Research in Social Sciences and Technology

https://ressat.org

E-ISSN: 2468-6891

Volume: 11 Issue: 3 2026

pp. 137-150

The Place of Emotional Experiences and A Critical Emotional Praxis Toward Creating Socially Just Environments for Students from Diverse Backgrounds

Collins Dumisani Morgan Motai[a]

a. Eduvos, Faculty of Humanities, Potchefstroom, South Africa and University of the Free State, Faculty of Education, Bloemfontein
Email: collins.motai@eduvos.com

10.46303/ressat.2026.18

Article Info
Received: March 13, 2026
Accepted: July 11, 2026
Published: November 13, 2026

How to cite
Motai, C. D. M. (2026). The Place of Emotional Experiences and A Critical Emotional Praxis Toward Creating Socially Just Environments for Students from Diverse Backgrounds. *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*, 11(3), 137-150. https://doi.org/10.46303/ressat.2026.18

Copyright license
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0).

ABSTRACT
There is an ongoing debate regarding the value of emotional experiences and practices in higher education. While some scholars highlight emotional experiences as essential to fostering socially just learning environments, others question this discourse for its disruptive potential. This study clarifies the central argument: emotional experiences and a critical emotional praxis are crucial for achieving social justice for students from diverse backgrounds within the South African higher education sector. Using a qualitative, autobiographical approach, conducted through individual semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion. This study explores how emotional experiences shape the experiences of marginalized students within higher education environments. The study further examines the role of emotional praxis in promoting socially just and inclusive higher education institution by investing how systematic inequalities related to race, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic status influence student's emotional and academical wellbeing. The study concludes that recognizing and intentionally addressing students' emotional realities is fundamental to building more equitable academic spaces. Stakeholders must reflect on student emotional experiences and adopt practices that actively support social justice. The study recommends that critical emotional praxis is a necessary approach for higher education institutions seeking to become socially just learning environments.

KEYWORDS
Emotional praxis; emotional experiences; social justice; learning motivation; decolonization.

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to determine how emotional praxis and emotional experience shape socially just higher education environments. The central argument is that emotional experiences directly affect students who are systemically 'othered', marginalized by race, gender, sexual orientation, or social status, as per Kumashiro's anti-oppressive education theory (2000). By focusing on the emotional realities of these students, the research examines pathways to greater social justice within higher education. Zembylas (2015) supports the view that addressing emotional practices in academia can confront historical injustices. Drawing on events such as the 'Fees Must Fall' movement, this research highlights the urgent need to address students' lived injustices, not only in academic settings but also in terms of socioeconomic status and psychosocial wellbeing. Powell and McGrath (2018) affirm that socioeconomic background strongly influences academic performance, emphasizing the importance of emotionally informed, socially just environments in promoting academic achievement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In post-apartheid South Africa, inequalities persist among various social groups. One of the most significant challenges is access to higher education, especially for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Spaull, 2015). Because of documented challenges, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face certain injustices in higher education, leading to disruptions such as the 'Fees Must Fall' movement. According to Cammarota (2014), many students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds experience injustices through practices used by various higher education institutions. This was demonstrated in a study conducted at a South African university, in which the authors documented that students there expressed feelings of despair, anger, and fear due to the university's practices in catering to students' diverse needs (Bozalek et al., 2013). In the same study, the authors concluded that through stakeholders' mutual understanding of emotions, including lecturers and university management, students believed they had been given a platform to engage with issues that affected them (Bozalek et al., 2013). Based on this conclusion, the literature shows that students need higher learning environments that consider their emotional experiences and environments that adopt an emotional approach to their practices.

There is constant debate about the place of emotional experiences in education because the discourse is regarded as too subjective to take a stance. Some scholars argue that emotional experiences and practices are key to creating socially just learning environments. For example, Naidoo (2014) argues that teaching is an emotional practice because teachers carry emotional experiences, which are part of their identity and influence how they teach and manage learners. She further asserts that, through emotional awareness and acknowledgment, teachers can create conducive learning environments for all learners, especially those who are marginalized (Naidoo, 2014). This is not just a case applicable to teachers working with young children, as it

has also been shown that emotional experiences play a key role in creating socially just higher education environments (Muller et al., 2018).

