as a solo project but as one with community engagement as it is the mother of all the programs. CE is a force with transforming powers and should be acknowledged for that. The current study has helped the researcher realise that general students need to also participate or support these community engagement structures when it comes to advocating for their wellness within the vicinity of the University. Students should not have to fight against management when they have enough fights with social injustices within the University. It really poses danger for students to confront management about lecturer bullying as students are bound to be afraid of falling at the wrong hands of the lecturers as that could mean unfairly repeating a module or worse. Aphrodite Global mentioned that the University is apologetic about a lot of things that it should be addressing such as the GBV and rape cases that keep on being reported every year. The university is then the enemy of students itself because if it can turn a blind eye to such dehumanizing crimes taking place in its environment then it presents a troublesome environment to innocent individuals who come to it to better their lives. The study unveiled a lot of issues that are

not spoken of enough because obviously nobody really wants to be in the bad books of management. Stop The Spot mentioned that the SRC members make it impossible for them to get funds for their events due to the fact that as a structure, they refuse to let such leadership loot money. Knowing that there are lootings in students' leadership such as the SRC also raises eyebrows and a need for a further study on the role of the management to prevent corruption within the University. Other than the already mentioned, it is recommended for the University of Venda to go towards dismantling social injustice with irrevocable intent. The University can manage change by being effective enough to adapt to that change. Should the institution master adapting to change, it will be ready and actionable to achieve organizational goals and objectives. The desire to adapt to change will help the University play a role in ensuring global competitiveness and making impact in the same global spaces for the betterment of the community at large. Service-learning as a feature that was introduced by scholars as promotive to social justice in the Higher Education Institutions poses a challenge of interpretation and application which obligates the lecturers and teachers to examine their usage of service-learning and conduct studies on how to present service-learning in a manner that will have positive impact on students' personal lives and social justice in the country as a unit. The university no matter how much advice it gets will not be effective in its responsibility to offer students a socially just learning environment if it does not for a moment move its focus from profiting but rather on what can better humanity not only in a financial way but in other ways that will be psychologically and emotionally fruitful for the society at large. The power and relevance of the University when it comes to making impact should resonate with its willingness to embrace change and work around it to achieve its institutional goals. The importance of change comes with adjusting higher education and institutional policies in order to remain relevant and making impact in every era of time. Higher Education Institutions including the University of Venda really struggle with hidden curriculum, curriculum that is discriminative of the minority groups and lack of indigenous knowledge systems in universities. The university of Venda indigenous knowledge systems degree was only introduced a few years ago with the intentions of amending the curriculum by prioritizing the massification of the area of knowledge within the university with hopes that the knowledge might be adopted by other universities.

Social injustice seems to be a never-ending problem as it is generally witnessed that the more time goes on it is the more desensitized people are becoming and some social injustices are already normalized by the system through the music, movies, shows broadcasted and Eurocentric books read by people. People are advised to play an active role in pioneering a socially just education environment because change begins within and what one person knows can be shared with many other thousands through love and compassion. The change I want to see must first begin in me so that there can be a larger number of people fighting for social justice even in times to come. The root causes of social injustice come from way back from apartheid era, for democracy laws were promulgated and enacted but they were not to be applied on people who are in equal positions, thus, being black and born in poor conditions on its own is a heavy burden that makes things extra-difficult for you even if you are currently not oppressed because some oppressions are systematic which is the reason why social injustice is not becoming a minor issue as time goes by, rather a normal nightmare. The reality of things is that the pandemic has also caused another drawback to the progress of social justice mitigation. Not all Universities were electronically equipped to resume studies online, thus a number of students especially those from rural areas and previously disadvantaged backgrounds suffered missing out on studies or struggles so much that they did progress to the following levels due to the internet connection problem that was only addressed after some time to find solutions to current problems that were resulted in by the corona virus regulations. With all that being said, social injustice can be crippled by intention and dedication from all stakeholders involved.

5.6 Study Recommendations

Having taken consideration of the outcome of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- ◆ **Further studies:** Studies to be explored to enhance this kind of knowledge should be related to figuring out how the student population perceive the role of the management in social injustice mitigation. According to the findings the detailed

approaches of the structures in mitigating social injustice are not furnished, thus further research could also be taken to close this gap. Contexts of other institutions can be studied and researched in order to find relevant measures for those institutions. Studies aimed at hearing the side of the story from the victims of social injustice that are supported, rescued and protected by these community engagement structures would be an increase to the body of knowledge that can be a catalyst to a pioneered world class University of Venda.

- ◆ **Community Engagement:** The management of CE should make sacrifices and allocate funds to all these structures in accordance to their needs. The CE can further award participants for the purposes of motivating performance. Participants from selected student volunteer structures under CE, as a barrier singled out lack of funding from the institution as a heavy barrier for their structures to fully function. Therefore, the CE as a department governing these structures must make it its mandate to advocate for the structures to the management. The scholars Goddard and Vallance (2011) further emphasize that where there are no sustainable funds, CE students are under limitations when it comes to volunteerism and reaching their goals. Lewin and Mawoyo (2014) also emphasized the importance of financial support in literature review.
- ◆ **Department of Higher Education and Training:** the sector should award CE participants for performance through the University or directly. Champions can be identified by singling out or awarding best performing structures as that would encourage performance for all the structures. This would further encourage Universities as organizations. This department can also further hold Universities who are either not implementing or applying policies that are promoting social justice accountable. This department is in charge of ensuring that inclusivity and access to democratic education are achieved, (Mpani & Nsibande, 2015).
- ◆ **Management Leadership:** Management has to recognize CE structures as legal structures and award them resources in their yearly budget as it does for the SRC. Furthermore, the management must work in harmony with the students and protect them against any social injustices perpetrated by staff members and deal with such transgressions harshly for the assurance of students' safety. The findings indicate

that students have reported maltreatment from the management and staff members (employees) of the University. Goddard & Vallance (2011) indicate that all members of the institution ranging from senior employees to general staff members must work together to bring about positive results to support student and CE endeavours. Goddard (2018) opines on how every part of management from top to the bottom is an influence on the successful implementation of the said strategic plans. Thus, to mitigate social injustice management should be involved in the community engagement activities and commit themselves to offering community engagement and their structures the necessary support needed to sustain their work and contributions to ensuring that the university is a safe space for students.

