



**UNIVERSITY  
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**CENTRE FOR ONLINE &  
DISTANCE EDUCATION**

## **Evaluating Decolonising the Curriculum initiatives on the PGC International Sports Management**

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## 1. Abstract

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the decolonising the curriculum (DtC) work within the Postgraduate Certificate in International Sports Management (PGCert ISM), offered in an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) format. The DtC interventions incorporated diverse cultural perspectives, non-Western methodologies, and inclusive pedagogies, aiming to create a holistic and decolonised educational environment suited to ODL learners. Using a mixed-methods approach that combines Action Research (AR) and Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE), this study provides an in-depth analysis of the outcomes and challenges of these initiatives in the ODL context.

The PTE framework includes a conceptual model and empirical evaluation, analyzing student surveys on decolonisation awareness, the influence of a culturally diverse teaching team, and the engagement with diverse resources. Action Research supports the continuous assessment and refinement of these initiatives, making them responsive to the unique needs of ODL students.

Key findings highlight variations in initial awareness, the potential positive impact of a culturally diverse teaching team, and the effectiveness of diverse resources in enhancing ODL learning outcomes. The study concludes that these decolonisation efforts may foster inclusivity, critical thinking, and cultural sensitivity, which are essential in global sports management education and ODL setting.

Recommendations include improved promotion of decolonisation webinars, tailored support for diverse student backgrounds, and the consistent integration of decolonial elements across the ODL curriculum. This study contributes to the discourse on decolonising higher education, especially within ODL frameworks, by demonstrating its potential to enrich learning experiences and support inclusivity on a global scale.

This research would have never reached fruition without the support and funding by CODE.

## 2. Background and introduction

Decolonisation, originally understood as the formal end of colonial rule, has evolved into a broad and complex concept encompassing the reclamation of cultural, psychological, and intellectual independence from colonial legacies. Today, it entails

dismantling entrenched colonial ideologies within education, society, and politics, with particular emphasis on addressing imbalances in knowledge production and validating diverse perspectives, especially those from the Global South. This expanded view highlights the need to challenge the enduring dominance of Eurocentric knowledge systems and cultural hierarchies that have shaped many educational structures worldwide, particularly in Western higher education.

The call to "decolonise the curriculum" in UK higher education has gained momentum, driven by global movements that address racial and colonial legacies (Bhambra et al., 2018). Events such as the 2020 murder of George Floyd sparked worldwide reflections on systemic racial inequalities, further amplifying demands for educational reform. In this context, Decolonising the Curriculum (DtC) initiatives in UK higher education seek to question and dismantle Eurocentric biases in curricula, incorporating non-Western knowledge systems and diverse cultural perspectives to create more inclusive learning environments. Thinkers such as Fanon (1968) and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) have long argued for the decolonisation of educational systems, advocating for the inclusion and recognition of knowledge from historically marginalised regions.

Despite these compelling calls for change, the implementation of decolonial initiatives faces considerable challenges, especially within neoliberal university frameworks that emphasize employability, student satisfaction, and market-driven outcomes (Giroux, 2014; Kidman, 2020). These constraints often lead to superficial reforms that fail to achieve the deeper, systemic transformations required for genuine decolonisation. As a result, many DtC efforts have yet to fulfill their potential, frequently limited to symbolic gestures rather than meaningful change. Research on decolonisation in education underscores the complexity of implementing these initiatives, revealing a gap between theory and practice that remains unaddressed in many academic settings.

In scholarly discourse, decolonisation involves a fundamental reassessment of knowledge production practices, seeking to rectify historical biases by decentering Eurocentric narratives and creating a more balanced intellectual landscape (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). This process often involves a return to indigenous knowledge systems, cultural practices, and languages suppressed under colonial regimes. Tuck and Yang (2012) further argue that true decolonisation goes beyond

symbolic changes; it necessitates actual restitution and the reclamation of cultural identity, land, and practices.

### The ISM Programme's Contribution to the Field

The International Sports Management (ISM) programme at the University of London aims to contribute to decolonial discourse by embedding decolonial initiatives within sports management—a field that has traditionally received less focus in decolonial studies compared to disciplines like the humanities and social sciences. The ISM programme systematically implements decolonisation through a structured Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE) framework to assess its initiatives. By doing so, it generates concrete data on effective strategies for decolonising sports education, thus adding to the relatively sparse empirical research in this area.

Key elements of the ISM programme's approach include:

**Ubuntu Pedagogy and Decolonial Critique:** The ISM curriculum incorporates Ubuntu principles—a concept rooted in African philosophy that emphasizes community and interconnectedness—alongside decolonial critique in assessments. This culturally grounded approach not only enriches students' learning experience but also serves as a potential model for other programmes seeking to integrate indigenous perspectives.

**Independent Research Development:** Through student-driven research projects, the ISM programme fosters critical thinking and encourages students to engage deeply with decolonisation topics, generating new insights that contribute to the broader decolonial discourse in sports.

**Integrating Local and Case-Based Studies:** To enhance relevance and comprehension, the ISM curriculum includes case studies from local contexts that resonate with students' backgrounds, enabling a deeper, more personal engagement with course material.

**Assessment Redesign:** The programme's assessments are designed to prompt students to analyze content through a decolonial lens, fostering critical thinking on issues of bias, representation, and inclusivity.

Curriculum Co-Creation: Recognizing the importance of diverse perspectives, ISM actively engages students in curriculum development from the outset, beginning with introductory webinars. This collaborative approach not only enhances engagement but also instills a sense of ownership in students, aligning with the decolonial principles of inclusivity and empowerment.

Through these initiatives, the ISM programme aims to bridge existing gaps in the literature by providing evidence-based insights into decolonising sports education and highlighting the importance of incorporating cultural relevance, equity, and inclusivity within curricula.

### 3. Theory and Review of Literature

Theory and Review of Literature (RoL) examines the underlying assumptions of the DtC initiatives to ascertain their efficacy and identify existing knowledge gaps. The RoL introduces the PTE framework and critically evaluates how it is used to assess evidence and literature related to each intervention, exploring the assumptions behind them and identifying gaps.

#### Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE) Framework

PTE is a structured approach used to assess how and why a programme achieves its outcomes by mapping the causal pathways from inputs to outcomes (Chen, 2005). The conceptual framework within PTE outlines these expected causal pathways, connecting programme inputs—such as decolonisation webinars and diverse faculty—to desired educational outcomes. This foundation sets the stage for empirical evaluation, involving the analysis of data from student surveys that assess awareness of decolonisation concepts, the impact of teaching team diversity, and engagement with diverse resources and pedagogies.

Studies have demonstrated the utility of PTE in various educational contexts. For instance, Chen (2005) illustrated the effectiveness of PTE in understanding complex educational interventions and their outcomes. Similarly, Donaldson (2007) applied PTE to evaluate teacher development programmes, highlighting the method's ability to uncover both intended and unintended outcomes. Despite these successes, gaps remain in the literature regarding the application of PTE specifically to decolonisation



initiatives in higher education. Comprehensive studies are needed to assess the long-term impact of such initiatives on student learning and engagement.

### Action Research (AR) Methodology

AR plays a crucial role in the ongoing assessment and refinement of the decolonisation initiatives within the PGCert ISM programme. AR is a reflective process of progressive problem-solving led by individuals working in teams or as part of a community of practice to improve the way they address issues and solve problems (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). By employing AR, the PGCert ISM programme continually evaluates the impact of its decolonisation interventions, identifying strengths and areas needing improvement.

AR facilitates the collection of qualitative data through methods such as focus groups, interviews, and reflective journals, providing in-depth insights into student experiences and perceptions (Stringer, 2013). These insights are invaluable for understanding how diverse cultural perspectives and non-Western methodologies are received by students and integrated into their learning processes. For instance, student feedback on the effectiveness of decolonisation webinars and the diversity of the teaching team can lead to immediate adjustments in content delivery and pedagogical approaches. Moreover, AR promotes a cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Lewin, 1946), ensuring that the programme remains dynamic and responsive to the needs of its students. This iterative process not only gauges the effectiveness of the decolonisation initiatives but also drives continuous improvement. By systematically analyzing the data collected, the programme refines its strategies to enhance learning outcomes, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant and effective (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002).

### Webinar as interventions to teach Conceptualization of Decolonization

The Postgraduate Certificate in International Sports Management (PGCert ISM) is an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programme that conducts synchronous sessions once a month. These monthly sessions include module wrap-ups and a program-wide webinar on decolonisation. During these webinars, a lecture is delivered to introduce the concept of decolonisation, followed by opportunities for students to engage through Q&A and participate in breakout group discussions. Webinars have become

indispensable tools within the ODL landscape, particularly for articulating and examining the multifaceted concept of decolonisation. These digital seminars facilitate an interactive learning environment that includes real-time Q&A sessions, polls, and discussions. Such features are especially advantageous for exploring the intricate historical, cultural, and power dynamics essential for a comprehensive understanding of decolonisation.

Czerniewicz and Rother (2020) argue that webinars democratize knowledge by removing geographical barriers and incorporating diverse perspectives, which are crucial for engaging discussions on decolonisation. The ability of webinars to foster a broader understanding through direct dialogue among diverse participants underscores their value in educational settings dedicated to decolonial studies.

Within the PGCert ISM framework, webinars are strategically employed to deepen students' understanding of decolonisation, aligning with the Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE) framework. This framework supports the assumption that active participation in webinars can lead students to acquire the necessary knowledge to effectively engage in decolonisation efforts. The effectiveness of such interventions in fostering an understanding and critical engagement with decolonisation concepts is supported by research indicating that interactive, digitally mediated educational experiences can significantly influence students' perceptions and actions regarding colonial legacies (Singh and Major, 2019). Thus, this model not only facilitates knowledge acquisition but also stimulates critical thinking and dialogue essential for challenging and reshaping prevailing paradigms to accommodate a more inclusive and diverse academic discourse.

### Teaching Team Diversity Impact and Decolonial Outcomes

The teaching team for the Postgraduate Certificate in International Sports Management (PGCert ISM) is composed of a diverse group of educators, including Black Africans, a Asian, and Caucasian members. The team has two female tutors out of seven. The significance of having a diverse teaching staff in higher education, especially within the context of decolonising curricula, has become a prominent topic in academic discourse. This review explores the impact of teaching team diversity on decolonial outcomes, focusing on the PGCert ISM programme.

Diversity within educational faculty is increasingly recognized as essential for fostering inclusive academic environments. Theoretical frameworks suggest that educators from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds bring distinct perspectives that enrich the learning experience, supporting the broader objective of decolonising academia (Smith & Turner, 2015). In the PGCert ISM programme, this diversity challenges the traditionally Eurocentric views that dominate the field of international sports management.

Empirical research underscores that diverse teaching teams enhance student satisfaction and overall educational outcomes. Jenkins and Kendricks (2013) have shown that student engagement and comprehension improve when taught by educators from a range of cultural backgrounds. This diversity broadens the scope of perspectives presented within the curriculum, making teaching methods and content more accessible and relevant to an internationally diverse student body (Morales & Hanson, 2015). The varied cultural and pedagogical approaches brought by a diverse faculty also improve students' critical thinking and empathetic abilities, prompting them to critically evaluate their assumptions and biases. This aligns with the goals of decolonial education to challenge and deconstruct colonial legacies in knowledge and learning processes (Harris & Reynolds, 2019).

The participation of educators from diverse backgrounds enhances the curriculum's relevance and accessibility. For instance, the PGCert ISM programme integrates insights and case studies from non-Western sports management practices, providing students with a more inclusive and balanced perspective on the discipline. This method expands students' academic horizons and fosters a nuanced understanding of the complexities of sports management in various cultural contexts (Lee & Nguyen, 2016).

A crucial aspect of decolonisation in education involves challenging traditional views on knowledge ownership and origin. The Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE) framework employed in the PGCert ISM suggests that interacting with non-Western educators confronts the notion that knowledge is predominantly a Western or traditionally dominant cultural product. This shift is essential in fields like sports

management, where contributions from the global South are often overlooked or minimized (Thompson & Bhopal, 2013).

This literature review underscores the profound and multifaceted impact of teaching team diversity on achieving decolonial outcomes in higher education, particularly within specialized programmes like the PGCert ISM. Such diversity not only enhances educational experiences and outcomes but also plays a pivotal role in redefining the ownership and narrative of knowledge in academia.

