



On the hegemony of International Knowledge in Tier 1 high-impact literature: A meta-study of citations in *Indilinga* (2008-2017)

Petro du Preez

School of Professional Studies in Education, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa
petro.dupreez@nwu.ac.za
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9100-6461>

Labby Ramrathan

School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa
RAMRATHANP@ukzn.ac.za
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9963-0675>

Lesley le Grange

Department of Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa
llg@sun.ac.za
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7096-3609>

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Abstract

In this article we problematize the hegemony of what we are choosing to call International Knowledge, as opposed to (South) African Knowledge, as it appears in articles and essays by International¹ authors in high-impact journals. We eschew the term Global North in the light of rising debates about decolonisation and forms of cognitive colonisation. Knowledge is foregrounded in our focus on academic publishing and curriculum. We seek to explore the extent to which articles published in *Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems* have referenced (South) African scholars. We go on to provide some explanation of why there is still a dominant reliance on International Knowledge for the scholarship published in this journal. We employed a realist interpretivist meta-study design and we selected a sample of 246 articles published in *Indilinga* between 2008 and 2017. We analysed the reference lists of these articles to determine the ratio between South African, African,² and International authors cited, and we determined the institutional affiliation of the authors as part of this study. We also analysed keywords that featured predominantly and that were aligned to the title of the journal. It was clear that International authors were cited most frequently in *Indilinga*.

Keywords: academic publishing, Africa, decolonisation, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, meta-study

¹ Our use of capital letters for these terms here and throughout this article is intentional. We seek to create terms that reflect our attempt to decolonise the knowledges that have long held sway in (South) Africa.

² African, in this context, refers to African countries apart from South Africa.

Introduction

The complexity of the production of knowledge, its value and currency, and who determines what knowledge is worth most is part of the historically ingrained contestations about the notion of knowledge around the globe. In South Africa and, indeed, in Africa, the issue of decoloniality simmers under the surface with several attempts having been made to decentre International Knowledge systems in favour of indigenous ones. We ask why Indigenous Knowledge Systems³ have not taken a firm hold yet despite the substantive efforts that have been made to promote, sustain, and centralise such ways of knowing. In this article we explore why Indigenous Knowledge remains at the margins despite the opportunities that are in place to promote and sustain such knowledge systems. Through a meta-analysis of a journal, *Indilinga*, that has the specific aim of promoting Indigenous Knowledge, we attempt to explore why it has not yet been able to uphold its aim despite being in existence for more than a decade and a half. This meta-analysis seeks to answer the following research question: To what extent are (South) African scholars referenced in articles published in *Indilinga*, a journal focused on Indigenous Knowledge, and which topics feature most prominently in the references? In responding to this central research question, we explore, through the meta-study, who has published in *Indilinga* and who is referenced in the articles published in this journal since its inception. Through this exploration we examine possible reasons why (South) African authors continue to rely on International Knowledge for their scholarship.

Coloniality and decoloniality: Where are we in the debates in (South) Africa?

Decolonisation is not the subject of a uniquely South African conversation and is not a new one. Decolonisation has several meanings; generally, the term refers to the undoing of colonisation through the removal of colonial governance at the point when colonised peoples attain independence. However, this does not mean that coloniality disappears. Quijano (2007) has pointed out that after nations achieve independence, the colonial matrix of power remains. This matrix relates to the regulation of the economy, authority (who controls institutions), knowledge, and identity. A critical awareness of, and resistance to, coloniality is what decoloniality is all about. In other words, decoloniality is an analytic of coloniality. Much earlier, others had a similar sense to that of Quijano's (2007) notion of coloniality such as Nkrumah (1965) who coined the term neo-colonialism. Yet others, such as Smith (1999) and Chilisa (2012) do not see decolonisation as circumscribed by the removal of colonial governance but as a broader process whereby colonised peoples correct the deficit ways in which they have come to be defined, seek self-determination, discover and recover their Indigenous Knowledges and sense of self, mourn the pain inflicted upon them by colonisation, and so forth. Fanon (1967) made the important point that there can be no decolonisation without individual liberation. In other words, decolonisation requires both the removal of the colonial state and the (self-)liberation of the individual.

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In the same spirit of decolonisation, we use capital letters for this term throughout.

However, the modern nation state (including newly independent states) came under threat in the latter part of the 21st century because of the ascendancy of neoliberalism that resulted in the erosion of the welfare state. As le Grange (2006) has noted, the neoliberal state's role was no longer that of provider but that of regulator and monitor. Moreover, capitalism has morphed into what Guattari (2001) has termed "integrated world capitalism" (p. 3) to which we commonly refer as globalisation. Twentieth- and twenty-first-century globalisation has further weakened the nation state and has witnessed new forms of governance through supranational organisations of all kinds such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, rating agencies, Group of seven countries (G7), Group of eight countries (G8), Group of twenty countries (G20), and so on. The compression of time and space through the mass media and new technologies such as the internet have resulted in the relatively free flow of information around the globe at a rapid pace. We are also seeing the world economy being controlled by a small group of people—the super-rich—and the growth of economic inequalities in the world (see Piketty, 2014). These developments, associated with modern globalisation, are important because they add complexity to the colonial matrix of power—they result in further domestication, homogenisation, and normalisation of the self—and to the regulation of the production of knowledge through processes of research and publication. We suggest that globalisation has brought about new forms of colonisation.