The literature extends the notion of emotional experiences in education, linking it to Dewey's (1897, as cited in Snaza, 2017) theory of humanizing pedagogy. According to Snaza (2017), humanizing pedagogy is a teaching approach intended to foster a trusting relationship between institutions of learning and students and value students' backgrounds and experiences. This means that through humanizing pedagogy, higher education institutions should establish mutually beneficial relationships that value students' backgrounds and experiences, thereby transforming the educational landscape for those who are marginalized (Snaza, 2017). To maintain this approach in education, the literature indicates a need to incorporate emotional experiences into these institutions' practices to create conducive learning spaces for all learners who are 'othered' (Zembylas, 2018).

Social justice aims to ensure equal opportunities and resources for all (Bell, 2016). Social justice education encourages institutions to pursue social enrichment, justice, and democracy (Mapuya, 2023; Moloi et al., 2023; Teise & Gaillard, 2019). Despite such advocacy, Matsepe et al. (2020) argue that marginalized groups continue to face inequalities, as demographic factors persist in creating disparities (Maistry & Africa, 2020). Cochran-Smith (2010) notes a lack of motivation and higher dropout rates among disadvantaged students who face daily injustices. Cammarota (2014) argues that assumptions about students' abilities further impact their motivation to learn. Higher education institutions must adopt socially responsible approaches to enhance motivation for underprivileged students (Lacour & Tissington, 2011; Pietersen et al., 2023). Scholars believe that exploring students' emotional experiences may help institutions implement frameworks that foster an emotional praxis, thereby enhancing learning motivation (Cochran-Smith, 2010). However, social justice also concerns what is taught, whose knowledge is legitimised, and whose languages and experiences are represented. Mapuya (2023), drawing on lecturers' experiences across South African universities, identifies language equity, inclusivity, diversity, inequality and academic imperialism as issues shaping the 21st-century curriculum. Students' emotional experiences therefore cannot be separated from institutional and curricular conditions; when identities, languages and knowledge systems are marginalised, belonging and participation may also be undermined.

Drawing from the literature, it is apparent that higher education institutions require an emotional praxis to cultivate socially just environments. However, Naidoo (2014) alludes that few studies have been conducted in South Africa that focus on emotional praxis in education. In addition, Pithouse-Morgan et al. (2012) agree that emotions have been under-researched in education. Thus, this paper aims to address the paucity highlighted above and contribute to the scholarship on emotional praxis as an educational approach.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To establish a clear understanding of the relationship between students' emotional experiences and the creation of socially just environment, this study adopted Zembylas' (2012) theory of critical emotional praxis, guided by a transformative paradigm lens. Critical emotional praxis is a theoretical stance that emphasizes the importance of emotions within a learning environment and how this emphasis leads to the creation of socially just learning environments (Zembylas, 2012). Zembylas, in developing this theory, maintains that critical emotional praxis enables teachers and learners to evaluate their emotions and provides a platform for understanding emotions in educational settings (Zembylas, 2012). Through critical emotional praxis, institutions of higher learning can acknowledge the presence of emotional experiences within the sector and, as Zembylas highlights, create socially just learning environments through these emotional discourses. It is further maintained that through an emotional praxis, higher education institutions can work toward social transformation, a significant aspect of creating socially just learning environments (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design using collaborative autobiographies as a research method was used in the study. Collaborative autobiographies, as the name suggests, allowed participants to share their stories while establishing links between their different narratives (Davies & Gannon, 2012). The study comprised staff and students from a public higher education institution in South Africa. Participants were selected purposively as the study focused on those from marginalized backgrounds. Autobiographies were intentionally used as a method that allowed participants to engage with one another in interpreting the meaning of their narratives. Davies and Gannon (2012) fully support the idea that when engaging in collaborative research, participants must be actively involved in the study to achieve transformative research.

Data in this study was collected through individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews with all eight participants. Participants in this study were interviewed using questions that were developed as part of the interview protocol. As semi-structured interviews were used, participants were allowed to share other narratives that relate to the phenomenon. The individual interviews were scheduled for an hour and conducted in person. The interviews enabled participants to engage in this study thoroughly as they shared their own lived experience of the phenomenon. To ensure trustworthiness, the interviews were coupled with a focus group discussion with participants, and later, participants wrote individual reflective journals to strengthen methodological rigor.