### Engagement with Diverse Resources

The integration of non-Western sources into educational materials plays a pivotal role in the decolonisation of curricula. This critical review evaluates how the inclusion of diverse resources challenges the predominance of Western epistemologies and broadens the knowledge spectrum accessible to students. The necessity to challenge Western dominance in academic content is well-documented. Incorporating diverse, particularly non-Western, sources into educational frameworks is essential for decolonisation, offering a counter-narrative to the traditionally Eurocentric academic discourse (Anderson & Williams, 2017). This approach not only confronts the hegemony of Western thought but also introduces students to a wider array of knowledge, thereby democratizing the information that shapes scholarly discussions.

Scholarly literature asserts that the integration of diverse resources significantly expands academic discourse. By bringing multiple cultural and intellectual traditions into the classroom, educators enable students to encounter a variety of perspectives, enriching their learning experience and fostering a more inclusive educational environment (Kim & Ng, 2018). This inclusivity is crucial in cultivating an academic atmosphere that respects and values global intellectual contributions equally.

The engagement with diverse resources helps create learning environments that are inherently more inclusive. Such environments encourage students to question conventional wisdom and explore new ideas, which is fundamental to intellectual growth and critical thinking. Moreover, exposure to varied perspectives promotes cross-cultural understanding and prepares students to operate in a globalised world (Patel & Lynch, 2019)

## Case Studies and Local Knowledge

The integration of local case studies into the curriculum of sports management represents a transformative pedagogical approach that deeply immerses students in specific cultural contexts, thereby broadening their global understanding and appreciation for the diversity inherent in sports practices. This critical review delves into the educational advantages of this method within the framework of the Postgraduate Certificate in International Sports Management (PGCert ISM) and examines its pivotal role in facilitating the decolonisation of education.

Local case studies in sports management education offer students a detailed view of how sports are influenced by and interact with local cultures. This approach significantly enhances a broader understanding of the diverse methods in which sports are practised and managed across different societies, thereby expanding students' global perspectives. Levine and Dean (2018) assert that employing local contexts in teaching enables students to witness the varied applications of sports management principles, thus underscoring the adaptability and relevance of these principles on a global scale. Furthermore, the literature on case-based learning highlights its efficacy in connecting theoretical concepts with real-world applications. Engaging students with local case studies presents them with scenarios that necessitate the application of classroom-acquired knowledge to address practical challenges, enhancing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Peterson & Jones, 2019). This educational strategy not only reinforces learning but also equips students to navigate the complexities of managing sports in culturally diverse settings.

The emphasis on local contexts is also crucial in the decolonisation of education. By prioritising local knowledge and examples, educators confront and challenge the dominance of Western-centric narratives and theoretical frameworks. The PGCert ISM programme strategically utilises local case studies to root learning within the students' own cultural and geographic realities, thereby promoting an educational paradigm that values local knowledge as equally as global theories (Singh & Richardson, 2021). This method effectively bridges the gap between global theoretical frameworks and local practical applications, a key step in the decolonisation process.

Specifically, within the PGCert ISM, local case studies are employed to deepen students' understanding of decolonisation. By exploring how various communities interpret and manage sports, students are enabled to critically evaluate the impact of colonial legacies on sports management and to explore alternative, decolonised approaches to sports practices. This facilitates a more nuanced comprehension of decolonisation, transforming it from an abstract theory into a tangible concept (Taylor & Mukherjee, 2020).

In summary, the use of local case studies in sports management education is instrumental in enhancing educational outcomes, particularly within the PGCert ISM. By effectively bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, fostering a comprehensive global understanding, and contributing to the decolonisation of the curriculum, local case studies serve as a vital tool in shaping competent and culturally aware sports management professionals.

### Decolonial Critique in Assessments

The integration of decolonial critique in assessments marks a transformative shift in educational methodologies, significantly enhancing the learning experience by fostering a critically engaged, ethically conscious, and intellectually autonomous student body. This scholarly review investigates the profound impact of embedding decolonial perspectives within academic assessments, a practice that not only enriches the discourse but also aligns educational practices with the imperatives of social justice.

Decolonial critique in assessments is deeply rooted in the principles of critical pedagogy, which advocates for the empowerment of students through critical reflection on the social, political, and economic contexts of their education. Paulo Freire's seminal work (1970) highlights the importance of engaging students in reflections that challenge systemic biases and colonial legacies embedded within contemporary education systems. By incorporating these critiques into assessments, educators equip students with the necessary tools to question and dismantle dominant narratives and structures that shape their fields of study. Empirical research supports the effectiveness of integrating critical and decolonial perspectives into educational assessments. Scholars such as Hooks (1994) and Giroux (2003) argue that when

students critically engage with mainstream epistemologies, they attain higher levels of critical thinking and are more likely to perceive their learning as relevant to real-world issues. This method of assessment compels students to actively engage with knowledge, critically examining its origins and implications.

Moreover, embedding decolonial critique in assessments enables a deeper engagement with the concept of intellectual autonomy. Walter Mignolo (2009) emphasises the importance of this practice for assessing historical and contemporary inequalities relevant to knowledge production. Such an approach fosters the development of a critical consciousness in students, which is academically rigorous and socially and ethically informed. The literature also indicates that decolonial critiques in assessments significantly contribute to academic discourse by creating environments where diverse epistemologies and experiences are valued. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's research (2012) on decolonising methodologies illustrates how questioning the universality of Western-centric knowledge systems promotes a more inclusive academic community, integrating and valuing diverse intellectual traditions.

In conclusion, the practice of integrating decolonial critique into academic assessments represents a vital step toward redefining educational standards and outcomes in accordance with decolonial theory. It involves not merely the incorporation of new content but a re-evaluation of the purpose and methods of education, aiming to cultivate a more just and equitable society.

#### Incorporation of the Pedagogy of Ubuntu or Ubuntugogy

Ubuntugogy, an educational approach derived from the Ubuntu philosophy rooted in African traditions, emphasises community, interconnectedness, and collective identity over the individualistic models typical of Western pedagogy. This relational pedagogy fosters a sense of community, collaboration, and holistic development in learning environments, thus contributing to the decolonisation of education, as exemplified in programmes like the Postgraduate Certificate in International Sports Management (PGCert ISM). By promoting the idea that "I am because we are," ubuntugogy enhances learning by viewing individual success as a collective achievement (Omodan & Diko, 2021).

## Epistemology and Ontology of Ubuntu

The epistemology of ubuntu is grounded in African values, beliefs, and experiences. It privileges knowledge derived from lived experiences, cultural practices, and environmental interactions over purely theoretical knowledge. For instance, in the PGCert ISM programme, students learn through case studies and real-life examples from their diverse cultural backgrounds, enhancing their understanding of sports management in different contexts. This approach recognises the value of students' local knowledge and experiences, making the learning process more relevant and engaging. Ubuntu encourages the use of local languages, stories and contexts in teaching, fostering an educational environment that is culturally relevant to students' realities. In the PGCert ISM, discussions and projects often incorporate local sports events and management practices, allowing students to draw connections between their studies and their personal experiences in sports management.

Ontologically, ubuntu centres on the communal nature of human existence, recognising the interdependence of individuals and communities. It sees the self as fundamentally connected to others, advocating for a moral and ethical framework rooted in solidarity and humanism (Bangura, 2005; van der Walt, 2010). In the context of the PGCert ISM, this means fostering a sense of community among students and staff, where peer learning is promoted. The programme encourages students to share their diverse experiences, learn from each other, and support one another, reflecting the communal ethos of Ubuntu.

**Transformative Tendencies of Ubuntu:** Ubuntu's transformative tendencies are evident in its potential to liberate education from Eurocentric and Americentric impositions. It challenges dominant Western narratives by validating and incorporating indigenous knowledge systems and cultural contexts. This decolonial pedagogy promotes social justice, equity, and inclusivity by fostering environments where all voices are heard and valued. Ubuntu emphasises critical reflection, dialogue, and mutual respect, transforming educational settings into spaces of empowerment and collective growth (Freire, 1996; Oelofsen, 2015).



## Pedagogical Applications and Benefits

The application of Ubuntu in educational settings has been shown to cultivate a strong sense of community and collaboration among students. This pedagogical strategy enhances classroom dynamics, making them more engaged and inclusive. According to Gade (2012), the Ubuntu notion of personhood promotes social cohesion and transforms educational settings into spaces characterised by mutual care and respect, significantly enhancing the dynamics of group learning.

Ubuntu's emphasis on the collective aspects of human experience makes it an invaluable tool for promoting holistic learning experiences that are both culturally relevant and socially engaging. This pedagogical approach supports not only the cognitive development of students but also nurtures their emotional and social skills, fostering an empathetic understanding of knowledge as a communal activity that benefits all members of the community (Waghid & Smeyers, 2012). For example, the PGCert ISM programme leverages this empathetic focus to help students appreciate and respect diverse worldviews. Peer learning is actively promoted as students and staff form a community of diverse experiences, facilitating mutual learning. The multicultural richness of the programme allows for the exploration of sports management concepts and understanding how they translate across different contexts, thereby challenging and enriching conventional perspectives.

In the context of 21st-century Open Distance Learning (ODL) classrooms, ubuntuogy is particularly relevant. It supports the creation of inclusive, learner-centred environments that embrace diversity and promote collaboration. Ubuntuogy enhances the learning experience by encouraging participatory methods, shared leadership, and democratic decision-making processes. It equips learners with the skills and attitudes necessary to navigate and contribute to a globalised world while staying rooted in their cultural identities. By integrating traditional knowledge with modern educational practices, ubuntuogy offers a holistic approach to learning that is both culturally and contextually appropriate for diverse student populations (Rampa & Mphahlele, 2016; Ngubane & Makua, 2021). It also prepares teachers to focus on human attributes such as empathy and interpersonal relations, which are areas where artificial intelligence may fall short.

In conclusion, integrating Ubuntu into educational practices is particularly effective in decolonising education. It challenges the dominance of Eurocentric models by advocating for an approach that respects and incorporates indigenous knowledge systems and cultural contexts. Ubuntu aligns with the goals of decolonial education, creating environments where cultural diversity is viewed as a strength. This approach not only enhances educational outcomes but also plays a crucial role in transforming educational systems to be more inclusive and equitable, nurturing responsive, responsible, and interconnected learners (Dei, 2014; Omodan & Tsotetsi, 2019).

#### Methodology and methods for data collection and analysis

The methodology of this study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining Action Research and Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE) to validate the effectiveness of decolonisation initiatives within the Postgraduate Certificate in International Sports Management (PGCert ISM) programme. This dual approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative elements, providing a comprehensive understanding of the data.

Action Research is an iterative, reflective process of problem-solving led by individuals working with others in teams or as part of a community of practice (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). This approach is useful for this study as it allows for ongoing assessment and refinement of decolonisation initiatives, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in achieving their goals. Programme Theory Evaluation (PTE) systematically validates the effectiveness of the initiatives. The PTE conceptual framework outlines expected causal pathways that connect programme inputs—such as decolonisation webinars and diverse faculty—to desired educational outcomes (Chen, 2005). This framework guides empirical evaluation, which involves analysing data from student surveys. These surveys assess various aspects, including awareness of decolonisation concepts, the impact of teaching team diversity, and engagement with diverse resources. The survey encompassed a diverse participant cohort, with sample sizes reaching up to 34 students.

#### Data Management

The anonymity of all participants was rigorously maintained to ensure no information could potentially reveal their identities. Data management and storage were strictly

controlled, with access limited exclusively to the researchers involved in this project. All data were securely stored within the University of London's databases. This mixed-methods approach, combining Action Research and PTE, allows for a robust evaluation of the decolonisation initiatives, ensuring comprehensive insights into their effectiveness and areas for improvement (Donaldson, 2007; Heleta, 2018).

#### Data collection

The data collection took place between 5th April 2024 and 5th May 2024 via the Microsoft Forms Survey platform provided by the University of London Worldwide. Surveys were sent individually to student cohorts who studied exclusively during the decolonisation efforts. A total of 34 participants responded out of a population of nearly 184, resulting in a response rate of approximately 18%. The survey was fully anonymous and congruent with the University of London's research ethics policies.