For the purposes of this article we foreground knowledge while acknowledging that knowledge cannot be separated from being and ethics and that knowledge is always imbricated with politics, economy, and identity. Given our privileging of knowledge our emphasis in this article is on cognitive colonisation, a subset of the colonial matrix of power and one that relates to the regulation of knowledge by Western powers in nation states (former colonies) after independence and to new forms of regulating knowledge in a contemporary globalised world in an era of academic capitalism.

Following first generation colonisation (the colonisation of the land and bodies of the colonised), the colonisation of the minds of colonised peoples took place through schooling that was introduced in colonies by the colonisers. When universities were first established in South Africa, they were the preserve, largely, of descendants of the colonisers and were based on European models of academic organisation. Even when university education was extended to oppressed peoples in the second half of the twentieth century, the academic organisation of all South African universities remained modelled on that of European ones. This resulted in what has become known and revered as Western knowledge being privileged in South African universities and Indigenous Knowledges denigrated and relegated to the margins. Furthermore, the European bias in the post-apartheid university curriculum has been laid bare by the student protests of 2015 and 2016; in the wake of these protests universities across the country are examining critically their curriculum offerings.

Cognitive colonisation has had several effects but here we discuss just two. First, colonised school and university education resulted in dependence (on the part of South Africans) on scholarly work produced mostly in Europe. Currently, South African academics continue to rely largely on International scholarly work produced outside of Africa, for the most part, as

evidenced by, for example, citations found in publications produced by South African authors. We have no quarrel with International Knowledge per se, but with its dominance; we take issue with the Eurocentrism entrenched in it. Our position is that International Knowledge should not be destroyed but decentred so that it becomes one way of knowing, not *the* way of knowing. Second, new forms of cognitive colonisation associated with globalisation are thwarting the agency of academics in the sense that their academic freedom is being curtailed. Academic publishing is no longer simply regulated by academics (although editors and peers might be academics) but remotely controlled by private companies who generate huge profits in what has become known as a global academic publishing industry forming part of the knowledge economy. For example, publication databases such as the Web of Science is owned by Thompson Reuters, a multi-billion US dollar private company, and Scopus by Elsevier Reeds that has a turn-over of billions of rands (for more detail, see le Grange, 2009). Journals listed in these international databases are privileged by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa and viewed as being of better quality than local South African journals. As a consequence, there is very little incentive for South African academics to establish, and publish in, local journals, particularly those promoting Indigenous Knowledge Systems, despite the importance of doing so. Western knowledge can and should be positioned as only one way of knowing so that the dignity and identities of indigenous peoples can be restored. Moreover, what is published in peer-viewed academic journals has a profound influence on the public's understanding of science⁴ and what therefore gets included and/or excluded in school and university curricula. This is so because the knowledge that gets privileged in society will also get privileged in these curricula.

One South African journal that has taken up the challenge of promoting Indigenous Knowledge is *Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*. The journal was established in 2002 when there was much hype about an African Renaissance in South Africa, inspired by the famous speech of former president, Thabo Mbeki, "I am an African." Although a South African journal, it was established to serve as an international forum for sharing research on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Through the journal, "a forum is created for African scholars, analysts and activists in IKS to participate on an equal footing with their contemporaries world-wide in debates, exchange of ideas and the creation and documentation of knowledge."⁵

In this article we explore the extent to which *Indilinga* has been successful in producing research that breaks with the dependence on International Knowledge and scholarship. We report on only one aspect of a meta-study that analyses different aspects of the articles published in the journal, including the methodologies and theories used. Here, we focus on the literature on which the journal's authors drew, and, more specifically, whom they cited so that we can ascertain the extent to which there is still a reliance of International Knowledge. It would, of course, be expected of authors to draw on some of this literature but we were

⁴ We use science here in a broad sense so that it is not restricted to the natural sciences.

⁵ <http://www.indilinga.org.za/>

interested in seeing whether *Indilinga* has been able to break with the strong dependence of South African journals on such literature. The analysis we report in this article is significant, potentially, in informing scholarship in the current decolonial moment given that the journal's establishment was inspired by an earlier decolonial moment—the birth of the African Renaissance movement. We point to the success and shortcomings of the journal in terms of its mission and our findings could provide *Indilinga* and other South African journals with useful insights. The focus on a survey of citations produced by authors in this article has one limitation in that citing an International author does not necessarily mean dependence on that author's work. It could mean that the African scholar, for example, is critiquing the work of this scholar. However, this detailed level of analysis is not part of this article.

