

A Systematic Review of the Potential for Promotion of Southern Epistemologies in Educational Research: Ubuntu Philosophy as a Research Paradigm, a Conceptual Model

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Abstract

Introduction: The fast changing global trends, practices and ideologies have a potential to dissipate cultural identities of historically colonized nations, in favor for adoption of popularized perspectives. This problem is becoming more and more evident in South Africa due to urbanization and impact of globalization. However, this becomes a constant barrier in knowledge creation, development and management due to the fact that southern epistemologies remain pacified and under-utilized in scholarship and educational research. One such pacified epistemology in both social and educational research is Ubuntu.

Aims: The aim of this study is to determine the suitable application of Ubuntu philosophy in educational research. This will be achieved by answering a theoretical question: How can Ubuntu be adopted as a paradigm for research inquiries within a southern epistemological context?

Methods: The philosophy of Ubuntu is located within a subjective realist ontology. Applying non-intrusive research measures, a Scoping Review method was used to postulate evidence for adoption and application of Ubuntu philosophy as a research paradigm. Using a search engine comprising a number of social sciences databases (AnthroSource, ASSIA, Wilson Web and CSA), articles were appraised using the Systematic Review research protocols and analyzed using Critical Appraisal Skills Programme. The final activity for data analysis culminated into thematic analysis, using COSTA QDA technique.

Results: This study played a crucial role in magnifying the pacified voices of cultural epistemological contexts and existential realities. While the concept of Ubuntu is well researched across different disciplines, there was paucity of research on its adoption as a research paradigm and research design. The study found out that there were seminal works of established researchers on decoloniality and Afrocentrism, requesting consideration of Ubuntu as a research method. Thus, this scoping review found evidence that Ubuntu can and should be used as a research method in African contexts within social, economic and management sciences, as well as health and politics.

Conclusion: It was concluded that institutions of higher learning should start teaching Ubuntu Action Research as a method of inquiry in their undergraduate and postgraduate research programmes. Consultants are also encouraged to investigate this research design approach for business and policy research.

Significance of the study: Contextualization of educational research and scholarship.

Key Words: African, Afrocentrism, Communalism, Decoloniality, Ubuntu Action Research

1. Introduction

The fast changing global trends, practices and ideologies have a potential to dissipate cultural identities of historically colonized nations, in favor for adoption of popularized perspectives. This problem is becoming more and more evident in South Africa due to urbanization and impact of globalization. However, this becomes a constant barrier in knowledge creation, development and management due to the fact that southern epistemologies remain pacified and under-utilized in scholarship and educational research. Established authorities in African scholarship have long proposed that interpretive research methods and explanations in relation to African issues are primarily related to the African realities across all sectors of society (Asante, 1987;1990).

The authors of this article, share the notion that African scholarship should reject ideas that locate African philosophies and principles at the periphery of thought and ideation. As a proposition for African philosophical adoption of a research method, this paper uses evidence from historical papers as well as current research. Furthermore, the paper calls for reenactment of ideas of African philosophies and revival of essential principles such as Ujamaa Afrocentrism and Ubuntu in methods of research inquiries across different disciplines within the social, economic and management sciences, including health and education. One such pacified epistemology in both social and educational research is Ubuntu. The central thesis of this article is investigation of how such a reenactment of the philosophy could aid scholarly enquiry and praxis.

Ubuntu, which means "humanness," is an African idea. It expresses profoundly held African values that human personhood is rooted in interpersonal connection. Due to its principles and practices, which place the individual at the center of everything, Ubuntu is a philosophy and way of life that has kept societies together (Oppenheim, 2012). Furthermore, literature indicates that this philosophy has a strong moral foundation that runs counter to the typical behaviors that are seen today (van Breda, 2019; Frengpong & Kadam, 2022;Mabasa, 2020). The values of Ubuntu are concerned with a person's behavior and character.

Ubuntu encourages the interrelated components of humanity because it recognizes the biological, psychological, spiritual, and environmental facets of existence (Laloo, 2022). Evidence is now casting doubt on the efficacy and propriety of teaching methods that force international students to adhere to norms that are driven by economic motivation and Eurocentrism (Denyse, et al., 2022). In response to cries for alternate ideas, this paper offers the idea of Ubuntu, an African worldview that lays a strong emphasis on "humanness" and interconnectivity. The essential ideas of effective pedagogical approaches for instructing research trajectories within an African

perspective, using Ubuntu are hereby examined in the following section (Mngun, et al., 2021;Oppenheim, 2012).

2. Research Background

South Africa as a country continues to be faced with a plethora of problems from different sectors and disciplines. Of the paramount is the unemployment, your inertia and idleness and declining educational and societal value systems. Ubuntu is a philosophy that many researchers have commented on and proposed its use across different disciplines to solve current problems. Others have proposed its use in management and leadership, including corporate governance levels (Mngun, et al., 2021; Tladi, 2021), others have seen it as a useful philosophical assumption to be used in healthcare (Chigangaidze, et al., 2022), social work (Mabasa, 2020)and even in conflict management (Omodan, 2022). Other scholars have consistently argued for its place as a research method that incorporates diverse African contexts (Ejuu & Opiyo, 2022;Frengpong & Kadam, 2022).

Many sub-Saharan African communities conceptually mirror the spiritual ideal and manner of life known as Ubuntu. Although there are many varied ways to conceptualize Ubuntu across many African cultures and languages, they all share the same fundamental meaning—that Ubuntu is both a goal and a road map for humanity. A duality that is the basis of Ubuntu is represented by the diverse African cultures that are bound together by a single message (Oppenheim, 2012). The word itself has deep placement within many cultures from the southern tip of Africa right across the east, central and west – what is commonly known as sub-Saharan Africa.

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According to established literature, the concept of Ubuntu was first practiced in the earliest cultures in central Africa, also known as the Bantu (Oppenheim, 2012). As some ethnic groups traveled to other regions of the continent, they brought the Ubuntu ideology with them (Mangena, 2016; Muxe Nkondo, 2007). The Ubuntu ideology started to vary slightly across the different groups as they established their own society, while still appearing to adhere to the fundamental principles (Mangena, 2016). Currently, several African nations, including Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Ghana, Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Gambia,

Gabon, Cameroon, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia and the DRC, practice the Ubuntu ideology (Mangena, 2016).