#### *Data Analysis*

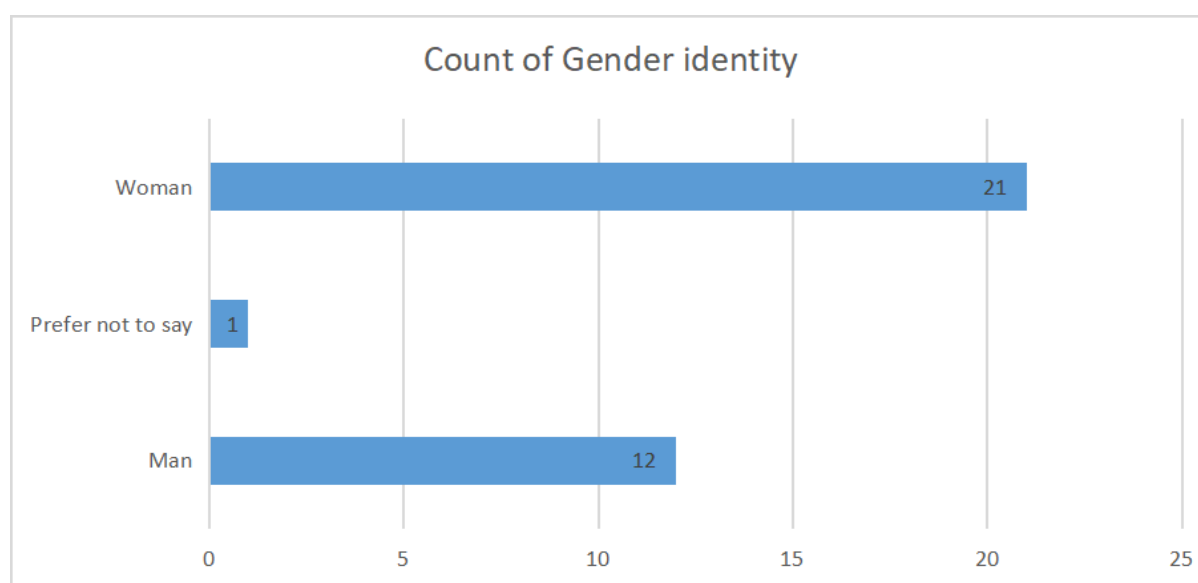
Microsoft Survey Forms provides files in xlsx as well as a summary of the responses in a predefined chart, graphs, word clouds and other. In order to analyse the results, the following software were used: Excel and Jamovi which is a similar to SPSS open source alternative. The qualitative part of the questionnaire allowed a content analysis which was illustrated through thematic examination. All open ended questions are situated as follow up questions to a close ended questions which analysis is additionally enriched through a word cloud illustration.

## 4. Results and Discussion

#### Gender Identity

The survey included 12 men, 21 women, and 1 participant who preferred not to disclose their gender identity. Although the survey included the option 'prefer not to say' and 'other', options such as 'non-binary', 'genderqueer/Gender non-conforming', 'prefer to self-describe' are widely used in surveys. Although, the distribution is with a visible predominance for females, the entire group reaches 18.48% of the entire population of students which is an acceptable part due to representing an entire teaching group of students.

Figure 1. Count of gender identity.

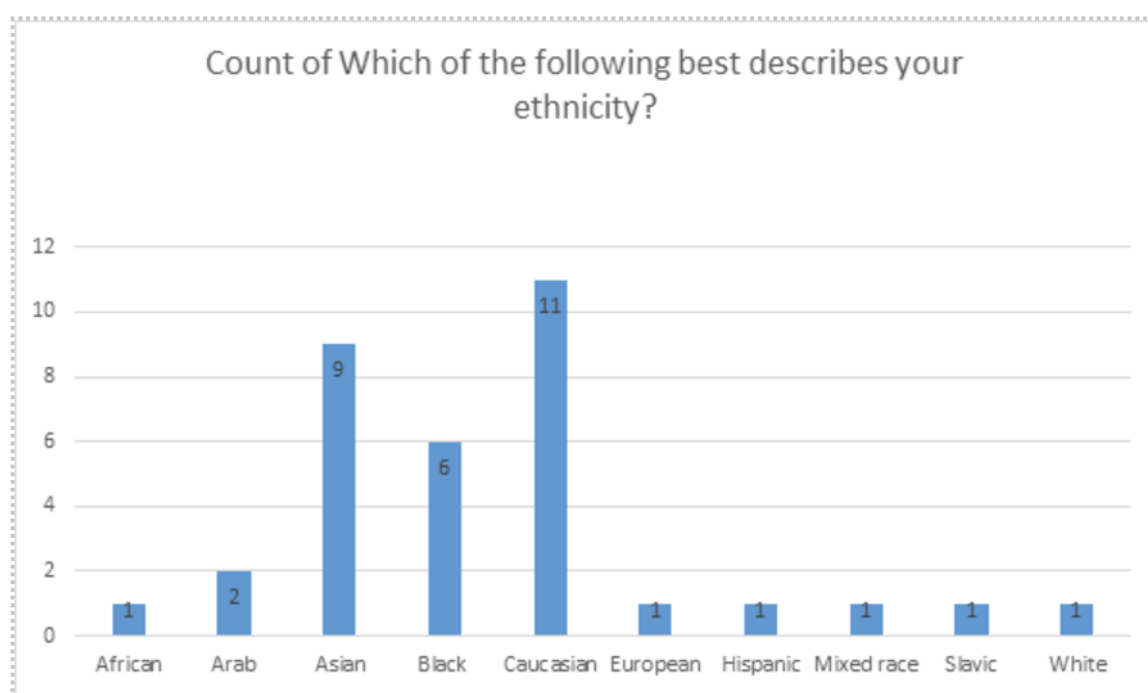


Participants in this study represent diverse ethnic identities, including African, Arab, Asian, Black, Caucasian, European, Hispanic, Mixed race, Slavic, and White backgrounds. Each category brings distinct cultural perspectives that are crucial for a comprehensive evaluation of decolonization efforts. For instance, "White" encompasses individuals from Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, while "Caucasian" more specifically refers to those from the Caucasus. Similarly, "Slavic" reflects Eastern European backgrounds with unique linguistic and cultural histories, and "Hispanic" includes individuals from Spanish-speaking Latin American countries. This diversity broadens the study's cultural insights, enriching its relevance.

The complexity of ethnic and cultural self-identification presents challenges, as self-identification is deeply personal and may not align perfectly with standardized classifications. Cultural identities are often layered, influenced by history, language, and region, and can vary significantly within broad categories like "African" or "Asian." Consequently, classifications may unintentionally obscure specific heritages, impacting the depth of cultural understanding.

To address these issues, I recommend using the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) Ethnic Group Classification. This system offers a structured yet flexible approach, allowing participants to specify additional cultural identifiers when needed. This hybrid model enhances inclusivity, respects self-identification, and ensures meaningful comparisons across diverse groups, making it especially valuable for nuanced decolonization studies (ONS, 2021).

Figure 2. Count of ethnic identity.



The ethnic diversity among participants in the University of London PGCert ISM programme at the University of London has important implications for the study of sports management. With students from over 90 nationalities, this programme stands out compared to other postgraduate sports management programmes in the UK, which may often have a more regionally concentrated demographic. This extensive diversity brings a balanced, culturally rich perspective to the field, which is essential for a comprehensive understanding of sports management in a global context.

The diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of students in the PGCert ISM enrich discussions beyond Eurocentric perspectives, fostering a more inclusive approach to sports management education. This diversity enhances the learning experience and highlights the importance of culturally inclusive practices in creating a decolonised curriculum, setting an example for other UK programmes to adopt a global perspective.

### *Recommendations*

- i. Tailored Support for Diverse Needs:
  - o Develop and implement support systems tailored to the specific needs of students from different ethnic backgrounds. This could include language assistance, cultural sensitivity training for faculty, and peer mentoring programmes.

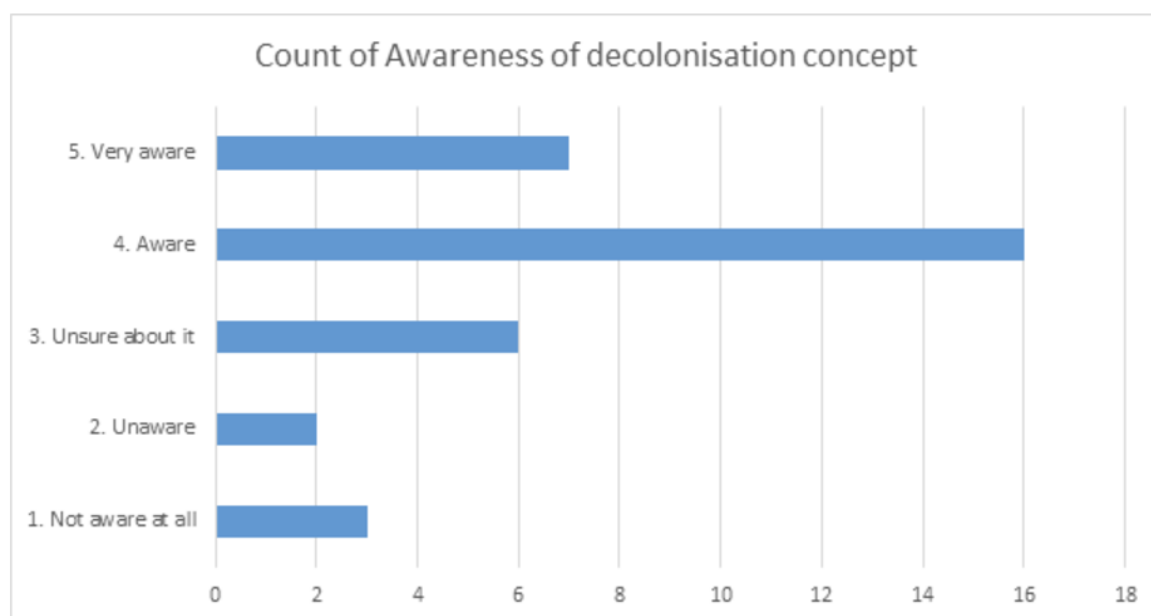
- ii. Continuous Engagement and Feedback:
  - Establish regular channels for students to provide feedback on their experiences. This could involve focus groups, surveys, and open forums to ensure that the programme remains responsive to the needs of a diverse student body.
- iii. Integration of Culturally Diverse Case Studies:
  - Enhance the curriculum by integrating case studies and examples from various cultural contexts. This will help students relate theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios and understand sports management practices in different cultural settings.
- iv. Promotion of Inclusive Teaching Practices:
  - Encourage faculty to adopt inclusive teaching practices that accommodate the diverse cultural backgrounds of students. This could include collaborative projects, group discussions, and activities that draw on students' personal and cultural experiences.
- v. Ongoing Professional Development:
  - Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively teach a diverse student body. This will ensure that the teaching methods remain inclusive and culturally sensitive.

### Awareness of Decolonisation Concept

The survey results reveal varying levels of familiarity with the concept of decolonisation among participants prior to engaging with the programme's initiatives. Specifically, 7 participants reported being very aware, 16 were aware, 6 were unsure, 2 were unaware, and 3 were not aware of decolonisation. This baseline measurement is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of the programme's educational interventions, as it provides a starting point to track improvements in understanding and engagement with decolonial principles. Understanding decolonisation enables PGCert ISM students to challenge Eurocentric biases and adopt inclusive practices, enriching their learning and contributions to a diverse field. Staff knowledge is equally

vital, as it shapes a curriculum that values diverse perspectives. These survey results are essential for tutors in designing support activities, such as online discussions, to foster a comfortable understanding of decolonisation in their studies and to apply decolonial insights to real-world scenarios.

Figure 3. Count of awareness of decolonisation concept.



### *Discussion of Results: Awareness of Decolonisation Concept*

#### **Key Insights**

- i. Varied Levels of Awareness:
  - The survey results indicate that participants had diverse levels of familiarity with the decolonisation concept prior to the programme's initiatives. With 16 participants aware and 7 very aware, a significant portion had some understanding of the concept.
  - However, 6 participants were unsure, 2 were unaware, and 3 were not aware at all, highlighting a critical gap in baseline knowledge.
- ii. Need for Baseline Assessment:
  - This baseline measurement is essential for tailoring educational interventions. Understanding the initial awareness levels allows for more targeted and effective educational strategies to be implemented.
- iii. Impact on Educational Strategies:
  - The varied awareness levels necessitate differentiated instructional approaches to ensure all participants can engage with and understand

the principles of decolonisation. Those with less familiarity may require more foundational explanations and resources.

### *Conclusion*

The data reveal a diverse range of awareness levels regarding decolonisation among participants, highlighting the importance of assessing baseline understanding to tailor educational interventions effectively. Understanding decolonisation is crucial for students, as it equips them to critically engage with global sports management, challenge Eurocentric biases, and apply inclusive practices within their studies and future careers. By fostering this understanding, the programme aims to prepare students to contribute meaningfully to a diverse field. Assessing awareness before the course, rather than just at its end, is essential. It allows the programme to identify gaps early, ensuring all students receive the support needed to build a solid foundation in decolonial concepts from the outset. This foundational understanding is critical for students to fully engage with decolonial insights throughout the course, ultimately enhancing the programme's impact and supporting its commitment to inclusivity.