The realist interpretivist meta-study design

Following du Preez & Simmonds (2014) the research methodology that we employed in this study is a quantitative meta-study framed by the realist interpretivist paradigm (see Schnelker, 2006) that begins with the assumption that social reality exists independent of perceptions about it and, in this sense, is seen as a refinement of postpositivism. Ontologically realist interpretivism differs from postpositivism based on “assumptions regarding the extent to which phenomena of interest can be fragmented into parts” (Schnelker, 2006, p. 44). Realist interpretivists maintain that social reality is complex and needs to be studied in its natural setting (context). They argue further that theory is best created when complex data sets are viewed in a particular context. Instead of theory being derived from propositions and hypotheses, as is the case with postpositivism, theory according to realist interpretivists is made by theory itself. Methodologically, this paradigm requires flexibility of researchers in their being able to respond to phenomena as they emerge from a natural setting. Data generation and analysis should, therefore, be holistically and interactively approached.

In accordance with the realist interpretivist paradigm's assumptions, a meta-study enables researchers to tailor methods of sampling, data generation, and analysis that are based on the review questions posed (see Pope, Mays, & Popay, 2007). The review questions emanate from the theory and not from predetermined propositions and hypotheses. Each meta-study will therefore differ from the next. Important starting points for designing and conducting a meta-study include questions such as those raised by Paterson, Thorne, Canam, and Jillings, (2001), and by Pope et al., (2007).

- What is the purpose of the meta-study? Is it to contribute to knowledge development in the field, or for policy decision-making processes? Is it to synthesise findings, or to determine trends in a particular cluster of studies?
- What needs to be analysed and synthesised through the meta-study, and why? Is it the theories, methods and/or findings? What is anticipated through the meta-study?

The purpose of this meta-study was to determine trends in a particular cluster of studies as the latter occurs in its natural setting. More specifically, the reference lists of 246 articles (N_0) in the journal *Indilinga* between 2008 and 2017 were analysed to determine certain trends in terms of which authors are referenced and which keywords authors use most frequently in their reference lists. Of the 7,251 (N_1) references in the 246 articles, a sample of 30% ($N_2 = 2,211$) was randomly selected (every third reference was selected) to be analysed. Of the 246 articles (N_0), a sample of 217 (n_3) were analysed to determine the frequency with which African, South African, and International authors wrote in the journal during the years under consideration. This sample was deemed sufficient to ensure data saturation and external validity since it is representative of all the articles published in the defined period and allows for generalisation based on the research aims (see Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013; Fox, Hunn, & Mathers, 2009). The data was analysed using descriptive statistical methods.

The journal *Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems* is the context (natural setting and population) in which this meta-study was conducted. *Indilinga* stands for the “circular orientation”⁶ of indigenous African communities that is exhibited in their material culture and behaviour. The journal arose because of the need for a dependable expression of critical and analytical writing on issues related to the recognition of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and their production and dissemination. It is a cross-disciplinary journal, specifically interested in qualitative research designs, that aims to unite scholars and thinkers to promote, analyse, critique, and preserve Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Disciplines often covered in this journal are agriculture and environmental studies, education, tourism, medicine, psychology, archaeology, and language studies.

Figure 1 below provides a schematic representation of this meta-study. Hitherto, this is how the context (Level 1) was sketched regarding the theoretical background and methodological positioning.