Using the interview notes, focus group transcript, and reflective journals, a biography was written to present the findings based on the five themes that emerged from the data. Data in this study were analyzed using narrative analysis to explore participants' lived experiences and the meanings they attached to them. The interviews, the focus group discussion, and reflective journal entries were transcribed verbatim and reviewed repeatedly so the researcher

could become familiar with the data. The shared narrative was coded to identify frequently emerging themes, key emotional experiences, and patterns that related to the research objectives. These emerging themes were then compared across the data sources to identify any similarities or differences in participants' narratives. During the data analysis process, the researcher kept reflective notes to understand how participants' narratives highlighted issues related to emotional experiences and social justice. This process allowed the researcher to preserve participants' experiences while generating meaningful themes aligned with the research objectives. Table 1 is an example of how themes were generated.

Table 1.

Coding and theme-generating process followed

Verbatim responses	**Code**	**Theme**
"Despite my circumstances, I remained hopeful"	Positive emotional resilience	Hope
"My lecturer encouraged me despite my struggles"	Positive emotional praxis	Compassion
"My parents sacrificed everything for me"	Support system	Parental love
"I felt angry because poor students were ignored"	Negative emotions toward injustice	Moral anger
"I feel emotionally hurt when my struggles were ignored"	Emotional suffering	Hurt

The findings of this study were interpreted and shaped through critical emotional praxis as a lens for addressing the research questions. However, the findings of this study cannot be generalized due to its nature, sample size, and data-collection methods. To ensure trustworthiness in this study, data were triangulated by using three data-collection methods. This ensured that the data could be compared and corroborated across the three sources during data analysis. The researcher conducted member checks by sharing the biography with all participants to ensure that the findings were not misinterpreted. The researcher also kept reflective notes and engaged with the data longer to ensure that a record was kept of any pre-existing assumptions that may influence the findings. The following section presents and discusses the findings of this study.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The study reveals that students and lecturers in the higher education sector experience and express a range of emotions that are deeply tied to issues of social justice, belonging, and motivation. These emotional experiences shape how students engage with learning and how higher education institutions can create inclusive learning environments. The key findings are organized under five themes as shown in Table 1.

Hope

Hope emerged as a central emotional value provided by supportive lecturers and staff within the higher education sector. Students narrated how lecturers who motivated them, affirmed their worth, and encouraged perseverance restored their confidence and learning motivation. In addition, providing hope is considered a social justice practice because it empowers students from diverse backgrounds, as noted by Zembylas (2007). This is evident in one participant's narrative, where she states:

Through the hope given to us by lecturers like Mr A, I do not believe I would have survived university life

The above narrative indicates that, through hope encouraged by their lecturers, students' learning motivation increases, which consequently will ensure that they become academically successful.

Compassion

Acts of compassion by lecturers and other stakeholders in the higher education institution, such as understanding students' struggles and showing empathy, made students feel safe, accepted, and motivated. Compassionate teaching practices were perceived by students as symbols of social justice and care, thereby creating more inclusive and equitable higher education environments, regardless of students' backgrounds.

One of the participants in this study alludes to this by highlighting the importance of compassion towards marginalised students within higher education.

I think some lecturers are doing very well in being compassionate and positive towards us as students; these acts motivate me to become better and well-educated. I also believe that we can do more to better our college, and this must involve all stakeholders engaging with us as students to understand what we go through daily. I believe that, as students, we can become motivated to achieve more.

From the above citation, the findings indicate that students believe that when higher education stakeholders become compassionate towards students, higher education spaces can become socially just environment.