The term "motho ke motho ka batho," which has almost the same conceptual meaning as its Nguni counterpart, expresses this idea as the ideal of Botho in the Sotho languages such as Sotho, Tswana and Pedi in South Africa; Basotho of Lesotho and Batswana of Botswana. Furthermore, due to its diverse nature and multiplicity of languages, in South Africa, the phrase "Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu" in the Nguni language of Xhosa, Zulu, or Ndebele is a summary of the word Ubuntu, which originates from the Xhosa/Zulu culture, the society into which Nelson Mandela was born. The idea behind this expression might be interpreted as "I am because we are" or "A person is a person through other persons" (Ejuu & Opiyo, 2022). Thus, the concept of Ubuntu focusses on formulation of healthy partnerships and cohesive societies, with common shared values within a particular community. It is for that reason that researchers in this study put forward a proposition to start using Ubuntu both as a research paradigm and as well as a research design. This concept has suffered prominence and practice even among African scholars, albeit much debated concept of decoloniality in educational research. Seminal works of scholars such as (Fanon, 1970) on authenticity and genius of African perspectives, Asante on Afrocentricity and African Renaissance (Smith, 2020) and researchers such as (Mkabela, 2005) encouraging southern epistemologies with the contexts of African scholarship have profound effect on this current study. Fanon argued that globalization accelerated the infiltration of primarily Western knowledge systems into African developing communities, including those of Bantu descent, resulting in academic ontologies neglecting the very essence of being Bantu (Mkabela, 2005; Fanon, 1970). In order to fit a more foreign-based, if occasionally incorrect, "global vision" of who they are, Africans such as Bantu have been redefined and frequently socialized out of their indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) by formal educational institutions and imported paradigms. According to Fanon (1970), education produces inferiority complexes on Africans because they want to feel equal to Europeans, who hold Europeans to be the arbiters of knowledge and truth and set the standards for African lives (Frengpong & Kadam, 2022).

African academic systems support Western paradigms while failing to support scholars who adopt African approaches. This paper makes the case that changing the way that research is done would give academics the means to communicate and examine traditional African philosophical concepts in a methodical manner that is sensitive to real-world ontological viewpoints. Research on Southern epistemologies should also discourage the importation of ideas and support regional initiatives that foster academic independence (Denyse, et al., 2022). Thus, this study is framed

against the question: How can Ubuntu be adopted as a paradigm for research inquiries within a southern epistemological context?

3. Research Aims and Objectives

The aims of this inquiry is to investigate the potential for adoption and application of Ubuntu philosophy as a research paradigm and a research design for educational, business and social science research. The research objectives are:

- To provide evidence for Ubuntu usage as a research paradigm and method of inquiry in educational and social science research
- To develop a framework for application of Ubuntu research paradigm in academic, social and business research
- To develop a framework for application of Ubuntu research method in academic, social and business research

The method of inquiry for this study is reflected in the next section of this document.

4. Research Method

The method of inquiry in this research was within the systematic review methodology. The following sections provide information as to how this method was operationalized for this particular inquiry.

4.1 Research Design

Using systematic review method, the researchers sought to obtain accuracy and precision for the proposition of using Ubuntu as a research philosophy and a research method. Systematic reviews are regarded as highest form of evidence and a gold standard for finding, gathering, analyzing, and summarizing the best available data addressing a clinical question is systematic reviews (Grant & Booth, 2009; Aromataris & Pearson, 2014). Researchers have in the past used this approach to investigate related topics in educational research, pedagogy and research methods (Costa & Ntsohi, 2022). The most reliable body of evidence to enable the creation of reliable educational research guidelines (and their recommendations) and practical decision-making is provided by the findings of systematic reviews (BMJ, 2021). This method adheres to a systematic research methodology that demands exacting techniques to guarantee that methods were transparent and that the findings are trustworthy and pertinent to the intended audience (Brooks & McNeely, 2013). In view of the fact that a systematic review methodology is regarded as the foundation of evidence-based research (Tawfik, et al., 2019; ten Ham-Baloyi & Jordan, 2016), it

was found prudent by researcher to select this method of inquiry to find evidence for using Ubuntu as a research paradigm and method of inquiry. In this inquiry, a scoping review method was selected among the 14 typologies as listed by Grant and Booth (2009). While systematic reviews have taken prominence in evidence research, with a notable explosion within the past three decades (Bastian, et al., 2010), there is scanty literature on the application of specific methods, in particular the scoping reviews and qualitative evidence synthesis.

4.2 Justification for selecting Scoping Review method

Logically, a scoping review is useful in searching literature in terms of scope and coverage of a particular subject (Munn, et al., 2018). Whereas Ubuntu as a philosophy has been extensively covered from different disciplines such as business management (Molose, et al., 2018) and economics (Mangaroo-Pillay & Coetzee, 2022), academics (Denyse, et al., 2022), health (Chigangaidze, et al., 2022), legal (Nzimakwe, 2014; Tladi, 2021) and socio-cultural perspectives (Smith, 2020), there is notable lack of literature on how Ubuntu can be used as a research paradigm and method in African contexts of scholarly initiatives. It was for this purpose that the scoping review was chosen as a method for determining the scholarly coverage on this subject. Scoping reviews are beneficial for analyzing developing evidence when it is unclear whether other, more specific issues may be presented and addressed profitably by a more particular systematic review (Munn, et al., 2018). They can report on the forms of evidence that address and inform field practice as well as the study methodology.

4.3 Review Protocol

As the study involves assessment of literature on available evidence, the process involved an iterative and interpretive exercise, following rigorous steps to ensure credible findings, repeatable and reproducible research processes, as postulated by Flemming and Noyes (2021).

STEP ONE : Formulation of focussed research question using PICOS

This process is critical in any systematic reviews, as it grounds the inquiry to dimensions of population being research or the problem (sometimes context or place is critical). Furthermore, it focuses on the phenomenon of interest, or intervention that the study proposes. Then the model further adapts the investigation to existing practices through robust comparison and finally postulates an outcome (Costa & Ntsobi, 2022). While focusing on the four dimensions mentioned above, all these are narrowed down to a particular design approach (Methley, et al., 2014). Using PICOS framework as indicated in Table 1 below, the following research question was developed:

How can Ubuntu be adopted as a paradigm for research inquiries within a southern epistemological context?