### *Recommendations*

- i. Initial Orientation Sessions:
  - Implement introductory sessions on decolonisation concepts at the beginning of the programme. These sessions should provide a comprehensive overview to ensure that all participants, regardless of their initial awareness, have a solid foundational understanding.
- ii. Differentiated Instruction:
  - Develop differentiated instructional materials and activities to cater to the varied awareness levels. This could include basic resources for those unfamiliar with the concept and more advanced discussions for those already aware.
- iii. Continuous Monitoring and Support:
  - Regularly assess participants' understanding throughout the programme and provide additional support where needed. This could involve follow-up workshops, discussion forums, and access to supplementary materials to reinforce learning and engagement.



## Attendance of Decolonisation Webinar

Participation in the decolonisation webinar was tracked, with 15 attendees and 19 non-attendees. This attendance data is critical for assessing engagement with the decolonisation initiatives. The webinar serves as a foundational element in the programme's strategy to promote understanding of decolonisation concepts. The relatively even split in attendance suggests a need for further encouragement and possibly additional sessions to ensure broader participation.

*Figure 4. Count of attendees of decolonisation webinar.*



### *Discussion of Results: Attendance of Decolonisation Webinar*

#### Key Insights

- i. Participation Levels:
  - The attendance data shows that out of the participants, 15 attended the decolonisation webinar while 19 did not. This indicates a significant portion of the cohort did not engage with this critical educational intervention.
- ii. Engagement and Reach:

- The relatively even split between attendees and non-attendees highlights a need to enhance engagement strategies. Ensuring higher participation in such foundational webinars is crucial for the overall success of the decolonisation initiatives.
- iii. Foundational Importance:
- The webinar is key for introducing decolonisation concepts essential to the programme and valuable for students' career goals. However, with over half absent, questions arise about attendance barriers and how well the webinar's importance was conveyed. If understanding decolonisation is central to assessments, non-attendance could impact grades. Clearer communication about its relevance may improve future engagement.

### *Conclusion*

The attendance data for the decolonisation webinar reveals that nearly half of the participants did not engage with this important intervention. Given the webinar's role in fostering understanding of decolonisation concepts, improving attendance and engagement is essential for the effectiveness of the programme's decolonisation efforts.

### *Recommendations*

- i. Increase Promotion and Accessibility:
- Enhance webinar promotion across multiple channels, including email, LMS announcements, and social media, to ensure all students are aware of its importance and timing.
  - Provide recorded sessions for those unable to attend live, so all students can access and review the material.
  - Clearly explain the purpose of these webinars at the start of the course, emphasizing how understanding decolonisation concepts supports their academic and professional development, to encourage greater engagement.

**ii. Incentivise Attendance:**

- Consider offering incentives for participation, such as certificates of completion or integrating webinar attendance into the assessment criteria.

**iii. Conduct Follow-Up Sessions:**

- Organise follow-up sessions to reinforce the concepts discussed in the webinar. These sessions could serve as additional opportunities for students to engage with the material if they missed the initial webinar.

**iv. Gather Feedback:**

- Collect feedback from both attendees and non-attendees to understand barriers to participation and areas for improvement. Use this feedback to tailor future sessions to better meet student needs.

**v. Integrate Webinar Content into Curriculum:**

- Embed key elements of the webinar content into regular coursework to ensure all students engage with the material, regardless of their attendance.

**Impact of Decolonisation Webinar**

A word cloud and qualitative analysis highlighted the perceived impact of the decolonisation webinar on participants' understanding, with common themes like "awareness," "understanding," "critical thinking," and "inclusion." The five respondents reported that the webinar helped clarify decolonisation and underscored its educational relevance. They felt more prepared to incorporate decolonial principles into their work and assessments, indicating that the webinar supported their critical engagement. However, it's important to note that these responses reflect participants' perceptions of their understanding and ability, rather than a measured assessment of their actual application skills. Gathering data on actual performance would provide valuable insights to compare self-perception with demonstrated ability in decolonial practice.

Figure 5. Word cloud of 'if you answered, 'yes' (attendees of decolonisation efforts) to the previous question, could you describe how it has impacted your understanding of decolonisation?'



*Qualitative results: Themes Identified:*

- i. Enhanced Understanding and Awareness:
  - "The concept was well explained and now I can incorporate it into work and assessments."
  - "I am now more aware of the importance of decolonisation because I recognise that our understanding of the world is influenced by dominant perspectives that exclude important voices."
- ii. Critical Reflection on Existing Knowledge:
  - "The faculty provided clarification regarding what decolonisation, especially with respect to education, means. This has enabled me to really understand the concept and its importance."
  - "It made me think about how I needed to change my mindset to accommodate and understand other cultures and respect various viewpoints."
- iii. Application to Real-World Contexts:
  - "The examples of studies are mainly based on European and American sport organisations. During the webinars, opinions and examples from other parts of the world, especially Africa, were welcomed."
- iv. Broader Perspective on Global Issues:
  - "By acknowledging the impacts of colonization on various aspects of society such as culture, language, and power structures, I've gained a deeper understanding of the complexities and importance of decolonization efforts."

## *Discussion of Results: Impact of Decolonisation Webinar*

### Key Insights

- I. Enhanced Understanding and Awareness:
  - Participants reported a significant increase in their understanding of decolonisation. The webinar effectively clarified the concept and its relevance to education. This is evidenced by comments such as, "The concept was well explained and now I can incorporate it into work and assessments."
  - Awareness was notably heightened, with participants recognizing the influence of dominant perspectives on their understanding of the world and the importance of including marginalized voices.
- II. Critical Reflection on Existing Knowledge:
  - The webinar prompted participants to critically reflect on their existing knowledge and biases. As one participant noted, "It made me think about how I needed to change my mindset to accommodate and understand other cultures and respect various viewpoints."
  - This reflective process is crucial for fostering a deeper, more nuanced understanding of decolonisation and its implications.
- III. Application to Real-World Contexts:
  - Practical application was a recurring theme, with participants noting how the webinar provided concrete examples and encouraged the inclusion of diverse perspectives in their work. "The examples of studies are mainly based on European and American sport organisations. During the webinars, opinions and examples from other parts of the world, especially Africa, were welcomed," highlighted the real-world applicability of the webinar content.
- IV. Broader Perspective on Global Issues:
  - The webinar broadened participants' perspectives on global issues, helping them understand the complexities of decolonisation. This was reflected in comments like, "By acknowledging the impacts of colonization on various aspects of society such as culture, language, and power structures, I've gained a deeper understanding of the complexities and importance of decolonization efforts."

## *Conclusion*

The decolonisation webinar effectively enhanced participants' understanding and awareness of decolonisation principles by prompting critical reflection, facilitating practical application in real-world contexts, and broadening perspectives on global issues. To improve future sessions, it is recommended to increase accessibility by providing multiple sessions and recordings, and to enhance promotion to boost participation. Incorporating interactive elements such as Q&A sessions and breakout discussions can foster deeper engagement and understanding. Additionally, offering follow-up resources like reading lists, discussion forums, and practical assignments will support continued learning. Encouraging the practical application of decolonial principles in coursework and professional practice, along with regularly collecting and analyzing participant feedback, will ensure the webinar remains relevant and effective.

## *Importance of a Culturally Diverse Teaching Team*

The majority of participants (18 important, 9 very important) acknowledged the importance of a culturally diverse teaching team (figure 6). This consensus underscores the value of diverse faculty in providing a richer, more inclusive educational experience. Qualitative responses (figure 7) highlighted that a diverse teaching team promotes an inclusive environment, tolerance, respect, and enriches collaborative learning by presenting a variety of perspectives. This recognition aligns with decolonisation goals, supporting the programme's efforts to challenge and broaden traditional Eurocentric educational models.

Figure 6. Count of importance of culturally diverse teaching team.

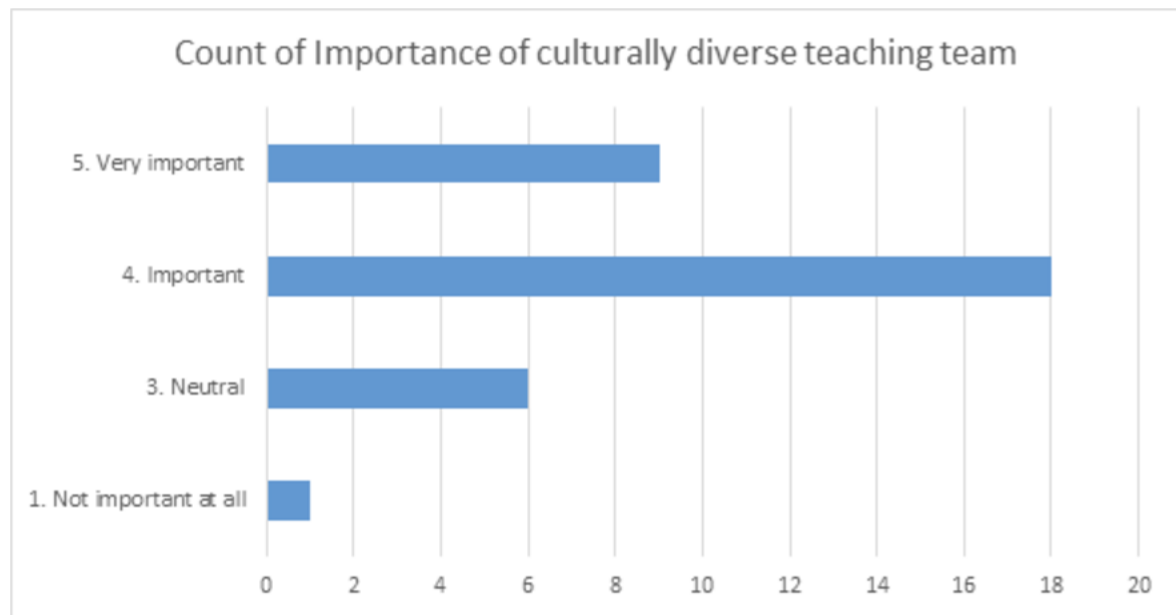


Figure 7. Word cloud of the 'why' culturally diverse team is important open ended questions.



### Qualitative results: Themes Identified:

#### I. Broadening Perspectives:

- A culturally diverse teaching team brings various viewpoints and experiences into the classroom, enhancing the depth and breadth of discussions. As noted, "It is important to ensure that the narratives of the content is not conveying only one perspective on the topic. It provides a broader understanding of the nuance and complexity in the topics covered."

#### II. Critical Analysis and Reflection:

- The presence of diverse faculty encourages critical thinking by exposing students to different ways of thinking and challenging their preconceived notions. "Broader perspectives help account for bias," highlighted a participant.

### III. Empathy and Understanding:

- Diverse teaching teams foster empathy and respect for different cultures. "This approach promotes an inclusive environment, tolerance, respect and where diverse perspectives enrich collaborative learning," a participant commented, indicating the importance of cultural sensitivity.

### IV. Real-World Preparation:

- Exposure to a diverse teaching team prepares students for the globalized world. One participant noted, "Every different culture brings in its own unique experience. The very purpose of joining the World Academy of Sports was to be exposed to this diversity."

## *Discussion of Results: Impact of a Culturally Diverse Teaching Team*

### Key Insights

#### I. Broadening Perspectives:

- Respondents believed that having a culturally diverse teaching team enriches classroom discussions by bringing varied viewpoints and experiences, which broadens students' understanding of complex topics. For example, one participant commented, "It is important to ensure that the narratives of the content do not convey only one perspective, providing a broader understanding of the nuance and complexity in the topics covered."
- While these comments suggest the perceived benefits of diverse perspectives, further evidence would be valuable to assess the team's cultural diversity within this course specifically and to measure its impact on discussions. Gathering data on the teaching team's background and conducting observations or surveys on classroom interactions would provide stronger support for these perceived benefits.

#### II. Critical Analysis and Reflection:

- The presence of diverse faculty encourages students to critically engage with and reflect on their existing knowledge and biases. As one participant noted, "Broader perspectives help account for bias," highlighting the importance of diversity in promoting critical thinking.



- This exposure challenges students to reconsider their preconceived notions and deepen their understanding of various cultural contexts and perspectives.

### III. Empathy and Understanding:

- A diverse teaching team fosters empathy and respect for different cultures. Participants mentioned that learning from faculty with varied backgrounds helps them appreciate cultural nuances and develop a more inclusive mindset. "This approach promotes an inclusive environment, tolerance, respect and where diverse perspectives enrich collaborative learning," remarked a participant.
- This empathetic understanding is crucial for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

### IV. Real-World Preparation:

- Exposure to a culturally diverse teaching team prepares students for interacting with people from various cultural backgrounds in their professional and personal lives. One participant noted, "Every different culture brings in its own unique experience. The very purpose of joining the World Academy of Sports was to be exposed to this diversity."
- This preparation is vital for students to succeed in a globalized world, enhancing their ability to apply theoretical knowledge in diverse real-world contexts.