⁶ <http://www.indilinga.org.za/>

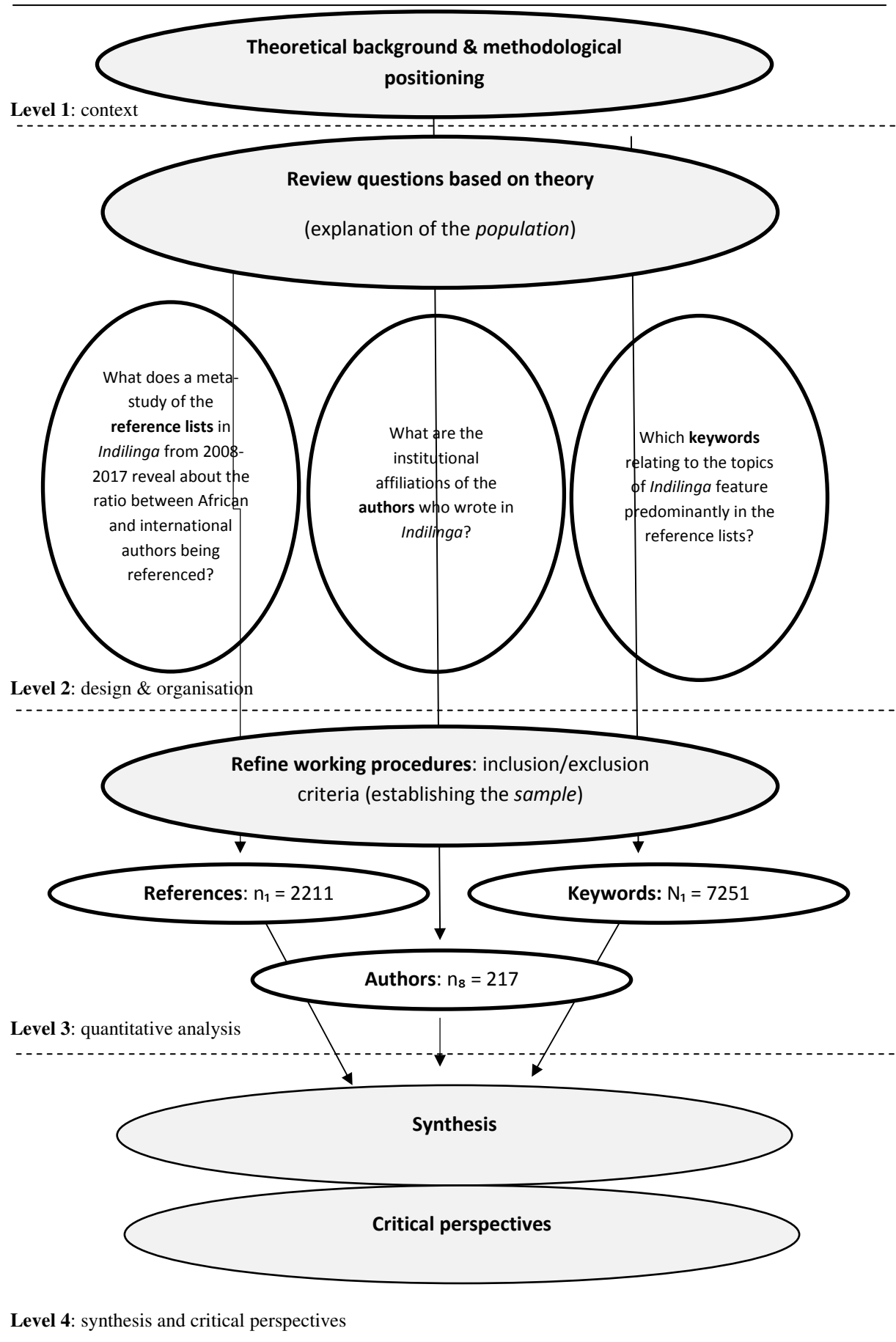


Figure 1: A schematic representation of the meta-study process

Level 2: Design & organisation

Based on the theory and the selection of the population (*Indilinga* authors), three review questions were formulated: (i) What does a meta-study of the reference lists in *Indilinga* from 2008 to 2017 reveal about the ratio between African, South African, and International authors being referenced? (ii) What are the institutional affiliations of the authors who wrote in *Indilinga*? and (iii) Which keywords related to the main topic of *Indilinga* (Indigenous Knowledge Systems) feature predominantly in the reference lists?

Regarding the first question a distinction was made between African authors, both local and international (n_2); South African authors, all races, except for Africans (n_3); and International authors, excluding Africans (n_4). These represented the inclusion criteria. These criteria were arrived at to determine the ratio between African, South African, and International authors being referenced.

The second question was posed to determine the institutional affiliation of the authors who wrote in *Indilinga* in order to establish whether they are South African, African, or International. Only the first authors were included. The citizenship of the authors was not taken into account; what was important was to establish from whence the new knowledge published in the journal emanated.

The third review question entailed an analysis of all terminology emanating from the reference lists that related to the journal's mission. The following keywords were identified:

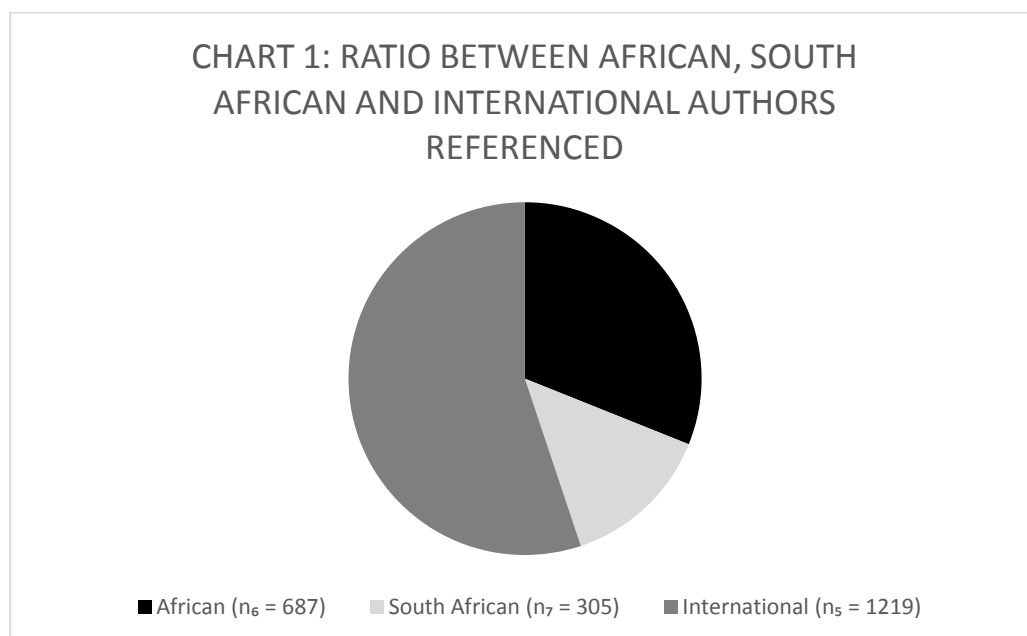
- African(s): Africa, Africanist, Africaine(s), Africana, Africanus, Pan-Africanising
- South African(s): South Africa, Southern Africa(n), Sub-Saharan African, S. Africa and S_Africa
- Africanisation: (Re)-Africanizing, Africanising
- Indigenous Knowledge System(s): AIKS, Indigenous African knowledge system(s)
- Indigenous: indigenise(d), indigenising, indigenisation, indigenist, indigeneity
- Colonialisation: colonial era, coloniser, colonial rule, colonialists, coloniality
- Decolonisation: decolonising, decolonization, de-colonising, decoloniality, post-colonial, anti-colonial
- Global South

Level 3: Quantitative analysis

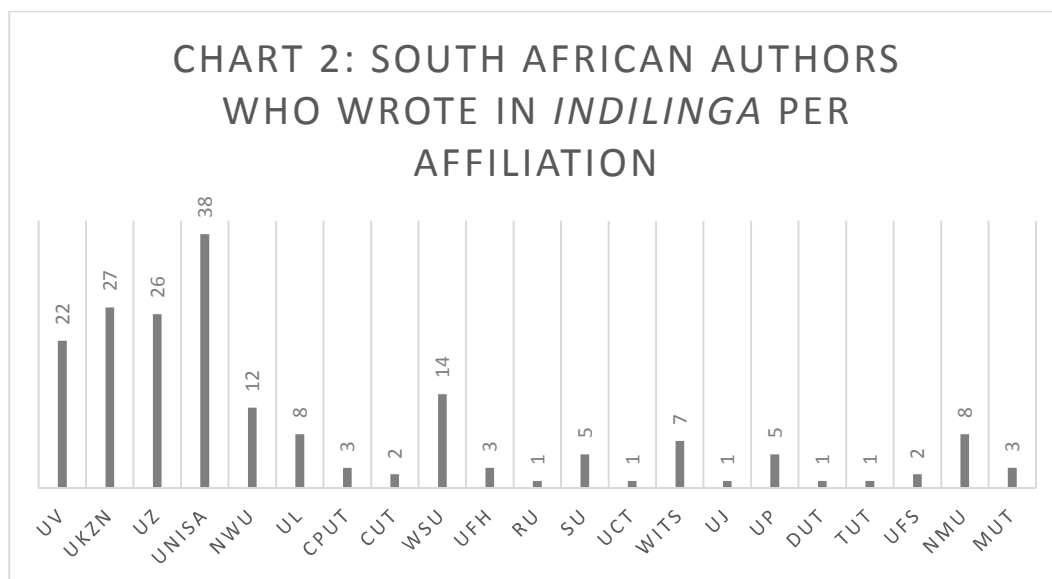
In the third phase of the analysis, the initial inclusion criteria were further refined to arrive at specific exclusion criteria. The initial inclusion and exclusion criteria are important since they direct a researcher in terms of which sample to select and which corpus of documents (reference lists) to work from (du Preez & Simmonds, 2014). As Pope et al. (2007) have made clear, this is extremely important for the reliability and trustworthiness of inferences made toward the end of a meta-study. As the study progressed, the following exclusion criteria were identified: no forewords, websites without authors, Holy Scriptures, national and international policy documents, book reviews, formal interview references, acts, and court

cases were taken into account during the analysis of the reference lists. With regard to the authors who wrote in *Indilinga*, it was deemed important not only to establish whether they were South African, African, or International, but also to determine from which institutions they came. The latter inclusion criterion gave a clearer perspective on who these authors were.

An analysis of 30% ($n_1 = 2,211$) of all the references ($N_1 = 7,251$) indicated that International authors are most frequently referenced ($n_5 = 1,219$), i.e. 55%. This is followed by African authors who are referenced 31% ($n_6 = 687$) and South Africans who are referenced 14% ($n_7 = 305$) of the time. An interesting observation is that of the 305 South Africans who have been referenced, 86 (28%) articles were by the same South African author, S. D. Edwards from the University of Zululand (Department of Psychology). The percentage of African and South African authors who are referenced is 45%. So, it is clear that International authors are predominantly referenced in *Indilinga*. The pie chart below provides a schematic breakdown of these statistics.