Table 1: Application of the PICOS Framework

P	African scholars in Africa and the Diaspora
I	Adoption of Ubuntu as a research paradigm and research method
C	Current colonially-informed(and influenced) research practices
O	Ubuntu Research Paradigm and Ubuntu Action Research
s	Scoping Review

The development of a clearly focused and narrow research question was instrumental in guiding the entire research process in this inquiry (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

STEP TWO : Development of a Review Process

By defining the review's objectives and developing the inclusion criteria, search tactics, quality evaluation standards, and screening methods, the review protocol was created (Alyami, et al., 2015). The aims of this inquiry was to investigate how Ubuntu philosophy can be used as a research paradigm and method within the educational research in African contexts. Its objectives were mentioned as:

- To provide evidence for Ubuntu usage as a research paradigm and method of inquiry in educational and social science research
- To develop a framework for application of Ubuntu research paradigm in academic, social and business research
- To develop a framework for application of Ubuntu research method in academic, social and business research

Furthermore, the process at this stage determined the sources of literature, the inclusion/exclusion criteria of articles to be search and appraisal techniques.

STEP Two : Application of a Review Protocol

A review protocol was based on principles of PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items on Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis) (BMJ, 2021). PRISMA is a standard and criteria set of evidence-based recommendations geared primarily toward encouraging transparency and thoroughness in systematic review reporting. The standard's significance has been recognized for its rigor in

synthesizing knowledge, creating protocols, and defining study scope (Sarkis-Onofre, et al., 2021). The protocol required researchers to focus on the main research question in review of preferred articles.

STEP Three : Literature Search and Data Extraction

Literature search followed a structured approach that focused on published articles, book reviews, theses and dissertations only. Search terms used in this study were:

- Ubuntu Philosophy – 993 articles

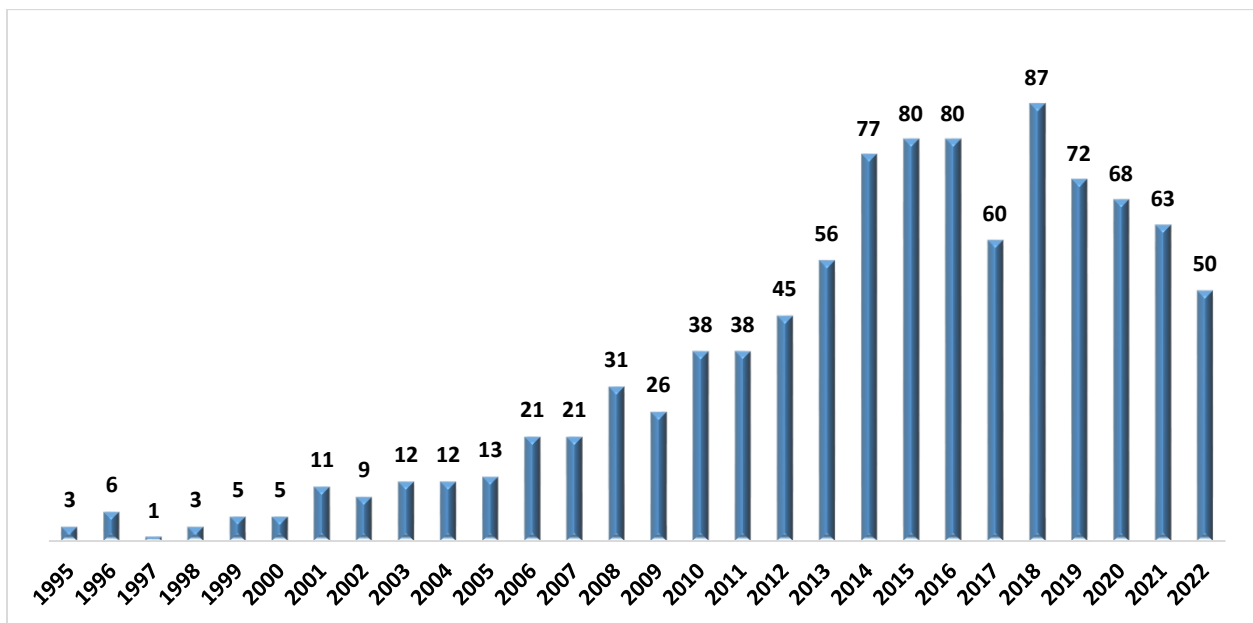


Figure 1: Search Term - Ubuntu Philosophy

Although articles for this category were searched from 1990 to 2022, there were no returns for periods prior to 1995.

- Ubuntu as a Research Philosophy - 998 articles

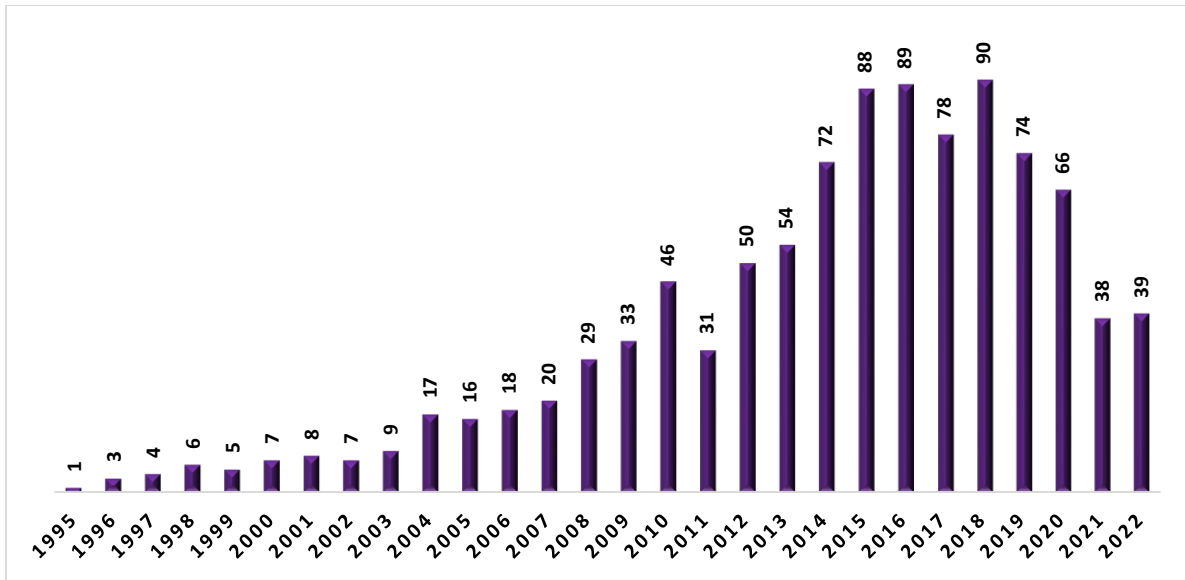


Figure 2: Search Term - Ubuntu as a Research Philosophy

A coincidence may be noted here, whereby articles prior to 1995 were not available during the search period.