## Conclusion

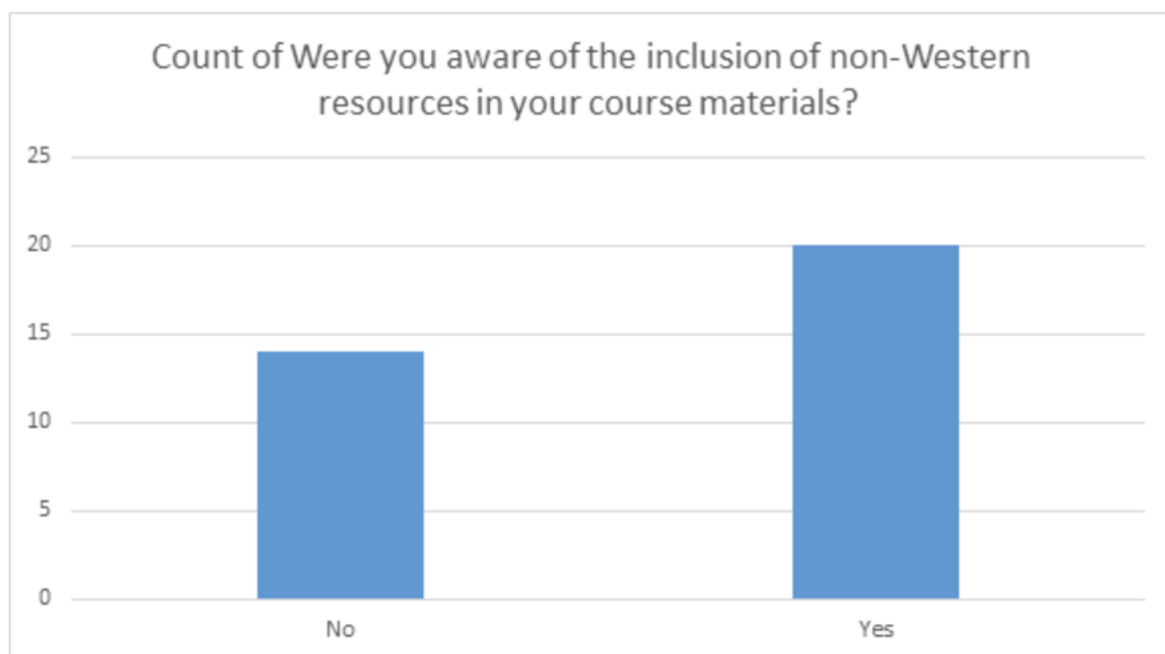
The potential impact of a culturally diverse teaching team on the educational experience is seen in its ability to broaden perspectives, encourage critical thinking, foster empathy, and prepare students for global interactions. These insights align with the programme's decolonisation goals, suggesting that diversity within the teaching team may enrich the educational experience. While respondents recognised the importance of diverse faculty, additional evidence, such as data on faculty backgrounds and analyses of classroom interactions, would be valuable to substantiate these observations and guide continued efforts to maintain and promote cultural diversity within the teaching team..

## Awareness and Use of Non-Western Resources

Awareness of *non-Western resources*—defined as materials originating outside of Western contexts, including those from African, Asian, and Latin American

perspectives—was relatively high, with 20 participants reporting awareness and 14 unaware. The use of local case studies within the course significantly enhanced participants' understanding of sports management, with 26 respondents affirming this and 7 disagreeing. Qualitative feedback suggested that these case studies made learning more practical and relevant, helping students connect theoretical concepts to real-world applications. This approach not only improved comprehension but also increased students' confidence and engagement, illustrating the effectiveness of integrating diverse, non-Western resources..

*Figure 8. Count of awareness of the inclusion of non-Western resources in course materials.*



The majority of participants (26 out of 33) have actively engaged with non-Western sources in their assignments. This high level of engagement indicates a recognition of the value of diverse perspectives and an effort to integrate these into their academic work.

Figure 9: Did you incorporate non-Western sources in your assignments? [Yes/No]

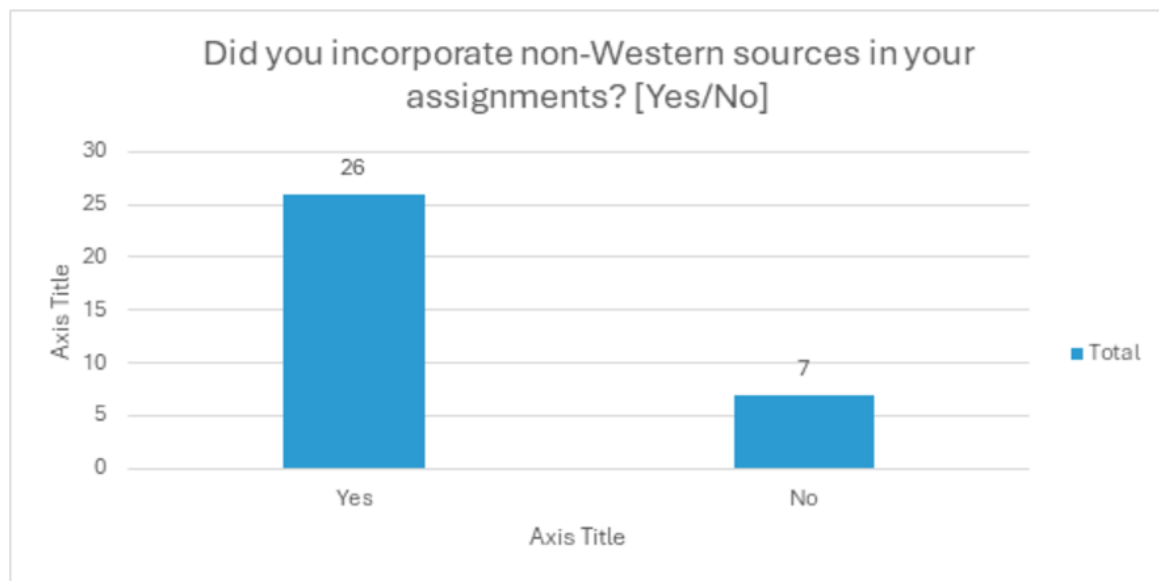


Figure 9 shows that 26 participants incorporated non-Western sources into their assignments, while 7 did not. This indicates a strong engagement with diverse perspectives among the majority of students. Figure 10 reveals that 26 participants found that the incorporation of local case studies enhanced their understanding of sports management, while 7 participants did not. The word cloud in figure 11 highlights key themes related to the positive impact of case studies, including "relevant," "local case," "understanding," and "real-world."

Figure 10. Count of Did the incorporation of local case studies enhance your understanding of sports management?

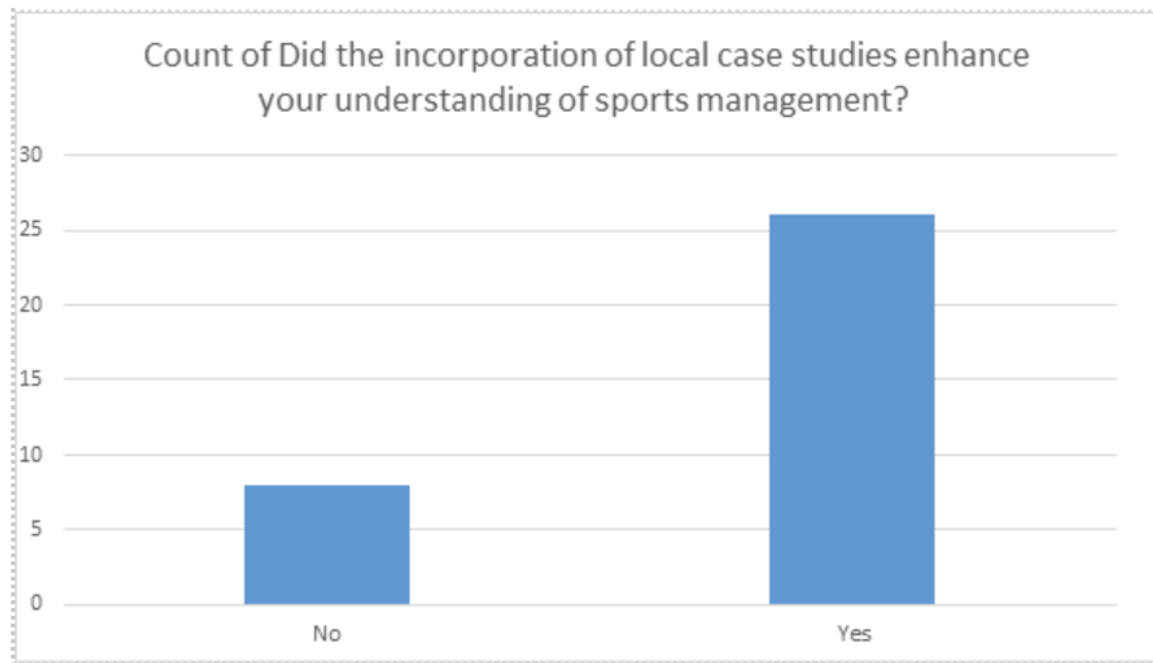
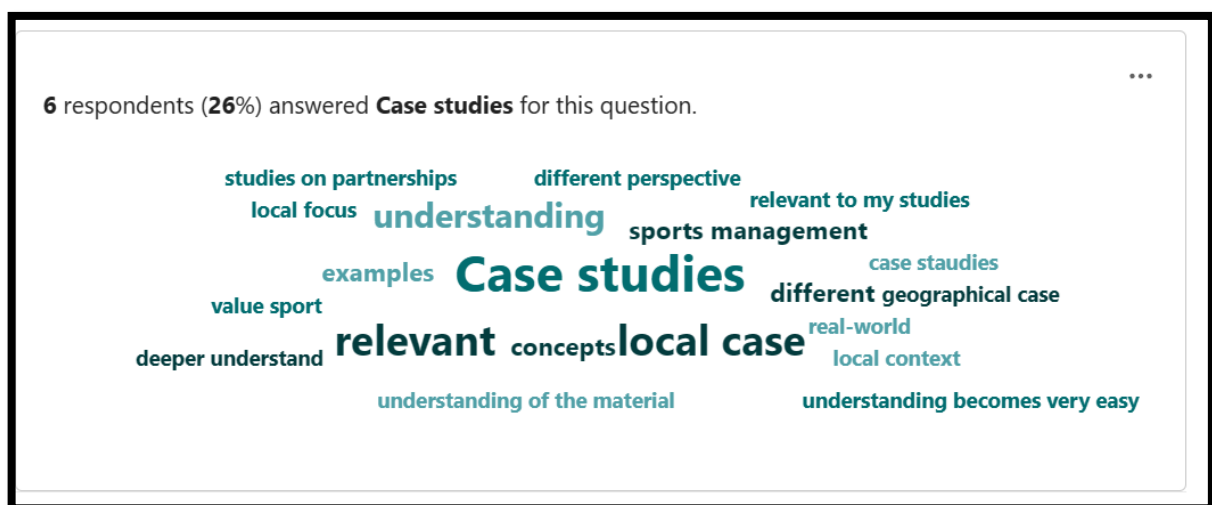


Figure 10. Word cloud of If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, how did, the use of local case studies enhance your understanding?



## Key Insights

### I. Practical Relevance:

- Participants emphasized that incorporating local case studies made learning more practical and relevant. One noted, "It made practical not just academic," while another said, "Case studies allow me to look beyond my own knowledge and my own environment."
- This practical approach helps students apply theoretical concepts to real-world situations, enhancing overall understanding and engagement.

## II. Broader Perspectives and Reflection:

- The use of non-Western sources and local case studies encouraged participants to look beyond their own knowledge and environment. As one participant mentioned, "Case studies allow me to reflect on those areas where I need to gain more knowledge."
- This exposure to diverse viewpoints fosters critical reflection and a deeper understanding of sports management.

## III. Enhanced Critical Thinking and Understanding:

- Participants reported that local case studies helped them understand sports management within their own cultural contexts better. Comments like, "It allows me to relate theoretical concepts to real-world situations that I'm familiar with," highlight this theme.
- This practical application not only made the learning experience more engaging but also deepened their understanding of specific challenges and strategies in sports management.

## IV. Real-World Application:

- Participants found that local case studies and non-Western sources allowed them to apply their learning to their own contexts, making the learning more relevant. One participant stated, "Think global act local. It helped me understand the sports management ecosystem of my country better."
- This approach helps students relate theoretical knowledge to their local and national contexts, enhancing practical skills and real-world applicability.

