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Equity, Access, and Inclusion

Paper presentation

Invoking a pedagogy of care in higher education towards equitable societies

Agenda 2063 aims for a transformed, inclusive and sustainable Africa. Institutions of higher education are at the forefront of enabling Africa's transition towards sustainable futures. This paper uses lived experiences of teaching the module “**Issues in Education**” which forefronts humanising pedagogies and critical theories to enable students' agency through dialogical engagement.

Drawing on the framework of epistemic justice, the presentation examines how injustices manifest in education, particularly through the marginalization of learners' lived experiences, cultural knowledges, and non-dominant identities. It highlights how conventional curricula often privilege Western epistemologies while silencing Indigenous, local, and experiential forms of knowledge. This epistemic exclusion not only undermines learners' agency but also limits the relevance and accessibility of educational content. The paper further argues that inequities related to gender, race, class, and sexuality shape both access to education and participation within it. Thus, the presentation advocates for an “**ecology of knowledges**” approach and a “**teaching from the heart**” philosophy, where multiple knowledge systems coexist and inform pedagogical practice, and teaching is an act of “courage”. Such an approach would enable higher education curricula to move beyond a standardized, one-size-fits-all model toward more inclusive, dialogical, and culturally grounded forms of learning. It would also enable teachers to weave through their hearts, the fabric that joins them with their students and the subject.