- Ubuntu as a Research Design – 985 articles

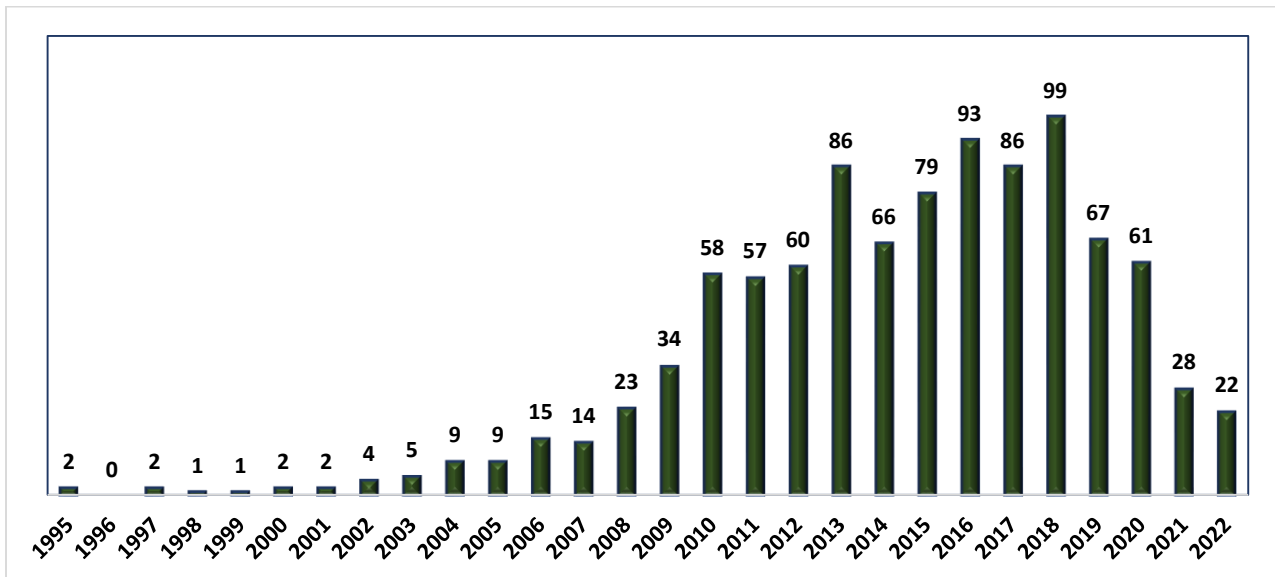


Figure 3: Search Term - Ubuntu as a Research Design

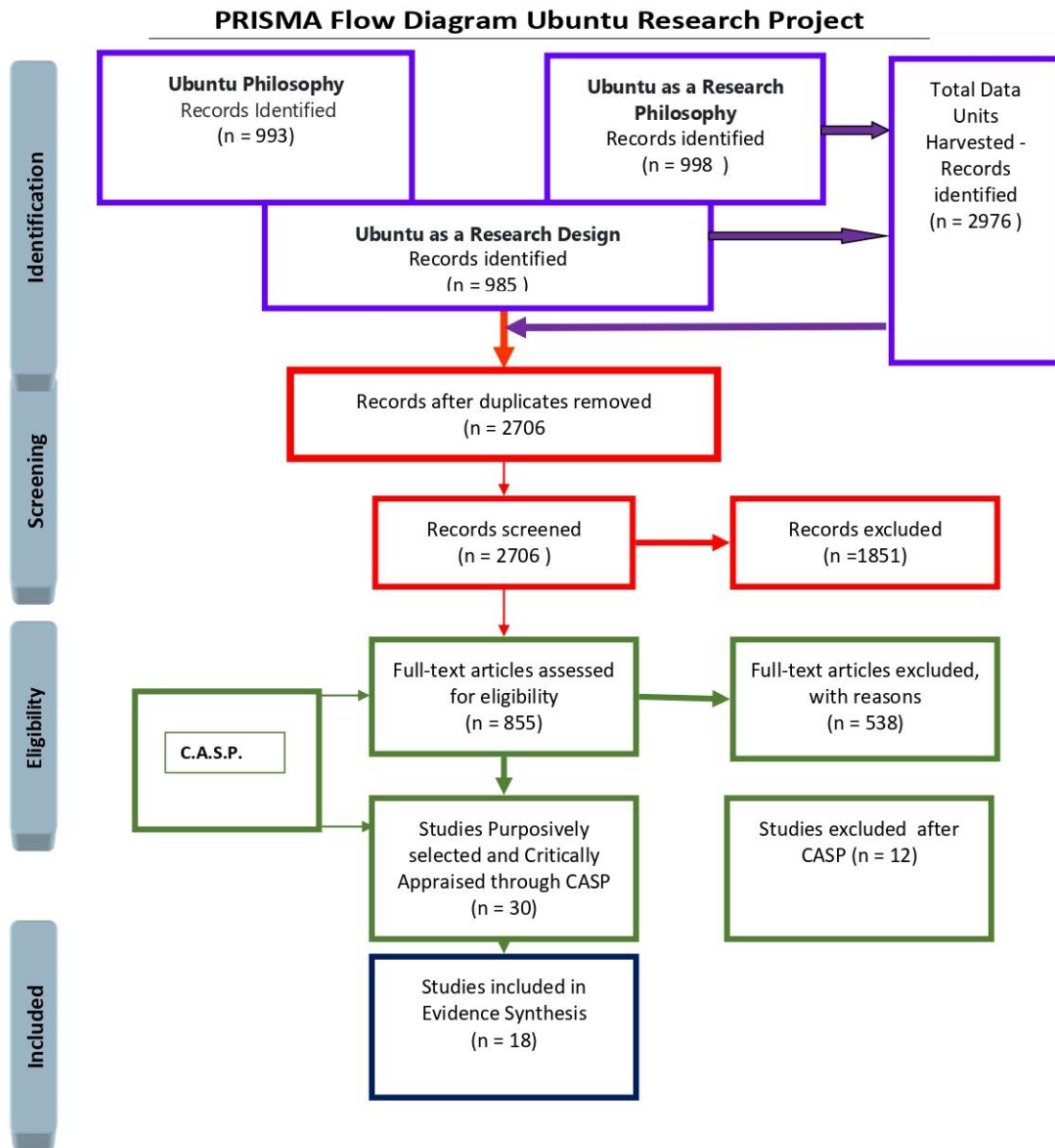
Harzing's Publish or Perish software was used to retrieve articles. Publish or Perish is a freeware application developed by Anne wil Harzing (<http://www.harzing.com>) that obtains and analyzes citations using Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic Search. This tool offers results in an orderly and user-friendly format that can be exported to other programs such as MS Excel or SPSS (Harzing & van der Wal, 2008). For this study, article retrieval was on MS Excel.