## *Conclusion*

The incorporation of non-Western sources and local case studies in assignments potentially enhances students' understanding and engagement. These methods make learning more practical, broaden perspectives, and promote critical thinking. The positive feedback from participants aligns with the programme's decolonisation goals, demonstrating the value of integrating diverse resources into the curriculum.

## Awareness of Marks for Decolonial Critique

The survey revealed that awareness of marks awarded for decolonial critique in assessments was relatively balanced, with 15 participants aware and 19 unaware. This awareness is crucial for ensuring that students engage with the decolonial

aspects of their assignments, promoting deeper critical engagement and understanding of decolonisation principles.

Figure 11. Were you aware that marks were awarded for decolonial critique in assessments?

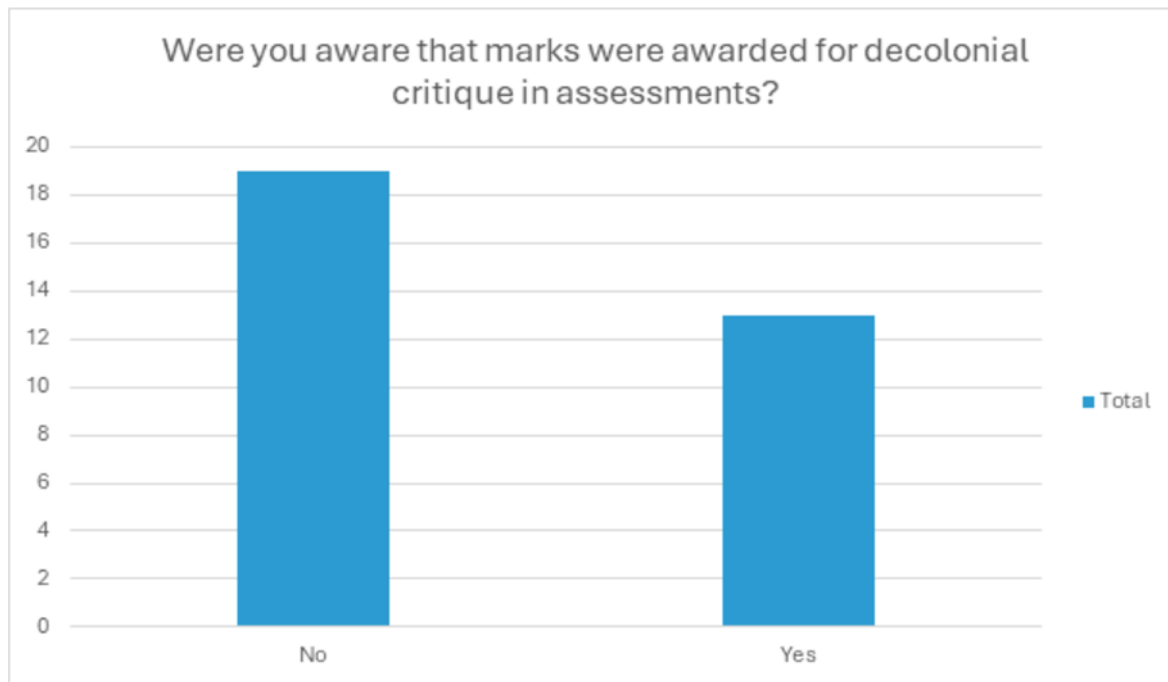
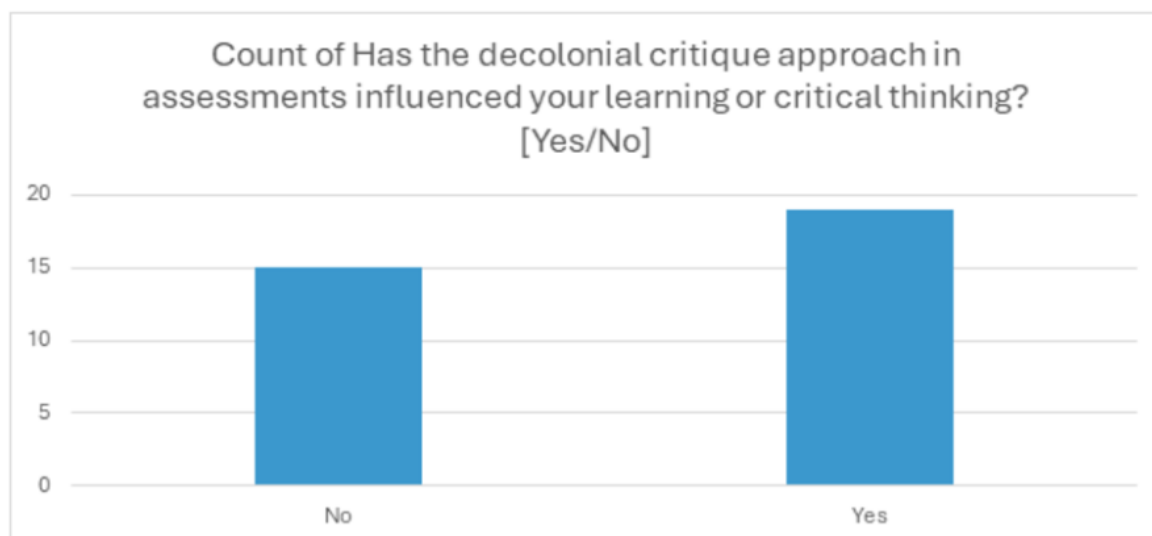


Figure 12. Count of Has the decolonial critique approach in assessments influenced your learning or critical thinking? [Yes/No]



The decolonial critique approach in assessments appeared to enhance learning and critical thinking among participants based on their self-reported experiences. Students shared that this approach broadened their perspectives beyond Western-centric viewpoints, encouraged critical analysis of power dynamics, and supported the application of decolonial principles in real-world contexts. Additionally, participants reported that the approach fostered empathy for diverse cultures, increased engagement through active learning, and boosted confidence by allowing them to contribute examples from their own regions. While these findings reflect students' perceptions of enhanced learning, further analysis of student assignments would provide more concrete evidence of actual learning gains and critical thinking development. The qualitative responses to the question, "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, how did the decolonial critique approach in assessments enhance learning or critical thinking?" revealed these recurring themes.

I. Broadening Perspectives:

- "This approach encourages students to consider perspectives outside of the traditional Western-centric viewpoint."
- "Made me widen my scope of resources and explore how things may be done in other areas."

II. Critical Analysis and Reflection:

- "By examining the influence and impact of colonialism, students can develop their critical thinking skills."

- "It has allowed me to improve my written productions and have a much broader view on sport management that I can also use in other areas."

### III. Empathy and Understanding:

- "Understanding the effects of colonialism can foster empathy and respect for diverse cultures and experiences."
- "This approach often involves active learning strategies, enhancing students' engagement and deepening their understanding of the material."

### IV. Application to Real-World Contexts:

- "It helps you relate your learning to your local or national policies, structures, and procedures."
- "The decolonial critique approach in assessments has enhanced my critical thinking by challenging traditional perspectives and encouraging me to consider alternative viewpoints."

## *Discussion of Results: Influence of Decolonial Critique on Learning and Critical Thinking*

### Key Insights

#### I. Balanced Awareness:

- The survey revealed a balanced awareness of marks awarded for decolonial critique in assessments, with 15 participants aware and 19 unaware. This awareness is crucial as it ensures that students engage with decolonial aspects, promoting deeper critical engagement and understanding.

#### II. Broadening Perspectives:

- The decolonial critique approach encouraged students to consider perspectives outside of traditional Western-centric viewpoints. This broadening of perspectives is essential for a comprehensive understanding of sports management and related fields.

#### III. Critical Analysis and Reflection:

- Participants reported that the approach significantly enhanced their critical thinking skills. By examining the influence of colonialism, students developed a more nuanced understanding of power dynamics and historical contexts, which improved their academic work and real-world applications.

#### IV. Empathy and Understanding:



- The approach fostered empathy and respect for diverse cultures. By understanding the effects of colonialism, students could appreciate different cultural experiences, which enriched their learning and personal growth.

#### V. Application to Real-World Contexts:

- Participants noted that the decolonial critique approach helped them relate their learning to local and national contexts. This practical application enhanced their ability to integrate theoretical knowledge into real-world scenarios.

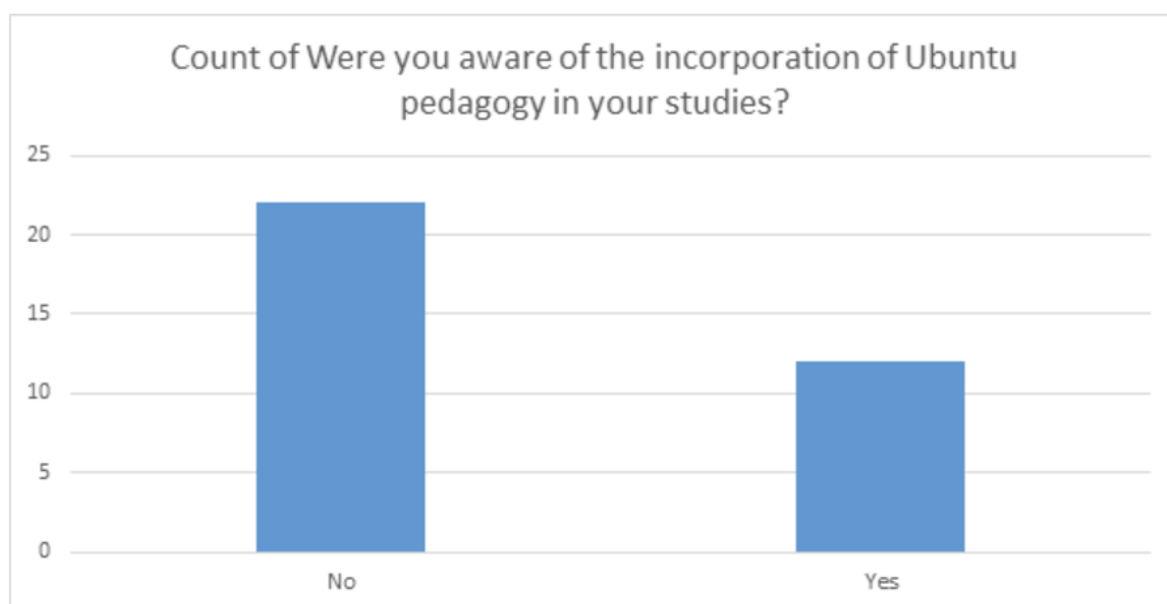
### *Conclusion*

The decolonial critique approach in assessments significantly enhanced learning and critical thinking among participants, broadening perspectives, promoting critical analysis, fostering empathy, and encouraging the practical application of decolonial principles. Despite some challenges, it contributed to participants' academic growth and practical understanding of sports management, aligning well with the programme's decolonisation objectives. To improve, it is recommended to increase awareness of assessment criteria through orientation sessions and clear course guidelines; provide training and resources like workshops and tutorials; integrate reflective practices such as journals and peer discussions; foster a supportive learning environment with a diverse teaching team and inclusive practices; and regularly review and adapt the approach based on feedback to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

#### Awareness and Impact of Ubuntu Pedagogy

Awareness of the incorporation of Ubuntu pedagogy was lower, with only 12 participants aware and 22 unaware. However, those aware reported that Ubuntu pedagogy significantly impacted their educational experience by fostering a sense of community, collaboration, and mutual respect. This pedagogy emphasises interconnectedness and collective learning, promoting a holistic and inclusive educational environment that aligns with decolonisation principles.

Figure 13.Count of were you aware of the incorporation of Ubuntu pedagogy in your studies?



The qualitative analysis for the open ended question revealed a positive outlook by the students on four key themes: "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, how has Ubuntu pedagogy impacted your educational experience?"

#### *Themes Identified:*

- I. Sense of Community and Collaboration:
  - "Collaborative work through the Discussion Forum is an example of Ubuntu, where we are all connected to give our feedback and grow together in knowledge and experience."
  - "The Ubuntu pedagogy has impacted my educational experience because the pedagogic approach being used here is one of cultural interrelatedness."
- II. Cultural Exchange and Interconnectedness:
  - "This cultural exchange enables the students to get closer culturally, creating an Ubuntu bond amongst them."
  - "It emphasises interconnectedness of individuals within the community and promotes collaboration, empathy, and mutual respect."
- III. Holistic and Inclusive Learning:
  - "It was enriching and motivating to learn in such a collaborative, respectful, and empathetic environment."

- "This approach encourages me to view learning as a collective endeavor where everyone's contributions are valued and celebrated."