- ◆ **To Policy Makers:** The current university governing policies should be amended in favour of the student-related community engagement structures and community engagement at large. Any policy in the sector of Higher Education and the University of Venda as institutions must capacitate the student-related community engagement structures to take on the responsibility to fight against social injustice with coded support from the University management. Aphrodite Global mentioned the need for policy change in favour of the CE structures in their discussion. The affairs of students' movement have to showcase itself contending with the matters of access, development of students and success. All these must be reflected in its policies, services and programmes. (MacMaster, 2015).
- ◆ **University of Venda Students:** students must pay attention and demonstrate interest in matters that affect them in support of the student-related community engagement structures. One respondent from Aphrodite global mentioned that one of the challenges is the general students' lack of interest in the matters they are affected by and another responded, "Another challenge is that male students are still reluctant to form part in GBV campaigns". It is quite clear that interest from the part of general students will make a huge difference in social injustice mitigation according to collected data.
- ◆ **Community Engagement Structures:** the structures should continue exercising the spirit of ubuntu through altruism and not be discouraged by lack of finance and

support from management. The structures should look beyond the University to get the support they need as it is not guaranteed that the University will offer the needed support due to current recognized matters concerning the lack of support from the management. Aphrodite expressed the need to remain persistent in the endeavour to make the university and the world at large a better place through all the challenges faced by structures and I believe that is very important. The structures' performance should not be much dependant on support from any external study.

- ◆ **Curriculum Specialists:** curriculum specialists must act in assistive ways towards lecturers and help them incorporate new curriculum courses in an efficient way that is considerate of other academic responsibilities of other teachers and students. The service-learning courses introduced or advocated for by curriculum specialists must be for the purposes of dismantling systematic errors that hinder rapid progression when it comes to social injustice mitigation. This is in light of the literature advocating for service-learning to be incorporated in university curriculums.
- ◆ **The State:** the national governing body must rewrite its constitution to remove provisions that are not consistent with African realities as that is where some social injustice problems are rooted. Like many other problems social injustice too will only disappear and be a problem of the past if it is dealt with by destroying the root causes.

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ANNEXURE 1: UHDC APPROVAL



UHDC APPROVAL.pdf

ANNEXURE 2: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:

Ms LE Mtsweni

STUDENT NO:

11640862

PROJECT TITLE: **Community Engagement: an Approach for Mitigating Student-Related Social Injustice in a Rural based University in South Africa.**

ETHICAL CLEARANCE NO: SHSS/20/AS/07/0212

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Prof VO Netshandama	University of Venda	Supervisor
Adv. Dr PE Matshidze	University of Venda	Co - Supervisor
Ms LE Mtsweni	University of Venda	Investigator - Student

Type: **Masters Research**

Risk: **Risk to humans, animals, environment, or a sensitive research area**

Approval Period: **November 2020 - November 2022**

The Research Ethics Social Sciences Committee (RESSC) hereby approves your project as indicated above.

General Conditions

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following.

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
 - Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
 - Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
 - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the REC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date; a new application must be made to the REC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the REC retains the right to:
 - Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project,
 - To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
 - It becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
 - The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
 - New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary

ISSUED BY:

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Considered: September 2020

Name of the RESSC Chairperson of the Committee: Prof Takalani Mashau

Signature:



UNIVERSITY OF VENDA OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
2020 -17- 2
Private Bag X5050 Thohoyandou 0950

ANNEXURE3: STUDY CONSENT FORM

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Mtsweni Lungile Ennie, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: SHSS/20/AS/07/0212.
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (*Participant Letter of Information*) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature
I,

(*L. E. Mtsweni*) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully

Informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher

Mtsweni, Lungile Ennie

.....

Date.....

Signature.....

Full Name of Witness (If applicable)

.....

Date Signature.....

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)

.....

Date.....

Signature.....

ANNEXURE4: DATA COLLECTION TOOL

This data collection tool seeks to gather primary information pertaining to Social justice approach to student community engagement initiatives. In this, there is section A, B, C and D. Questions in section A will enable the profiling of student volunteer structures involved social justice initiatives at the University of Venda. Section B relates to the approaches harnessed; Section C is about the challenges while Section D seeks to identify support measures for the structures. Please, kindly complete the questions below.

Section A: Profile of student volunteer structures mitigating social injustice

1. Name of the student volunteer:

2. Year founded _____
3. Size of the volunteer group:

4. Composition of the group _____
5. Membership criteria _____
6. Mission of the group _____
7. Specific targets of the group _____
8. Essential benefits _____

Section B: Approaches student Volunteer structures use to fight social injustice

9. In an attempt to eradicate social injustice within your stream, what have you done?

10. What would you say were the best measures you have used to handle and successfully address issues under your cover?

11. What were some of the issues you have addressed so far that bring the feeling of fulfilment?

Section C: Challenges confronting student volunteer structures fighting against social injustice

12. Kindly mention the most threatening challenges you have confronted in the process of fighting against social injustices confronting students.

Section D: Possible measures of supporting student volunteer structures fighting against social injustice

13. In line with each challenge mentioned above, what would you suggest could be the solution? Also indicate what you believe should be prioritized.