STEP Four : Screening for Inclusion/exclusion

When searching for relevant articles, we first examine their abstracts to see whether they satisfy our inclusion criteria, and then we read the whole texts (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The co-researcher was involved in further examination of articles retrieved, for duplicates and relevance to the study. The criteria used to exclude data was:

- Duplicated articles
- Abstracts with no relevance to the subject matter
- Blogs and newspaper opinions
- Essays
- Articles out of the 1990-2022 period
- Articles not written in English

One critical risk that often threatens the validity and trustworthiness of systematic reviews is the selection bias. Using Harzing's Publish or Perish Software enables the researchers to type in search terms on a chosen database (Google Scholar, Crossref, PubMed, Semantic Scholar, Scopus and OpenAlex). The search runs for a 1000 returns for a hit of search term. Thus, as reflected in Step 3 above, 2976 articles were retrieved in the database at each hit of the mentioned search terms. Figure 4 represents a PRISMA Workflow Diagram of articles treatment in this study.



Reference: Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, The PRISMA Group (2009). Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: The PRISMA Statement. PLoS Med 6(6): e1000097. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed1000097

Figure 4: Workflow of Data Documents Appraisal

STEP Five : Eligibility and Quality Assessment

The quality assessment of the evidence to be synthesized is a crucial step in all systematic reviews (Flemming & Noyes, 2021; Higgins & Green, 2008). The question of what constitutes

"quality" in qualitative research and systematic reviews is a topic of heated controversy and scant scholarly consensus. Since "qualitative" refers to such a wide variety of techniques, it's impossible to come up with a "one size fits all" definition of quality or method for evaluating it (Sandelowski, 2002). Many questions remain unanswered, such as how to evaluate qualitative research conducted from a variety of ontologies and epistemologies, how to evaluate the breadth of qualitative research as a single field, and how to judge the rigor and validity of qualitative evidence (Long, et al., 2020). In this study, CASP (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme) was used to appraise articles for eligibility and inclusion (CASP, 2022). CASP allows researchers to map quality assessment of articles against 10 key criteria as reflected on Table 2 below.

Table 2: Critical Appraisal Skills Programme elements of assessment

Appraisal question	Yes	Can't tell	No
Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?	18	0	0
Was the chosen methodology appropriate?	10	8	0
Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research	10	8	0
Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	13	3	2
Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	5	10	3
Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	6	4	3
Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	9	3	1
Was the data analysis reported in sufficiently detailed manner?	14	4	0
Is there a clear statement of findings?	18	0	0
Does the paper provide information about the value of the research?	18	0	0

STEP Six : Coding and Synthesising Data

This step ensured rigorous qualitative data or articles through the use of the COSTA QDA cloud computing software. The COSTA QDA is a software, is a type of CAQDAS (O'Kane, 2020) that was developed by authors, specifically for analyzing and synthesizing data in systematic reviews (Costa, 2020). CAQDAS refers to Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software. The coding process for articles as data sources followed the established practice in qualitative data analytic procedures (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Analytic procedures involved both deductive and inductive strategies. Analyzing qualitative data can be using both the deductive and inductive methods enables the researchers to immerse themselves in the data, reading line by line, word by word, over and over again while at the same time processing it in order to make sense of the entire set of data and grasp the situation (Azungah, 2018). A total of 18 studies were included in

the final coding and synthesis of literature. Table 2 below provides a tabular perspective of how articles were synthesized.

	Study	Authors	Methods	Findings and synthesis	Emerging Themes
1.	Developing the notion of <i>Ubuntu</i> as African theory for social work practice	(van Breda, 2019)	Not clear, (presumed desktop).	Ubuntu is an African term that refers to humanity. It embodies deeply held African values about one's humanity being rooted in one's interconnectedness with others. It is appropriate for use as an African Framework in practice and study to promote ethics, long-term growth, and recognition of participants' ontological viewpoints. It serves as a groundbreaking theory in action research practices.	Ubuntu Philosophy is a collectivism theory that supports action-oriented solutions
2.	Practising Ubuntu and leadership for good governance	(Nzimakwe, 2014)	Not clear, (presumed desktop).	<p>This study investigated the central values of Ubuntu as a panacea for service delivery and promotion of good governance in the public sector. As a tool for social cohesion and transformative philosophy, Ubuntu principles were found to be suitable for integrating with any strategy that seeks to promote service delivery in the context of public sector.</p> <p>In Ubuntu, there is a distinct sense of morality that challenges the manner of behavior that is commonly present nowadays. Ubuntu contains values that are concerned with both a person's character and behavior. According to the essay, Ubuntu and leadership and governance ideas are compatible and complementary.</p>	Principles of Ubuntu centered on humanism and collectivism are foundational for leadership and governance