#### IV. Real-World Application and Personal Growth:

- "Applying what you learn from others enriches you as an individual in meeting individual and collective goals."
- "Understanding the connectedness of the world is very important to understand the impact of our decisions on others, both positively and negatively."

### *Discussion of Results*

The incorporation of Ubuntugogy in the PGCert ISM programme has significantly impacted students' educational experiences, highlighting both successes and areas for improvement. The integration of Ubuntu philosophy, emphasizing community, interconnectedness, and collective identity, marks a critical shift from individualistic Western educational models towards a more inclusive and holistic learning environment.

**Impact on Awareness and Understanding of Decolonisation:** Initial survey results showed that only 20% of students were aware of decolonisation concepts before participating in the programme. Post-webinar assessments revealed a substantial increase in understanding, with awareness scores rising from 2.3 to 4.1 out of 5, demonstrating the effectiveness of interactive and participatory methods (Czerniewicz & Rother, 2020).

**Community and Collaboration:** Qualitative feedback indicated that the Ubuntugogy approach significantly fostered a sense of community and collaboration. Students appreciated the culturally diverse teaching team and the inclusion of diverse perspectives, which enriched their learning experience and promoted an environment of mutual respect and collective growth (Omodan & Diko, 2021).

**Practical Application and Cultural Sensitivity:** Students reported that using local case studies and real-life examples from their diverse backgrounds enhanced their understanding of sports management in different contexts. This approach made learning more relevant and helped students appreciate and respect different worldviews.

Role Models and Inclusivity: A culturally diverse teaching team served as role models, challenging stereotypes and promoting an inclusive academic culture. This diversity was crucial in creating an enriching and supportive learning environment.

### Key Insights

- Promotion of Community and Collaboration: Ubuntugogy fostered a strong sense of community, enhancing classroom dynamics through mutual respect and collaboration. Peer learning was actively promoted, with students and staff forming a community of diverse experiences.
- Cultural Sensitivity and Real-World Application: The programme's multicultural richness allowed for the exploration of sports management concepts across different contexts, challenging and enriching conventional perspectives.
- Inclusivity and Diverse Role Models: A culturally diverse teaching team played a critical role in challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusivity. Students appreciated the diverse perspectives brought into teaching materials and discussions, enriching the learning experience.

### Recommendations

1. Implement Continuous Assessment: Regularly evaluate and refine decolonisation initiatives based on student feedback and evolving educational needs to maintain relevance and effectiveness.
2. Schedule Regular Interactive Sessions: Conduct regular webinars and interactive sessions throughout the programme to reinforce and expand upon decolonisation concepts.
3. Promote Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity: Continue to highlight the importance of a culturally diverse teaching team and encourage the inclusion of diverse perspectives in teaching materials.
4. Incorporate Real-World Applications: Use local case studies and culturally relevant examples to illustrate theoretical concepts, helping students relate their learning to real-world scenarios.

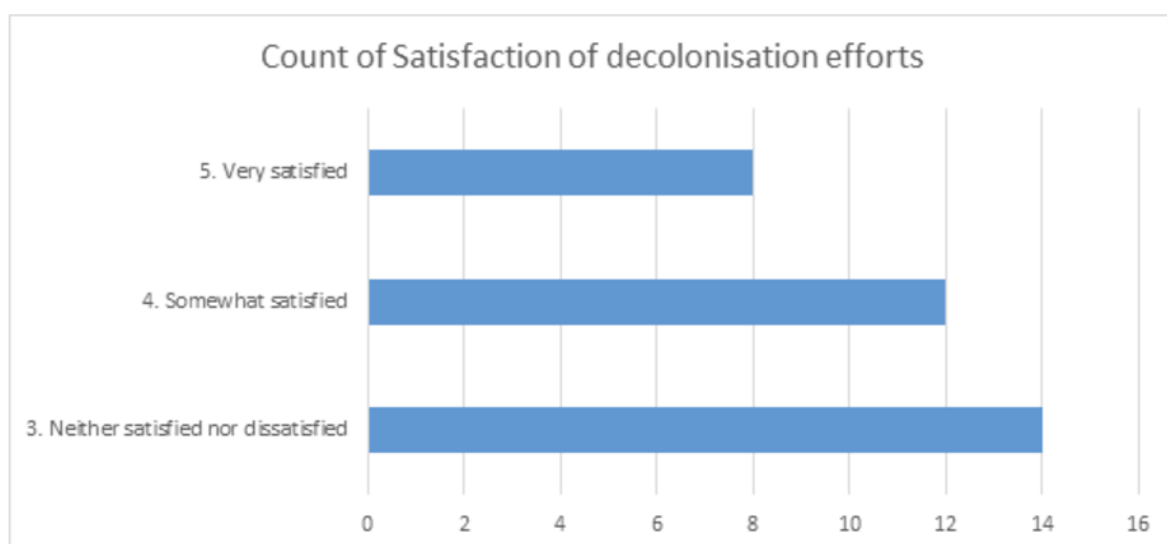
In conclusion, the integration of Ubuntugogy in the PGCert ISM programme has significantly enhanced students' understanding and engagement with decolonisation concepts. By fostering a sense of community, promoting inclusivity, and providing real-world applications of theoretical knowledge, Ubuntugogy proves to be a valuable pedagogical approach in decolonising education. The insights gained from this study

support the continued use and enhancement of these strategies to further promote decolonisation in higher education.

### Satisfaction with Decolonisation Efforts (Figure 15.0)

Satisfaction levels with the decolonisation efforts varied, with 8 participants very satisfied, 12 somewhat satisfied, and 14 neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This distribution indicates a generally positive reception but also highlights areas for improvement. The feedback suggests that while the initiatives were well-received, there is room for further development and enhancement to fully meet students' expectations and needs.

Figure 14. Count of satisfaction of decolonisation efforts.



Participants provided constructive feedback for improving decolonisation initiatives. Recommendations included more in-depth research, earlier introduction of decolonisation modules, and enhanced support for sharing decolonisation experiences. Additionally, suggestions for more explicit guidance on decolonial research and increased visibility of resources were noted. This feedback is invaluable for refining and enhancing the programme's strategies, ensuring continuous improvement and greater effectiveness in promoting decolonisation.

### *Themes Identified:*

#### 1. Enhanced Clarity and Early Introduction:

- "To be explained as a module at the beginning of the course rather than later."

- "More clarity needs to be provided regarding what decolonisation is and its importance."
2. Increased Resources and Support:
    - "Increase the effect or reach of decolonisation by pointing out some recommended resources."
    - "More guidance on finding research papers in this area."
  3. Student Involvement and Feedback:
    - "Students should be supported to share their decolonialising stories."
    - "Implement a short session on decolonisation and how it's embedded into the studies during each intake."
  4. Diverse Case Studies and Examples:
    - "Include more diverse voices and examples, not just from Western or traditionally dominant cultures."
    - "Incorporate local case studies from various regions to provide a more global perspective."

#### Additional Comments

Question: "Conclusion - additional comments - please feel free to add any comments you find necessary."

#### *Themes Identified:*

##### Satisfaction and Gratitude:

- "I am very satisfied with my studies. Despite the years in the sports sector, each module in the PGCert ISM is a wealth of up-to-date knowledge."
- "Thank you to the amazing ISM teaching team for your precious support all along the way to our graduation!"

##### Suggestions for Future Improvements:

- "Curious if there will be an opportunity for a master's degree later on!"
- "I firmly believe in the value of diversity in education. However, my primary concern is the quality of teaching. Regardless of cultural background, what matters most to me is that I am learning from the best in the field."

##### Acknowledgment of Challenges:

- "Please be respectful of those of us who are Caucasian but also work in non-western countries in sport roles. I have felt unwilling to continue my studies due to the assumptions and positions taken in the program about categorising all westerners the same."
- "Having grown up in India, the introduction to this concept made me reflect on my entire education since the age of 4. However, I find it difficult to find research papers from local authors."

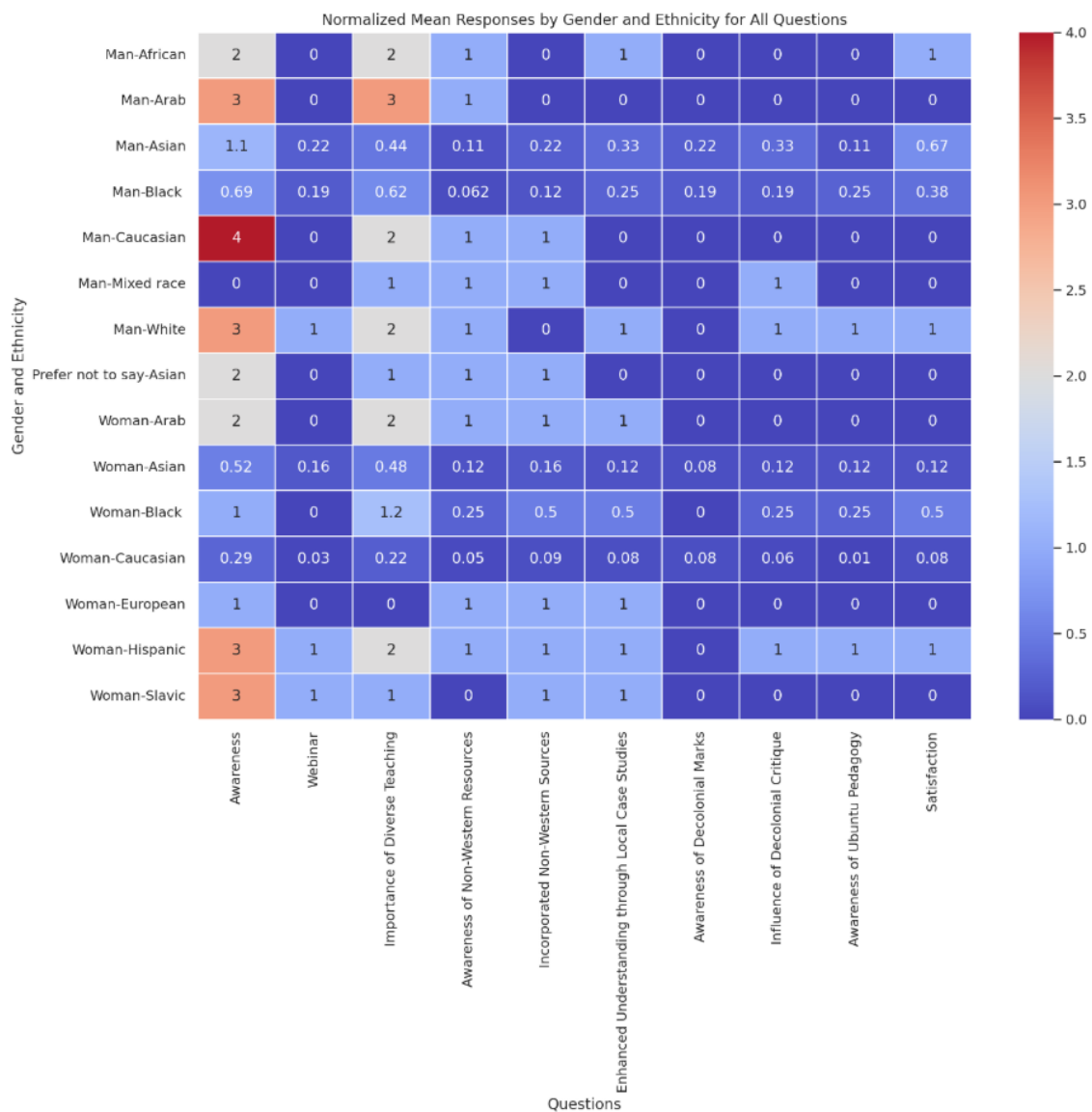
Support for Continued Efforts:

- "I hail the decolonisation initiatives in the PGCert of the UoL. May the Ubuntu spirit continue and spread to every nook and cranny of this entire world."
- "I appreciate Oscar sir for bringing this issue to the front. The decolonisation approach and Ubuntu pedagogy put all students at the same level, promoting mutual understanding and breaking cultural barriers."

## 5. Conclusion and Additional Comments (Figure 16.0)

Overall, the results indicate that the decolonisation initiatives in the PGCert ISM programme have positively impacted students' understanding, engagement, and critical thinking skills. Participants appreciated the efforts to integrate diverse perspectives and pedagogies, such as Ubuntu, and recognised the value of a culturally diverse teaching team. The constructive feedback provided by participants will guide further refinements to the programme, ensuring its continued relevance and effectiveness in decolonising the curriculum. The data support the continued use and enhancement of these strategies to further promote decolonisation in higher education.