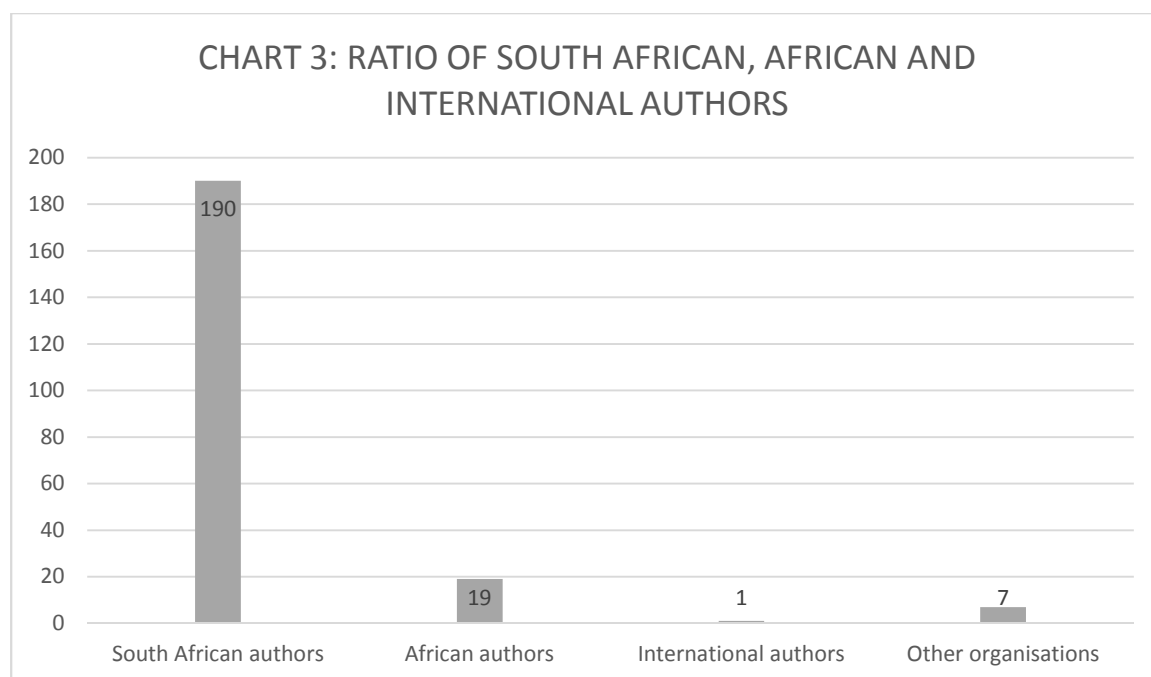


When the data about institutions represented by the authors who wrote in *Indilinga* was produced, the following was found.



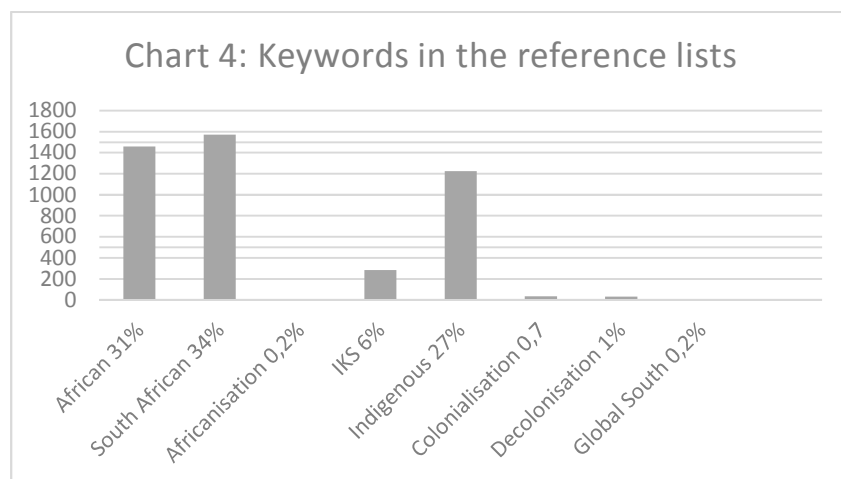
Of the 246 (N_0) articles that were published a sample of 217 (n_8) was selected. Again, no book reviews and forewords were included in the sample. From Chart 2 it is evident that most South African authors were affiliated with the University of South Africa (18%), followed by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (12%), and the University of Zululand (12%).