Parental love

The findings further revealed that higher education institutions can promote social justice by encouraging staff to adopt a nurturing, "parental figure" role by listening, sharing personal stories, and providing practical support to students. While this contradicts specific policies on professional boundaries, students valued this approach as it fostered a sense of belonging and support, especially for those from diverse backgrounds. However, the findings also revealed that some staff expressed tension; some hesitated to adopt this role due to policy, while others embraced it as vital to students' success and wellbeing. From students' perspective, they believed that, through parental love, higher education institutions can work towards social justice, whereas stakeholders in the sector are hesitant about adopting such an approach. Below is a statement that was shared by one of the students' participants:

I guess he is like Mrs Linda. I met her when I first enrolled at the college, and from that time, I loved her. She is like my second mother. Whenever I need to talk about anything, and whenever I feel down, I know that she will always make time to listen to me. She is the best lecturer for all her students, and she always tells us to believe in ourselves. I remember at some point I wanted to drop out because of the circumstances at home; however, through the love, encouragement and kindness I received from Mrs Linda, I knew giving up was not the right choice

As indicated above, adopting such an approach seems to be a challenge to higher education, as policy on such relations is vague. This was said by one of the participants who said: *I find the parent type of a relationship with students important as it provides a sense of belonging to students; however, there is always policies and rules that are against this relationship hence, I am always not willing to be involved.*

Moral anger

The findings showed that although anger can be a negative notion, some people saw it as a motivating force for social justice. One participant narrated how personal experiences of poverty, crime, and discrimination (linked to sexuality and socioeconomic background) led to anger, which they channeled into empowering students and promoting justice. This indicates how negative experiences can be transformed into positive practices that can embrace social justice within higher education.

This is evident from an incident experience by one of the participants who shared that through discrimination she experiences from university staff members because of social class, due to this ordeal she was motivated to do better and improve her situation.

I once experienced a situation where one staff member treated me very badly mainly because I did not have a smart phone like all the other students, this made me feel poor and ashamed. Later that night when I went to the room, I knew that I had to improve my situation. The anger I experienced pushed me for the better.

Hurt

Many of the students in the study reported experiences of exploitation, abuse, and humiliation, often linked to financial insecurity and lack of resources. These painful experiences caused despair, hopelessness, and even suicidal thoughts. However, students expressed that acknowledging their pain and receiving emotional support from lecturers and stakeholders could transform higher education institutions into socially just, caring environments, as indicated by Bozalek et al. (2013). This is evident in the narrative shared by one of the participants who mentions how she was almost exposed to sexual abuse because of lack of financials resources to rent accommodation near the institution:

I remember one day when I was hitchhiking back to Kroonstad as I did not have accommodation in Bloemfontein. I got a lift from some male; he offered to buy me food and to top it all off, I also did not have enough money for transport. I accepted the food offer, and I also explained to him that I did not have enough money for transportation as I had to come to school to write an exam. He agreed to assist me in that regard, but as the trip continued, he started

inappropriately touching me. This hurts me so much, and I started questioning God as to why all of that was happening to me. I even became suicidal because this did not occur just once with one guy, but it happened several times with different guys. I was out of options, and had to hitchhike, as I sometimes needed to come to the college for assignments, tests and exams

In conclusion, the findings showed that emotional experiences are central to students' sense of belonging, motivation, and perceptions of justice in higher education. When higher education institutions adopt values such as hope, compassion, parental love, and even moral anger, they create socially just and inclusive learning spaces. Conversely, ignoring the pain and struggles of students reinforces marginalization and contributes to the continuation of injustices.

DISCUSSION

This study found that higher education institutions should adopt an emotional praxis in practice and policy, as it plays a key role in advancing social justice. The study revealed that students require higher education institutions to foster a sense of belonging for them by acknowledging their emotional experiences. Students need an environment that is welcoming and safe, one that accommodates their emotions. Values such as hope, compassion, and empathy play a pivotal role in advancing social justice for students in higher education. The study illustrated the importance of encouraging hope among students, as it empowers them and enhances their motivation to learn. Students also desired a relationship with their lecturers that is free and open-minded, so they can feel safe when engaging with stakeholders. In addition to the emotional values that participants regarded as essential for promoting social justice within higher education institutions, they highlighted what they described as “parental love”. Participants described parental love as a relationship characterized by an emotional connection and understanding between students and lecturers. This was not only revealed by students; some lecturers indicated that if they received similar support from stakeholders within higher education, they might have felt a sense of belonging. Moreover, the findings revealed that through the emotive support, institutions of higher learning can become socially just environments. Patel (2019) supports this, stating that stakeholders, especially lecturers in higher education institutions, need to act as 'parents' to students and should not be solely responsible for academic support; however, lecturers also need to focus on students' safety and emotional support. In addition, the study demonstrated the need for stakeholders in the higher education sector to be trained to recognize and engage with students' emotional experiences, thereby creating safe classroom environments.