3.	Ubuntu Philosophy as a Humanistic–Existential Framework for the Fight Against the COVID-19 Pandemic	(Chigangai dze, et al., 2022)	Qualitative Research Methods	The African worldview of seeing oneself through the eyes of others is referred to as Ubuntu. It is a pattern of connectivity between people expressed in the form of a philosophy or worldview. Ubuntu investigates issues concerning the cosmic and global framework of life. According to this article, Ubuntu can provide solutions to issues posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Ubuntu promotes humanity's integrated components by appreciating the biological, psychological, spiritual, and environmental aspects of life. The essay delves into a variety of topics, including self-awareness and societal responsibility, holism, spirituality, health promotion, food security, social justice and human rights, giving, sharing, and collaboration..	Core values of Ubuntu theory may assist in implementing effective public health programmes
4.	Application of the African Ontological Value of Ubuntu in Corporate Governance	(Tladi, 2021)	Qualitative Review Methods	Literature indicates that other scholars view the philosophy of Ubuntu as an ontological perspective with strong transformational elements. Its elements of care, ethics, honesty among others were deemed essential tenets of corporate governance.	Ubuntu philosophy entrenches transformative theories and ethical perspectives on governance
5.	Ubuntu in international education: Theoretical discussion and implications for teaching	(Tran & Wall, 2018)	Qualitative Research	The effectiveness and propriety of teaching techniques that require international students to conform to economically motivated and Eurocentric standards are now being called into doubt by evidence. This paper introduces the concept of Ubuntu, an African worldview that places a premium on	Ubuntu philosophy is essential for sound educational principles due to its collaborative nature.

	international students			"humanness" and interconnectedness, in response to calls for alternative viewpoints. It then uses it as a conceptual lens to examine the fundamental principles of engaging pedagogical practices in instructing international students. The research identifies three key ways—humanness, interconnection, and situatedness—in which the Ubuntu approach might be applied to teaching international students. The paper provides fresh perspectives on how to analyze worldwide education practice using Ubuntu, a little-studied non-Western human wisdom. By doing this, it advances theory development and encourages the use of a different pedagogical perspective. The paper, in particular, uses Ubuntu as a critical framework to question traditional perceptions of overseas students as the "other" in "our" educational system.	
6.	Infusing Ubuntu as a Principle Towards Improving Social Development: A Social Work Perspective	(Mabasa, 2020)	Qualitative Research Methods	This study investigated the integration of Ubuntu principle with service delivery strategies. According to the study, adopting Ubuntu as a guiding philosophy for service delivery is in the best interests of the community because it encourages collaboration among those working in dissimilar environments. The study also showed that including Ubuntu in policy and programme design makes it possible for people in various situations to consider themselves as equal human beings, so establishing social	Ubuntu principles and values are fundamental in social services

				solidarity and fairness. The study came to the conclusion that incorporating Ubuntu into social workers' interactions with other stakeholders as part of the social development landscape increases their ability to provide services to the communities.	
7.	Towards a Collective-Values Framework of Ubuntu: Implications for Workplace Commitment	(Molose, et al., 2018)	Literature Review	This study provides a supplement to earlier studies on commitment in various cultural contexts. The idea of Ubuntu is included as an integrating model that can be used in conjunction with other viewpoints to guide employee workplace commitment. A survey of the literature was done that included ideas about cross-cultural concepts and how Ubuntu and commitment relate to them. In this article, we make the case that the conceptualization of Ubuntu is crucial for adapting the cultural frameworks that are currently in use, as operationalized by individualism, collectivism, and power distance dimensions for regional management application. It was determined that the Ubuntu collective values—compassion, survival, group solidarity, respect, and dignity—are a distinctive component of cultural management philosophy for guiding interpersonal interactions, workplace commitment, and performance management advancements. These values correlate positively with a sense of workplace collectivism.	Ubuntu principles in organisational leadership enhances employee commitment

8.	The Ubuntu Paradigm and Comparative and International Education: Epistemological Challenges and Opportunities in Our Field	(Assié-Lumumba, 2017)	Desk-top Review	<p>In the context of structural inequality, this paper challenges presumptions of comparative education research and international education on the general transfer of policies and practices in North-South relations. The drive for comparison and the pursuit of knowledge in various educational traditions are looked at. In articulating the patterns of tensions in temporality and epistemology in knowledge production, aspects of individual socio-geographic and intellectual travels within the global setting are explored with a focus on agency, legitimacy, and ownership. What needs to be the guiding principles for new transformational relational theories and techniques of understanding education in historically colonized nations, particularly Africa, are among the topics that are critically studied. As a permanent corrective action that can provide opportunities for growth and renewal to the area of comparative and international education, the Ubuntu paradigm is articulated as an alternative framework for defining relations inside and across the frontiers of local and global places.</p>	<p>Ubuntu paradigm may be articulated as an alternative framework for defining relations across difference epistemological positions that are culturally influenced</p>
9.	Ubuntu Leadership – An explication of an Afrocentric	(Laloo, 2022)	Desk-top	<p>Non-Western views have frequently been left out of recorded chronologies of leadership instances, with Western perspectives mostly guiding the development of leadership theories, while neglecting the value of southern</p>	<p>Ubuntu philosophy is not well understood outside Africa, particularly as a research paradigm</p>

	leadership style			epistemologies in leadership research. One such leadership idea is Ubuntu leadership, which gained popularity after South Africa's first democratic election. Even though Ubuntu leadership has now been thoroughly examined, it is still mostly unheard of outside of Africa.	
10.	Ubuntu Politics of Process: An Alternative Conflict Management Culture in Universities	(Omodan, 2022)	Desk-top review	In this study, the Ubuntu politics of process is offered as an option to resolving intra-institutional conflict. The transformative paradigm is the setting for this theoretical work. It was also suggested that Ubuntu and conflict resolution go hand in hand. The results demonstrated that qualities such as a spirit of cooperation and sharing, a positive outlook, compassion, and inner goodness can reduce organizational conflict in the university system. The study comes to the conclusion that one aspect of conflict resolution in the academic system is the Ubuntu politics of process. It is recommended that institutions ought to encourage cooperation, the sharing of ideas, a positive outlook, compassion, and inner virtue among all parties.	Ubuntu paradigm is suitable for conflict resolution due to its transformative and collectivist nature
11.	Through the Lens of Ubuntu: The Value of Partnerships and Corporate Social Responsibility towards	(Mngun, et al., 2021)	Qualitative Research Methods	The paper makes a case for the application of Ubuntu's tenets in corporate social responsibility initiatives. The results show that the absence of a formal partnership between MNCs and the host communities is a defining characteristic of CSR operations. To direct the charitable efforts aimed at advancing the socioeconomic development	