From the 217 (n_8) articles, 190 were written by South Africans (87.5%), 19 from other African countries (9%), and 1 by an International author (0.5%). The African authors came from Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Cameroon, Malawi, Namibia, Ghana, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe. Seven articles were written by representatives of various organisations outside the university (3%) such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (1), the World Conservation Union (1), Freedom Park (2), South African Wildlife College (1), a schoolteacher (1), and one by an independent curriculum consultant and researcher.



Before we discuss the keywords that featured most often in the reference lists, it is worth noting that although most of the authors in *Indilinga* are South Africans, the reference lists indicate that the majority of the authors referenced are International. In addition, *Indilinga* aims to provide an international platform for authors with an interest in Indigenous Knowledge Systems to engage with each other, but only 9% of the authors are affiliated with other African countries and 0.5% with international institutions.

The keywords identified featured 4,611 (n₉) times in the entire set of reference lists. The bar chart below provides a percentage breakdown of the keywords in the reference lists.



Based on the above it is clear that the keyword *South African* features most often, followed by the keywords *African* and *Indigenous*. It is interesting to note that *Indigenous Knowledge Systems* feature in only 6% of the references given that the name of the journal is *Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*. Also, *decolonisation* appears only 1% of the time even though this term has received a lot of attention recently in academia.

Level 4: Synthesis and critical perspectives

Taking cognisance of our theoretical framing of this paper based on our belief that dominant International Knowledge should be decentred, the findings are quite revealing and suggest that much more needs to be done to decolonise knowledge production and to advance Indigenous Knowledge production. Noting that *Indilinga* was conceptualised as a medium through which African scholars could reveal their indigenous scholarship and contribute to the emancipation of Indigenous Knowledge, the finding suggests that while the vast majority of authors of articles in this journal are South African, there is still a major reliance on International scholars to inform their scholarly works and we need to investigate some of the reasons for this. Since this is a meta-study of published materials and since articles published in *Indilinga* provided the source of empirical data, our explanation of these revealing findings is located in the broader discourses influencing higher education and in the on-going narratives that are informing the decolonisation and curriculum transformation debates. Drawing from those influencing higher education we explore how macro issues of institutional rankings and performativity, and institutional issues of recognition and

promotion have contributed to the continued reliance on International scholars despite the drive for more indigenous ways of knowing and Indigenous Knowledge. With respect to the narratives of decolonisation and curriculum transformation, we explore issues related to politics, capacity, and availability of exemplars, research, and critical literature centring these narratives in South Africa and, indeed, in the whole of Africa.

In trying to make sense of this finding we are reminded of how and why this journal, *Indilinga*, was established and therefore consider the shifts in the discourses of Africanisation and indigenisation as a further reflection on our findings. Noting that one of the specific aims of the journal was to provide a platform for African scholars to publish their work and that this journal was initially inspired, in part, by Thabo Mbeki with his focus on an African renaissance, this establishment of the journal could, perhaps, be seen to have constituted the first wave of the discourse on decolonisation in South Africa. Currently, a new wave has emerged—the student protest actions calling for the decolonisation of higher education that swept the country. This new wave has brought about renewed emphasis on decolonisation with a focus on the perennial curriculum-based question of what knowledge is worth most in the South African context. Drawing from this historical trajectory of the journal, a possible explanation of why International authors are cited predominantly in the published articles in *Indilinga* may have to do with the lead-in time necessary to integrate African scholars predominantly into the scholarship across the disciplines. In other words, more time is needed for a critical mass of African scholars who could be cited in articles published in this journal to emerge if the dominance of cited International authors is to shift materially. There are, however, other imperatives that influence the publishing of scholarly works by African, and indeed, South African authors as noted in this meta-analysis. We go on engage with some of these imperatives to show the complexity associated with reducing the dominance of International Knowledge and decentring it.

Related to the lead-in time to integrate the knowledge base of African (and South African) scholarship into the process of decentring International Knowledge and reducing its dominance is the notion of dependency. This dependency could be located in the globalisation of published works and the academic capitalisation of knowledge production and utility because people are pressured into publishing in international spaces either because of personal promotional aspirations and the desire for global recognition or the institutional imperatives of internationalisation, both of which we have already engaged with briefly as contributing to the explanation of the complexities surrounding the decentring of International Knowledge systems. Personal aspirations and global recognition feature in the promotion criteria of most institutions; these include a demand for academics to publish in International high ranking and high impact journals, thereby contributing to the capitalisation of the knowledge economy. To get their papers accepted in such journals, therefore, scholars are required to keep abreast of the International Knowledge systems and ways of knowing that embody, to a great extent, their knowledge of, and fluency in, the use of such literature related to their scholarship; these International Knowledges have become the benchmark of quality work. Hence, to move away from this notion of quality work is both a personal challenge and a conundrum for African (and South African) academics in relation to

recognition. The imperatives for the continued dependency on International scholarship are very strong and have personal aspirational implications regarding promotion and recognition. In addition to these, there are structural processes for personal rating grades, framed by the NRF's rating system that brings substantial funding and opportunity benefits to academics. For an academic to be rated on the NRF's rating scale, international recognition through publications in International spheres is required and the more global presence one's scholarship has, the higher one's NRF rating. To be recognised as an International scholar necessitates that an academic locates her or his work in global discourses; this suggests that reference to International scholars is a necessity and therefore becomes a dependency for academics in their aspirational trajectory and for buying into the neoliberal discourse of global academic capitalism.

