



Report on the Learning and Teaching Imbizo 2022

The Learning and Teaching Imbizo took place from 22nd to 25th November 2022 at the Southern Sun Maharani and Elangeni. The Imbizo was planned and organised by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. The Imbizo theme *Time for Universities to grow up?* provided delegates with the opportunities to pause, engage reflexively and ask deep, critical questions about change and growth post-pandemic – it was an opportunity to engage collaboratively in dialogue and deliberate on critical higher education issues.

One hundred forty-six (146) delegates registered from 24 institutions, 13 of these were SA higher education institutions, a number of institutions from Africa and two overseas institutions. There were 90 DUT registered delegates, including postgraduate students. There were five studentpreneurs from the innobiz who exhibited their work. The Imbizo took place as a hybrid event enabling in-person and virtual participation.

The 87 presentation formats included

- 3 keynote addresses

- 4 workshops

- 5 Critical dialogues

- 59 paper presentations

- 16 lightning presentations (shorter papers)

With some cancellations and withdrawals during the event, there were 80 presentations.

The attendance numbers (somewhat disappointing) during the Imbizo was as follows:

- 22 November: 81

- 23 November: 77

- 24 November: 78

- 25 November: 53

The first day of the Imbizo commenced with 4 workshops and 1 critical dialogue session. The following days included keynote presentations, papers and critical dialogues. On day 2, delegates were warmly welcomed by Prof Mncedisi Maphalala. The acting DVC Teaching and Learning, Prof Suren Singh, delivered an inspiring opening address and officially opened the LT Imbizo.

The provocative keynote presentations on days 2, 3 and 4 included a diverse range of critical higher education imperatives. The first keynote address was delivered by Prof Mugendi M'Rithaa, acting DVC: Administration, Planning and Finance, Dean and Professor of Industrial Design at Machakos University, Kenya. Prof M'Rithaa's presentation entitled *Co-creating HEIs in the Age of Disruption: a Designerly Perspective*, focussed on the need for introspection and a renewed sense of agency for higher education to deal with the changing contexts brought about through the pandemic but also existing issues around postcoloniality. In his presentation, Prof M'Rithaa drew on design thinking as a novel and creative approach to deal with some of the wicked problems that higher education must engage with.

The second keynote address was delivered by Prof Lee Ruszynyak, Associate Professor at the School of Education and Director of the Legitimation Code theory hub, at the University of the Witwatersrand. Prof Ruszynyak focused her presentation, entitled, *Preparing students to participate in practice: Lessons from teacher education*, on making the tacit aspects of our teaching explicit to students so that they can move beyond mimicry to understanding the reasoning of why academics do what they do. She drew on tools from legitimation code theory to demonstrate how academics can reveal the inner logic of their practices to their students.

The final keynote presentation by Prof Mncedisi Maphalala, Director CELT, focused on *Rethinking Higher Education assessment practices: An Academic integrity perspective*. This topic also generated much interest and discussions given that assessment quality and integrity have been challenges experienced during the pandemic and emergency remote learning, teaching and assessment. A key aspect highlighted by Prof Maphalala was that assessment design is crucial to ensuring and assuring quality and integrity.

There were robust discussions and deliberations from the diverse presentations throughout the Imbizo, and there were new collaborations forged among participants. Day 2 and 3 concluded each day with a 'harvesting session' that included reflections and discussions of the day's engagements. The final day concluded with a reflection on the Imbizo, and participants shared their learnings over the four days.

The evening events included a Cocktail event on 22nd November and an Imbizo dinner on 24th November. At the Cocktail event, we celebrated the milestone of the publication of a book by DUT colleagues. The book *Extended Curriculum Programmes: Challenges and Opportunities*, edited by Prof Tennyson Mgutshini, was launched. 8 of the 9 chapters are from DUT authors.

Working in collaboration with the research office and Dr Oparinde, there will be a Special Issue of papers presented at the Imbizo in the Alternation Journal. The guest editors for the special issue are Nalini Chitanand, Prof Mncedisi Maphalala and Dr Gita Mistri. This issue is expected to be published before the end of 2023.

Feedback received from participants indicated that they found the Imbizo engaging, thought-provoking, informative, insightful, and provided opportunities for collaboration. See the word cloud of responses in figure 1. Other delegates submitted the following feedback:

“I want to extend my deep thanks to you and your team for the warmth, openness and hospitality shown at the conference. I found the papers very thought-provoking, showing a high level of caring for students, and the quality of the research and presentations were outstanding. My colleague and I look forward to next year’s conference. I am also very excited about the possibility of developing further and future collaborations with some of the phenomenal DUT colleagues I met over these last days. I did not feel as if I was from outside of DUT – great spirit and warmth!!!” (Dr Sharmila Rama, UKZN).

“I want to take the opportunity to congratulate and thank you for a well-organised, well-presented, interesting and insightful Learning and Teaching Imbizo. I enjoyed every moment. Thank you for the generosity in the gifts, meals and other items – truly appreciated. I loved the diversity in the various topics presented. The theme was very appropriate, stimulated a lot of different thinking, and opened up a lot of areas for debate, discussion and exploration. I enjoyed the interactions and discussions with the many academics and dignitaries present. Thank you for including me in the presentations and for the opportunity to chair sessions. I look forward to the next one. Please be reassured of my support and assistance at any time. Once again, congratulations; you deserve the biggest applause for all your organisation of your wonderful Imbizo.” (Dr Nellie Naranjee, DUT)

Figure 1: Participants' Learnings and Reflections



LT Imbizo 2022 participating universities/ institutions

SA Universities:

1. Durban University of Technology – 90 participants
2. North-West University
3. Sol Plaatje University
4. Stellenbosch University
5. Tshwane University of Technology
6. University of the Free State
7. University of Johannesburg
8. University of KwaZulu-Natal
9. University of Limpopo
10. University of South Africa
11. University of the Witwatersrand
12. University of Zululand
13. Walter Sisulu University

SA other institutions

14. Ehlanzeni TVET College
15. SADTU

External participants:

16. Bindura University of Science Education - Zimbabwe
17. International Development Research Centre – Canada
18. Science and Technology Policy Research Institute, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR-STEPRI) - Ghana
19. University of Abomey-Calavi – Benin, West Africa
20. University of Cumbria - UK
21. University of Gondar - Ethiopia
22. University of Professional Studies, Accra - Ghana
23. Women's University in Africa - Zimbabwe

Keynote speakers

24. Prof Mugendi M'Rithaa - Machakos University, Kenya
- Prof Lee Rusznyak – WITS
Prof Mncedisi Maphalala – DUT

It was noticed that some delegates arrived only for their presentations and did not stay for the duration of the programme. The planning committee will take this into consideration and explore appropriate dates for future events and how best to encourage delegates to engage during the course of the Imbizo.

Teaching and Learning Imbizo Programme & Book of Abstract



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