	Community Development in the City of uMhlathuze, South Africa			of host communities, a practical Ubuntu-based policy framework needs to be created.	
12.	Building bridges across knowledge systems: Ubuntu and participative research paradigms in Bantu communities	(Mwangi-Zake, 2009)	Qualitative Research Methods	This study shows how Bantu in South Africa used Ubuntu as a concept and technique alongside participatory Western paradigms to evaluate an educational computer game. If meaningful outcomes are to be realized, the paper contends that research among Bantu must express research experiences within Ubuntu perspectives.	Ubuntu principles inform perspectives on Participative Action Research
13.	Ubuntu and constructivist grounded theory: An African methodology package	(Schreiber & Tomm-Bonde, 2015)	Qualitative Research Methods	The goal of this article was to investigate Ubuntu, a Southern African philosophy, as a suitable ontology for qualitative nursing research, particularly constructivist grounded theory. The paper examined the challenges underlying historical Western studies on Africa and Africans and their relationship to Africa and Africans. Researchers introduce the ideas of Ubuntu and its importance in African society, and offer constructivist grounded theory as an example of an Ubuntu-compatible technique. The values of Ubuntu, such as mutuality, interdependence, humility, and solidarity, could be used to boost any research by urging researchers to enter the field with a sense of awe and respect for the complexity of human life.	Ubuntu is a suitable ontological paradigm for nursing research, due to its constructivist and collectivist nature

14.	Decolonising Research in a Sub-Saharan African Context: Exploring Ubuntu as a Foundation for Research Methodology, Ethics and Agenda	(Seehawer , 2018)	Qualitative Research Methods	<p>Researchers are tackling the colonial legacy of research across the globe. This study seeks to contribute to the decolonization of research in a sub-Saharan African environment by investigating Ubuntu as a Southern African indigenous research paradigm. Using insights learned through participatory action research with South African science teachers and Ubuntu research literature, researchers constructed and reflected upon the ethics, agenda, and methodology of Ubuntu research. Ubuntu comprises both the process of being and the state of being human. Both dimensions are realized through lived community and considerate, respectful relationships with other living beings and the environment. Thus, ethical standards revolve around fostering positive relationships with people. Ubuntu's research agendas and approaches are community-based, relational, and participatory. The emphasis of the article is not on presenting Ubuntu research as fundamentally antagonistic to standard methodology, but on an approach to research that is anchored in indigenous African epistemologies.</p>	<p>Ubuntu comprises both the process of being and the state of being human and essential for Participative Action Research</p>
15.	The Ubuntu Approach in Project SOAR (Speaking Our African American	(Denyse, et al., 2022)	Qualitative Research Methods	<p>Community-academic collaborations to enable study within marginalized populations are becoming increasingly significant. The Ubuntu Approach, which is founded on community-based participatory research frameworks, is</p>	<p>The Ubuntu Approach, which is founded on community-based participatory research frameworks, is suitable for</p>

	Realities): Building a robust community-academic partnership and culturally curated focus groups			presented as a set of principles for beginning and fostering meaningful and effective community-academic research partnerships.	building partnerships across disciplines
16.	Educational Paradigm with Ubuntu Mindset: Implications for Sustainable Development Goals in Education	(Frengpong & Kadam, 2022)	Not clear	The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of our development systems and raised awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals' implementation (SDGs). In this chapter, we recognize the crucial contribution that education makes to the promotion of sustainable development. We promote inclusive education for the Sustainable Development approach and present the African philosophy of Ubuntu (I am because we are) as a way of thinking that should propel the necessary transformation. We argue that using this mindset as a theoretical and methodological framework has the potential to improve learning collaboration by bringing students closer to their social reality.	Using Ubuntu philosophy as a theoretical and methodological framework has the potential to improve learning collaboration by bringing students closer to their social reality.
17.	Using the Afrocentric Method in Researching Indigenous African Culture	(Mkabela, 2005)	Not clear	The paper emphasizes the challenges and dynamics faced by scholars studying native African culture. African indigenous people's cultural goals, comprehensions, and practices should position researchers to carry out and organize the study process. There are also suggestions for	Ubuntu, as an Afrocentric philosophy, should be used in investigations that impact on African contexts

				<p>how to apply the Afrocentric method and how to employ African indigenous culture as its foundation. The goal of this research was to promote informed conversation regarding the definition, workings, and usage of the Afrocentric approach as a suitable research technique for indigenous African culture and how it can be applied as an adjunct to qualitative research techniques.</p>	
18.	<p>Nurturing Ubuntu, the African form of Human Flourishing through inclusive home-based early childhood education</p>	<p>(Ejuu & Opiyo, 2022)</p>	<p>Desk-top Review</p>	<p>Human flourishing is now more widely recognized as a requirement for increased human resilience in unstable times. While the majority of authors from the West hold that human flourishing is a later-life achievement, communal African groups may not share this perspective. It is possible that there will be a change in the contextualization of human flourishing and its routes because communalism, not individualism, is a fundamental tenet of African Ubuntu ideology. This article examines how communities are working together to create flourishing by establishing home-based early childhood learning centers. It does so through the lens of Ubuntu. In African community contexts, desk review was used to discover the context-specific meaning of human flourishing and many routes to it. As each family and community member becomes valuable in providing a service that enables others to grow at different stages of</p>	<p>Ubuntu principles are essential for early childhood development</p>

				life, home-based early learning centers run by parents were considered as a vital activity to nurture Ubuntu.	
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STEP Seven : Reporting on findings

This step is covered extensively in Section 5 below.