On the other hand, the study revealed that most stakeholders are resistant to this practice because it is contrary to policy. This poses challenges for institutions of higher learning as they aim to advance social justice. As Zembylas (2015) stated, higher education institutions need to recognize and acknowledge students' emotional experiences. Moral anger was also a significant theme in the findings, described as an emotional experience people felt in response

to hurtful situations; however, the study found that most people channeled this anger toward bettering their lives.

Through collective narratives, students expressed a desire for higher education institutions to consider the harm they endured from specific practices and policies in the sector. Based on these shared experiences, the study revealed that students believe strong, well-established emotional support, demonstrated not only through wellness departments but also in the classroom as lecturers integrate emotional praxis into their teaching, can foster socially just environments. To foster a sense of belonging, higher education institutions need to create spaces that allow students to express their emotions, as found in this study (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008). Therefore, for social justice to be possible, institutions of higher learning need to consider students' voices and involve students in decisions that might impact them. These findings also point to a structural dimension of emotional experience. Mapuya (2023) highlights how language inequity, exclusion and the privileging of dominant knowledge can reproduce social injustice in higher education. Read alongside the present study, this suggests that hurt, anger and alienation may reflect not only interpersonal encounters but also institutional and curricular conditions that restrict recognition and participation. Critical emotional praxis must therefore combine compassionate support with attention to the practices and arrangements that produce marginalisation.

Through the collaborative research methods adopted in this study, students were able to express their emotions in a trusted environment. Through this type of collaborative work, institutions of higher learning could create socially just spaces by allowing students to express their emotional experiences. Furthermore, the study revealed that through collaborative research, people can reflect on their own practices and work to improve them to become more transformational.

Overall, the study's findings were that through collaborative work focusing on emotional praxis and experiences, the creation of socially just higher education environments is possible. The study demonstrated that this can be achieved by adopting specific emotional values among all stakeholders involved in higher education.

Recommendations

This study recommends that higher education institutions adopt certain practices in their procedures and policies to advance an emotional praxis within the sector. Firstly, students' emotions should always be taken into consideration; thus, taking an emotional praxis approach is key within the higher education sector.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that emotional support should be provided by all stakeholders in the higher education sector, and not just by institutional wellness departments. This means that all stakeholders should be trained and supported in the approach and strategies that are linked to emotional praxis. Below are some of the suggested strategies based on the findings.

Classroom practices

Higher education institutions' academics are encouraged to acknowledge emotions as part of teaching and learning by creating spaces in lectures, seminars, or tutorials for students to express how the content makes them feel, especially when addressing issues of inequality, identity, or lived experience. In addition, as the findings suggested, academics must incorporate teaching methods such as journalling, storytelling, and dialogue to provide students with a platform to reflect on and process their emotional responses to curriculum content. Lecturers can also play a key role in fostering emotional experience in the classroom by modeling openness, sharing their own academic struggles or moments of growth, and signaling that emotions are valid in academic environments.

Curriculum design

In terms of curriculum design, the findings demonstrated that adopting an emotional praxis curriculum should include emotional literacy, allowing students to discuss how emotions relate to power, privilege, and oppression within a specific discipline. This can be highly effective with educational and social science content. In addition, the curriculum should include representation of marginalized groups, with texts, case studies, and examples that highlight the diverse experiences of those who are often silenced, to encourage hope and resilience and improve learning environments. Moreover, the curriculum should incorporate real-world cases, where emotions were the driving forces behind social justice and transformation, so that students can perceive emotions as a political tool. This also requires reviewing whose knowledge, languages and lived experiences are recognised in curriculum content and teaching practices, since curriculum can either challenge or reproduce exclusion (Mapuya, 2023).

Student support and engagement

It is also recommended that maximizing students' support initiatives can play a key role in adopting an emotional praxis. This can be done in safe dialogue spaces, such as peer groups, mentorship programs and forums, where students can express their emotions freely. It is also important to note that faculty's presence in student support initiatives plays a key role, as students believe they belong to their faculty; hence, the study recommends that faculty adopt trauma-informed and compassionate teaching approaches that balance academic rigor with awareness of students' emotional realities. As indicated earlier, students should be included in decision-making to create socially just environments; therefore, it is vital for higher education institutions to co-create policies, pedagogy, decision-making, and curriculum with students to validate their emotional investments in education.