The institutional imperatives are located in the discourse on global benchmarking of higher education institutions and have gained strong momentum in the last decade. This neoliberal discourse on higher education that subjects institutions to global ranking assessments has been fuelled by the benefits of competition, branding, and influence in the knowledge economy. Hence, being globally ranked means that that institutions of higher learning are known throughout the world and receive global recognition, both in and outside their countries. Having been ranked on the various global ranking systems, institutions of higher learning aspire to ascend such rankings or strive to maintain their high-ranking levels. Some of the criteria for influencing their ranking status is related to the level of internationalisation that informs their curriculum, the research outputs of their academic staff, and their established international relationships. Hence, institutions demand that their academic units and staff increase their international presence through their work as teachers, scholars, and researchers. Such demands, therefore, inform their scope of scholarship and exposure to knowledge domains. Hence, through this exposure and use of International Knowledge and International literature in their daily work, their fluency in such scholarship almost naturalises their use in their writings. It is therefore inevitable that the articles published in this journal, and perhaps on other publication platforms, will have a dominance of references from International publications.

Opportunities and abilities to build a mainstream African and South African knowledge base through publications is very limited in South Africa. *Indilinga* is perhaps one of the platforms to harness and on which to build opportunities to grow the African scholarship grounded in African epistemology. But the ability to mainstream African scholarship grounded in African epistemology requires more than *Indilinga* as a publishing space and may include other spheres of influence and recognition that can sustain and expand this knowledge base into a formidable space of knowledge influence with an engulfing force that could drive the decolonisation agenda now.

In returning to the findings on the keywords used in the reference list of articles published in *Indilinga*, we note that the most common keywords used, viz. African, South African, and Indigenous, are largely contextual descriptors rather than knowledge epistemes. The term Indigenous Knowledge Systems, for example, features as 6% of the keywords, suggesting

that the focus on an African episteme is very limited and perhaps can be attributed to the former engagements related to the dominance and over reliance on International Knowledge for knowledge epistemes. The dominant reference to the terms Africa (and South Africa) and indigenous, together with the dominance of International authors in the references of the articles in *Indilinga* suggest an imposition on, or adaptive perspective to, geographic contextualisation rather than to knowing and ways of knowing in Africa (and South Africa). The implications of this observation for curriculum transformation in the context of decolonisation, therefore, is that the International Knowledge epistemes continue to be the lens through which Africa (including South Africa) is observed, understood, and theorised and this implication negates the perspective of decolonisation on the necessity of decentring International Knowledge.

The implications for curriculum transformation are that the drive to remove International authors from informing teaching and learning, and indeed, the curriculum, may lead to a superficial decentring of International Knowledge with African (and South African) authors who are continuing to ground their scholarship in it. So, a technical replacement of curriculum content with content material written by African scholars does very little to decentre the influence of International Knowledge on knowledge production in Africa, and, indeed, in South Africa. The reconceptualization of curriculum for higher education is not an easy task and not an easy choice to make and neither it is easy to deal with the challenges involved. The destabilising and decentring of International Knowledge and influence requires an enculturation process of re-embodiment to shift our notion of quality which, naggingly, seems to reside in International Knowledge. The measures of quality to which we refer were engaged with in this synthesis and discussion of the findings; they include recognition, national ratings, global bench-markings, and global rankings.

Conclusion

In this meta-study we have shown, through the analysis of articles published in *Indilinga*, that there is still a dominant reliance on International Knowledge systems to inform (South) African scholarship despite the on-going emphasis on decolonisation and the promotion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Through the analysis of the data produced we have shown the complexity associated with the decentring of International Knowledge, with all its dominance, and have argued that regimes of accountability and recognition need to be changed to facilitate the recognition, promotion, and sustainability of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. The establishing of *Indilinga* in 2002 was a positive step towards advancing African scholarship on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Such efforts are laudable and need to be supported and encouraged. However, if a journal whose mission it is to advance the production of Indigenous Knowledge enjoys limited success, the challenge of decolonising research and how (and by whom) it is represented is daunting. Perhaps the problem lies, too, with the way in which we represent research given that such representation of research through publication in journals and scholarly books is itself Western. We do not question the fact that information can be called knowledge only if it has been subjected to intellectual and

ethical judgement. But whether there are other ways of representing and legitimating knowledge in Africa and elsewhere is an open question—an urgent one that needs answering.

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