5. Research Findings and Discussion

5.1 Philosophical Dimensions

Ubuntu philosophy has similarities with the paradigm of relativism (Schreiber & Tomm-Bonde, 2015). According to relativism, there are no common standards for judging throughout different cultures and historical periods, and standards of truth, reason, and good and wrong differ significantly between them (Baghrarian, 2001). Ubuntu respects relativism and makes clear the variations in people's perspectives on the world. Like how we explore the worlds of our participants, getting to know someone takes conversation and the sharing of viewpoints in order to recognize our shared humanity and seek common ground. This relativist ontology lays the foundation for communication and the growth of a general comprehension of the things under study (Denyse, et al., 2022; Charmaz, 2006). Furthermore, the question of ontology is best explained by understanding epistemological associations with it. It is essential to address the fundamental issue of epistemology when considering the framework for research investigation, learning and study, not just in terms of how we know what we know but also in terms of what we believe is important to know (Assié-Lumumba, 2017). The choice of how to proceed and identify the most appropriate and efficient tools that can offer the best results in obtaining pertinent data in carrying out the given research can only be made at that point. Temporality is a crucial component of the quest of knowledge. The pursuit of knowledge is fundamentally an effort to gain understanding of the past that may be helpful in addressing and comprehending the present or in predicting the future in the same society/country or another context within the context of global education (Chigangaidze, et al., 2022). The concept of the past, present, and future is inextricably linked to intellectual inquiry. So how can we decide which history should guide which future? Inevitably, conscious decisions are made during the process, and selective memory plays a significant role. What, then, are the selection-influencing factors? Ubuntu philosophy, with its relativist characteristics, seems to be suitable to answer these questions to the African scholar with a quest for advancing its epistemology for sustainable development goals (Frengpong & Kadam, 2022). Its value systems, as portrayed in Figure 1 (designed by authors of this study), allow for multi-perspectival and constructivist approaches to solving problems as they emerge (Charmaz, 2006).

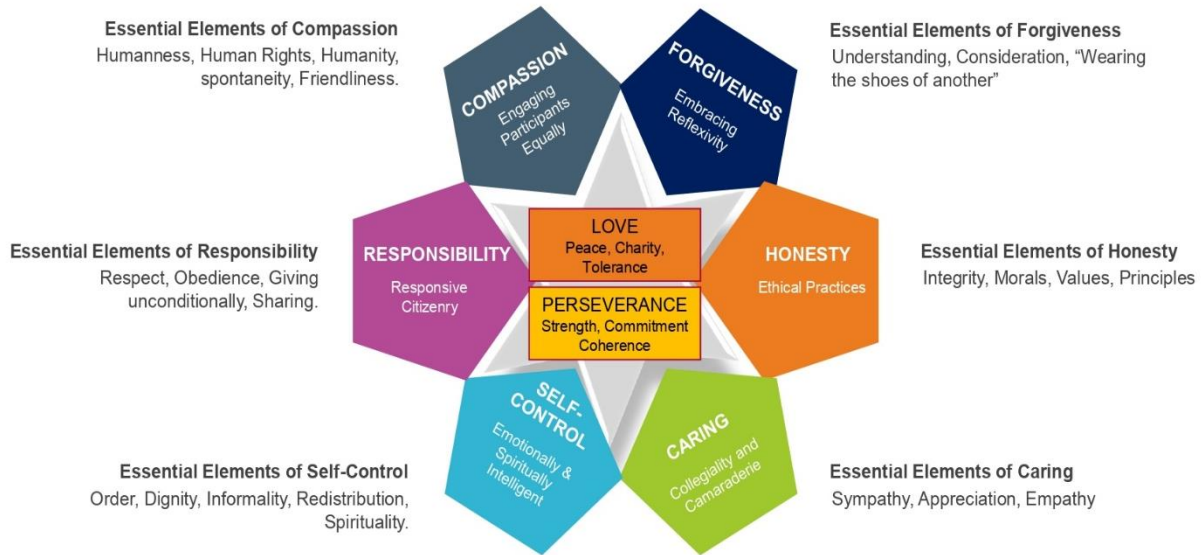


Figure 5: Relativist characteristics of Ubuntu Philosophy

5.2 Research Design Dimensions

Research design is concern with a clear procedural strategy that researcher follow when conducting a research investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The collaborative nature and structure of Ubuntu has been associated with methods of inquiry within a Participative Action Research design by a number of scholars (Smith, 2020;Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The guiding principles of this paradigm are consistent with qualitative research, in which researchers should actively participate in order to develop knowledge appropriate for the cultural and social environment in which they work. In essence, this suggests that the researcher is a genuine historical person with definite, specific objectives and interests rather than an invisible, nameless voice of authority (Mkabela, 2005). The context and the phenomenon under study are fully experienced by the researcher, from the contextual perspective. Through their involvement in the lives of social actors under study, the researcher/s is/are more interested in understanding the social phenomenon from the participant's perspective. In this type of study, the researcher empathizes and identifies with the subjects in order to comprehend their perspectives (Vaughn & Jacquez, 2020;Warren, et al., 2018; Bush, et al., 2017).

5.3 Ubuntu as a Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Originally developed in Africa and South America (Bozalek, 2011), participatory action research (PAR) is characterized by a research process that encourages participants' individual development and collective knowledge-building while also seeking collective action to address problems of shared concern. Relationship-based action research (PAR) is central to Ubuntu since it is both community-based and relational (Grant, Nelson, & Mitchell, 2008). By producing knowledge that is significant to our study participants and doing it in ways that are significant to them, researcher could be reinforcing a collaborative drive of humanness and togetherness in scholarship and praxis. It goes on to ask how academia might change to value and include research that is founded on epistemologies other than Cartesian epistemologies at the level of academic institutions, international journals, and conferences. In this sense, decolonizing research is a global movement that includes Ubuntu research as a Participative Action Research. The search for a more compassionate academic environment is not just important for indigenous scholars or restricted to bottom-up techniques in the field, but it is crucial to a mind-thought renewal about perspectives of identity and knowledge development. These culminated in a central theme of the importance of Ubuntu in scholarship. This central theme addresses three dimensions of philosophy, anthropology and practical research design.

6. Conclusion

This section culminates in the end of this first part of our series of investigations on active inclusion of Ubuntu as a central thesis for research inquiry within the African context, both in Africa and the Diaspora. The paper presented rigorous research methods from question formulation, data collection through to analysis and synthesis of secondary data, through the scoping review design approach. Three key themes are presented as conclusion and post of departure from this investigation. These themes are:

- Ubuntu is fundamental and foundational in solving problems within the African context. Leaders and managers need to learn the core values of Ubuntu for application in their businesses
- Ubuntu philosophy is not yet understood in academic research, but very feasible and should be included as the fourth contender in social and educational research dimensions
- Ubuntu Action Research is proposed as a suitable design in study settings that seek to solve practical problems

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