Staff development

Similarly, all stakeholders within higher education institutions must be trained in and developed on emotional praxis. This can be facilitated through workshops that equip staff to recognize emotions as part of knowledge-making and handle emotionally charged discussions without silencing students. In addition, it is recommended that lecturers engage in reflective practice, considering how their own emotions influence interactions with students. This will allow staff

to evaluate their emotional identity and its impact on inclusivity. Furthermore, higher education institutions can establish peer mentorships for academic staff to share strategies on balancing care, authority, and critical engagement.

Institutional culture

One key aspect evident in the findings is institutional culture: students believe that a positive culture makes them feel socially included. Therefore, it is recommended that higher education institutions adopt a value-care approach, treating staff well so they are emotionally sound and able to adopt an emotional praxis with students. This can be achieved by implementing critical dialogue forums where academics can discuss how emotions shape institutional culture, justice, and student success. Moreover, higher education institutions can develop transformative policies that align with support systems, mental health services, and equity initiatives, recognizing that emotions are linked to systemic conditions, not just individual resilience.

The findings, through the lens of emotional praxis, illustrate that students tend to feel a sense of belonging, which directly impacts the presence of social justice within an institution. Hence, it is recommended that institutions of higher learning create conducive, safe environments where students can express their emotions without fear of being victimized and judged. These platforms do exist at some institutions of higher learning; however, most students are not aware of these support programs. This means higher education institutions need to be more efficient in raising awareness of the existing emotional support strategies and in reviewing policies related to emotional experiences in academia.

CONCLUSION

This study focused on the place of emotional praxis within the South African higher education sector. The central theme of this study highlighted the importance of the emotional experiences of those who are often marginalized in creating socially just higher education spaces. This study explored how these emotional experiences can be used to encourage stakeholders within the sector to adopt an emotional praxis and engage in emotional discourse to better students' experience of social justice. Through autobiographies, the study found a need for emotional practice in higher education, particularly given that most students in this sector are from lower, more diverse social backgrounds. The study further indicated that it is important for all stakeholders to reflect on their emotional identity and how it influences their approach to students.

In addition, the study encourages further research on emotional experiences in higher education and on social justice and critical theory in South Africa. It enables a fresh appeal for the use of diverse qualitative data-collection methods, in which participants collaborate to collect and analyze data. The study also had some limitations that the researcher considered. Owing to the nature of the study, some participants were prompted to recall emotional encounters that left them feeling vulnerable and uncomfortable. To mitigate this, a counselor was appointed to provide emotional support to affected participants. It was also difficult to

schedule the focus group sessions, as not all participants were available at the time they were held. This was mitigated by using a reflective journal as an additional data source. The researcher's positionality as an individual working at the higher education institution was also a limitation, as the researcher could have influenced the findings. To mitigate this, the researcher kept field notes and consciously reflected on their assumption in a record to avoid bias. The study demonstrated a gap in the literature on emotional praxis in South African higher education. These findings could contribute to the design of critical emotional praxis programs that advance social justice in higher education and may serve as a basis for follow-up research exploring social justice in higher education.

REFERENCES

Bell, L. A. (2016). Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In M. Adams & L. A. Bell (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 3–26). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315775852-2

Bozalek, V., Carolissen, R., & Leibowitz, B. (2013). A pedagogy of critical hope in South African higher education. In V. Bozalek et al. (Eds.), *Discerning critical hope in educational practices* (pp. 40–54). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203431115-5

Cammarota, J. (2014). The social justice education project: Youth participatory action research in schools. In J. Cammarota & A. Romero (Eds.), *Raza studies*. University of Arizona Press.

Chubbuck, S. M., & Zembylas, M. (2008). The emotional ambivalence of socially just teaching: A case study of a novice urban schoolteacher. *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(2), 274–318. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831207311586

Cochran-Smith, M. (2010). Toward a theory of teacher education for social justice. In M. Fullan, A. Hargreaves, D. Hopkins, & A. Lieberman (Eds.), *Second international handbook of educational change* (pp. 445–467). Springer.

Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2012). Collective biography and the entangled enlivening of being. *International Review of Qualitative Research, 5*(4), 357–376. https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2012.5.4.357

Kumashiro, K. K. (2000). Toward a theory of anti-oppressive education. *Review of Educational research*, *70*(1), 25-53. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/00346543070001025

Lacour, M., & Tissington, L. D. (2011). The effects of poverty on academic achievement. *Educational Research and Reviews, 6*(7), 522–527. https://academicjournals.org/article/article1379765941_Lacour%20and%20Tissington.pdf

Maistry, S. M., & Africa, I. E. (2020). Neoliberal stratification: The confounding effect of the school poverty quintile ranking system in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education, 40*(4), 1–9. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/saje/article/view/204987

Mapuya, M. (2023). Exploring social justice issues that inform the 21st-century curriculum in higher education: Lecturers' voices and experiences. *Research in Educational Policy and Management*, 5(3), 108–127. https://doi.org/10.46303/repam.2023.26

Matsepe, D., Cross, M., & Fenyane, S. (2020). Equity in the admissions policies for undergraduate students in post democracy in selected South African universities. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, 9*, 437–445. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bf3d/5bb2dd61c2cfec4955648a3b80c8b3ca8426.pdf

Moloi, T., Matabane, M., Simuja, C., Seo, B.-I., & Tarman, B. (2023). Constructing a Social Justice Curriculum Policy in the 21st Century. *Research in Educational Policy and Management, 5*(3), i-iv. https://doi.org/10.46303/repam.2023.36

Muller, M., Motai, C., Nkopane, E., Mofokeng, T., Lephatsoe, N., & Mouton, R. (2018). Working toward a socially just curriculum in South Africa: A collaborative autobiographical narrative inquiry. *Journal of Education, 74*, 85–101. https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S2520-98682018000400007&script=sci_arttext

Naidoo, J. (2014). *A labyrinth of teacher narratives: Subjectivities and emotionality in HIV/AIDS teaching* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of KwaZulu-Natal. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/344750936.pdf

Patel, V. (2019, February 18). The new "in loco parentis." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.montana.edu/parents/student-resources/In%20Loco%20Parentis-v1-final.pd

Pietersen, D., Langeveldt, D., & Van Wyk, A. (2023). Techno-Rationalism and Higher Educational Law: Examining Legal Frameworks in Southern African Universities from a Freirean Critical Pedagogy Perspective. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education, 6*(3), 163-178. https://doi.org/10.46303/jcve.2023.26

Pithouse-Morgan, K., Khau, M., Masinga, L., & Van de Ruit, C. (2012). Letters to those who dare feel: Using reflective letter-writing to explore the emotionality of research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 11*(1), 40–56. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691201100104

Powell, L., & McGrath, S. (2018). The long and winding road to the labour market: South African public TVET college students' experiences of system failure. In C. Nägele & B. E. Stalder (Eds.), *Trends in vocational education and training research: Proceedings of the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER), Vocational Education and Training Network (VETNET)* (pp. 305–311). https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1319704

Snaza, N. (2017). Is John Dewey's thought "humanist"? *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 32*(2), 15–34. https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/view/627

Spaull, N. (2015). Schooling in South Africa: How low-quality education becomes a poverty trap. *South African Child Gauge, 12*(1), 34–41.

https://ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/content_migration/health_uct_ac_za/533/files/Child_Gauge_2015-Schooling.pdf

Teise, K., & Gaillard, C. (2019). Social justice and discipline in South African education. In M. Reyneke & R. Reyneke (Eds.), *Restorative school discipline: The law and practice* (1st ed., pp. 147–170). Juta Publishers

Zembylas, M. (2007). Mobilizing anger for social justice: The politicization of emotions in education. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 18*(1), 15–28. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10476210601151516

Zembylas, M. (2012). Critical emotional praxis for reconciliation education: Emerging evidence and pedagogical implications. *Irish Educational Studies, 31*(1), 9–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2011.579480

Zembylas, M. (2015). *Emotion and traumatic conflict: Reclaiming healing in education.* Oxford University Press.

Zembylas, M. (2018). Decolonial possibilities in South African higher education: Reconfiguring humanising pedagogies as with decolonising pedagogies. *South African Journal of Education, 38*(4), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v38n4a1699