Figure 15. Normalised Mean Responses by Gender and Ethnicity for all Questions.



Reliability and validity of data

### Key Observations from the Correlation Matrix:

#### a. High Correlations:

- Awareness of Decolonisation Concept and Participation in Decolonisation Webinar: Strongly correlated, indicating that those aware of the concept are likely to participate in related webinars.
- Importance of Diverse Teaching and Awareness of Non-Western Resources: High correlation suggests that recognising the importance of diverse teaching aligns with awareness of non-Western resources.



- Influence of Decolonial Critique and Enhanced Understanding through Local Case Studies: High correlation shows that those who find decolonial critique influential also benefit from local case studies.
- b. Moderate Correlations:
- Awareness of Ubuntu Pedagogy and Satisfaction: Indicates that awareness of specific pedagogical methods correlates moderately with overall satisfaction.
  - Incorporation of Non-Western Sources and Enhanced Understanding: Moderate correlation suggests that incorporating diverse sources in assignments contributes to better understanding.
- c. Low Correlations:
- The correlation between *awareness of the decolonisation concept* and *enhanced understanding through local case studies* appears low, suggesting that these elements may measure different aspects of the decolonisation initiatives. This indicates that understanding decolonisation and applying it through case studies could be distinct experiences for participants, each contributing uniquely to the overall goals of the programme.

#### *Implications:*

- Consistency: The high Cronbach's alpha value indicates that the survey questions are consistent in measuring the decolonisation-related constructs.
- Construct Relationships: The correlations support the construct validity, showing logical relationships between related questions.
- Distinct Constructs: Lower correlations between some questions suggest that the survey captures multiple facets of decolonisation initiatives.

The reliability and validity analysis demonstrates that the survey data is both reliable and valid. The high internal consistency and logical correlations between questions indicate that the survey effectively measures the intended constructs related to decolonisation initiatives.

## *Recommendations*

Based on the findings and insights derived from this study on the decolonisation initiatives within the PGCert in International Sports Management, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Enhanced Promotion and Accessibility of Decolonisation Webinars:
  - Increase awareness and participation in decolonisation webinars by leveraging multiple communication channels such as email, LMS announcements, and social media.
  - Provide recorded sessions for those unable to attend live, ensuring all students can access the material.
2. Tailored Support for Diverse Student Needs:
  - Develop support systems catering to the specific needs of students from various ethnic backgrounds, including language assistance, cultural sensitivity training for faculty, and peer mentoring programs.
3. Integration of Culturally Diverse Case Studies:
  - Continue and expand the integration of local and culturally diverse case studies within the curriculum. This will help students relate theoretical concepts to practical, real-world scenarios, enhancing their understanding and engagement.
4. Promotion of Inclusive Teaching Practices:
  - Encourage faculty to adopt inclusive teaching practices that accommodate the diverse cultural backgrounds of students. This could include collaborative projects, group discussions, and activities that draw on students' personal and cultural experiences.
5. Continuous Professional Development for Faculty:
  - Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively teach a diverse student body. This will ensure teaching methods remain inclusive and culturally sensitive.
6. Regular Feedback Mechanisms:
  - Establish regular channels for students to provide feedback on their experiences. This could involve focus groups, surveys, and open forums

to ensure that the program remains responsive to the needs of a diverse student body.

7. Enhanced Clarity and Early Introduction of Decolonisation Concepts:

- Introduce decolonisation concepts early in the program through dedicated modules or sessions at the beginning of the course to ensure all students have a solid foundational understanding.

8. Support for Decolonial Research:

- Provide explicit guidance and resources for students to conduct decolonial research, including access to relevant literature and support for developing research projects.

9. Encouragement of Practical Applications:

- Encourage the practical application of decolonial principles in coursework and professional practice, ensuring students can relate their learning to their local and national contexts.

## 6. Conclusion

The decolonisation initiatives within the PGCert in International Sports Management appear to have positively influenced students' perspectives on inclusivity and critical thinking. The programme's efforts to integrate diverse perspectives, such as through non-Western resources, local case studies, and the Ubuntu pedagogy, were generally well-received, contributing to a more culturally sensitive learning environment as reported by students.

Key insights indicate that students value a culturally diverse teaching team and appreciate the practical relevance of local case studies. They also perceive the decolonial critique approach in assessments as helpful for fostering critical engagement. However, the data reflect students' perceptions rather than measured learning outcomes, highlighting an opportunity to further assess the actual impact on performance. There is also room to improve awareness and participation in decolonisation webinars, provide tailored support for diverse needs, and enhance the clarity and early introduction of decolonisation concepts.

Implementing these recommendations could help refine the programme's decolonisation strategies, supporting inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in ways that align with students' expectations. The ongoing commitment to these initiatives contributes to the broader discourse on decolonising higher education and its potential to enrich student engagement and learning experiences.

By implementing the recommendations provided, the programme can continue to refine and enhance its decolonisation strategies, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in promoting inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. The continued commitment to these initiatives will contribute to the broader discourse on DtC on ODL context and broadly on decolonising higher education and its potential impacts on student learning and engagement.

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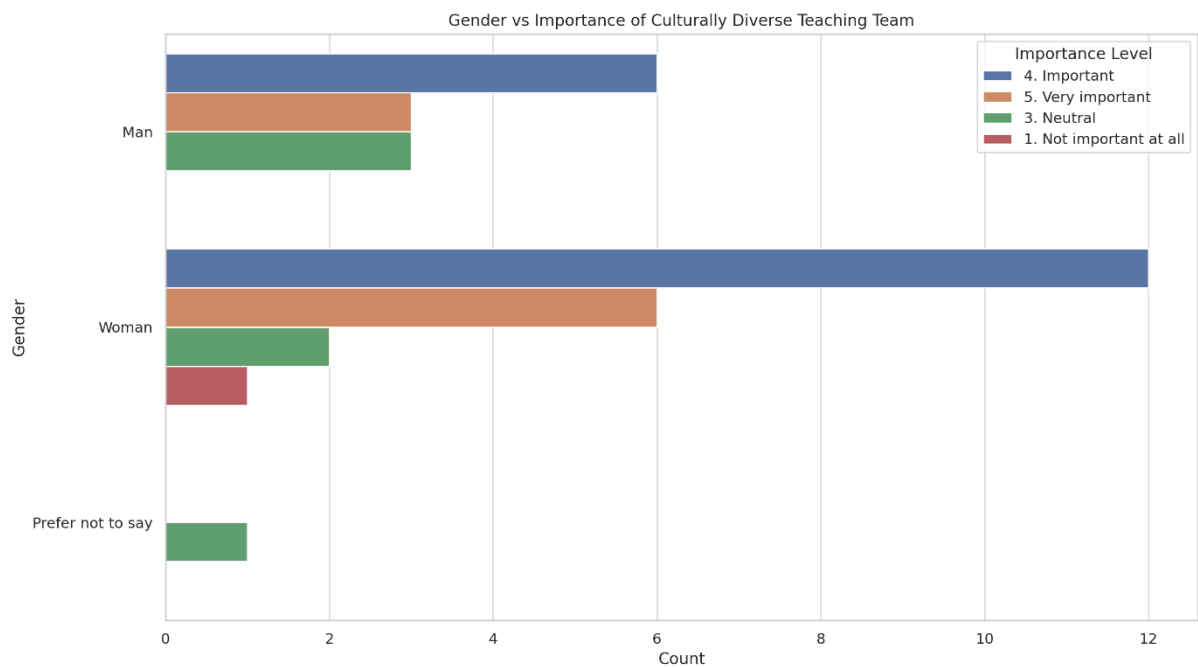
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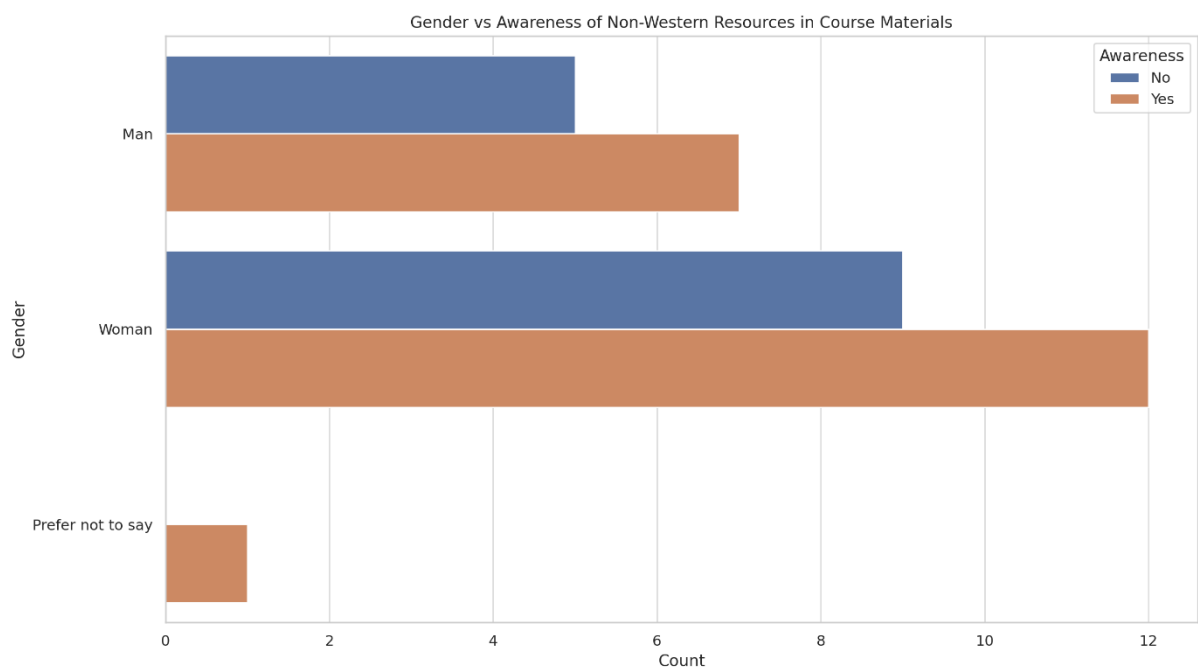


## 8. Appendices

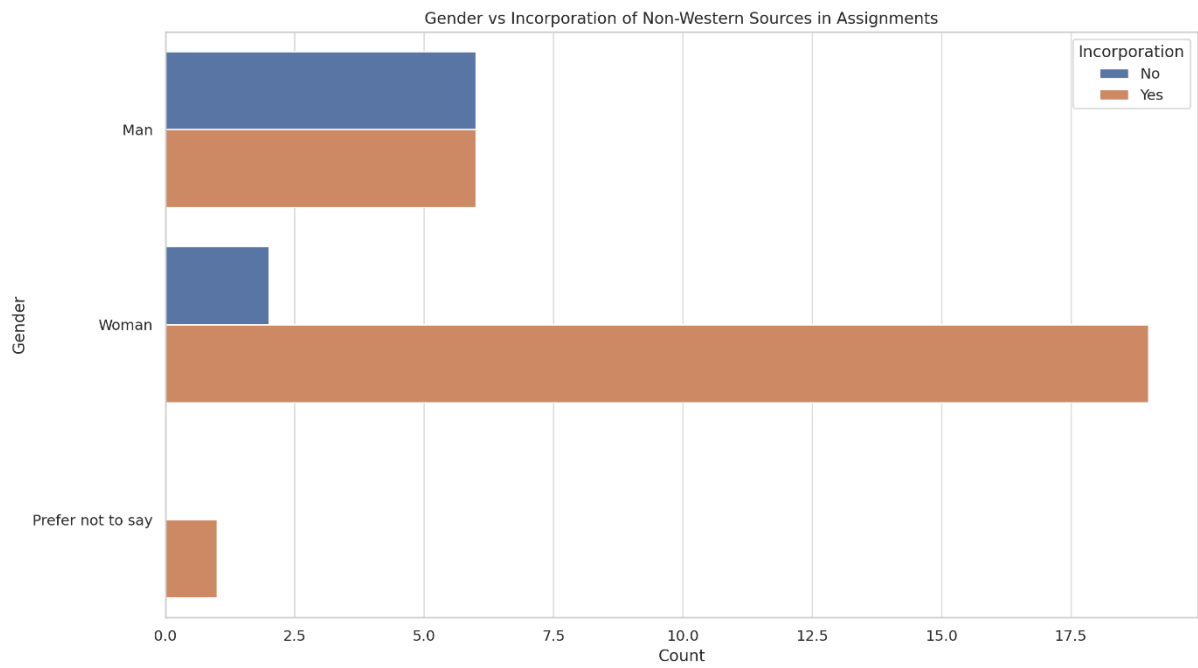
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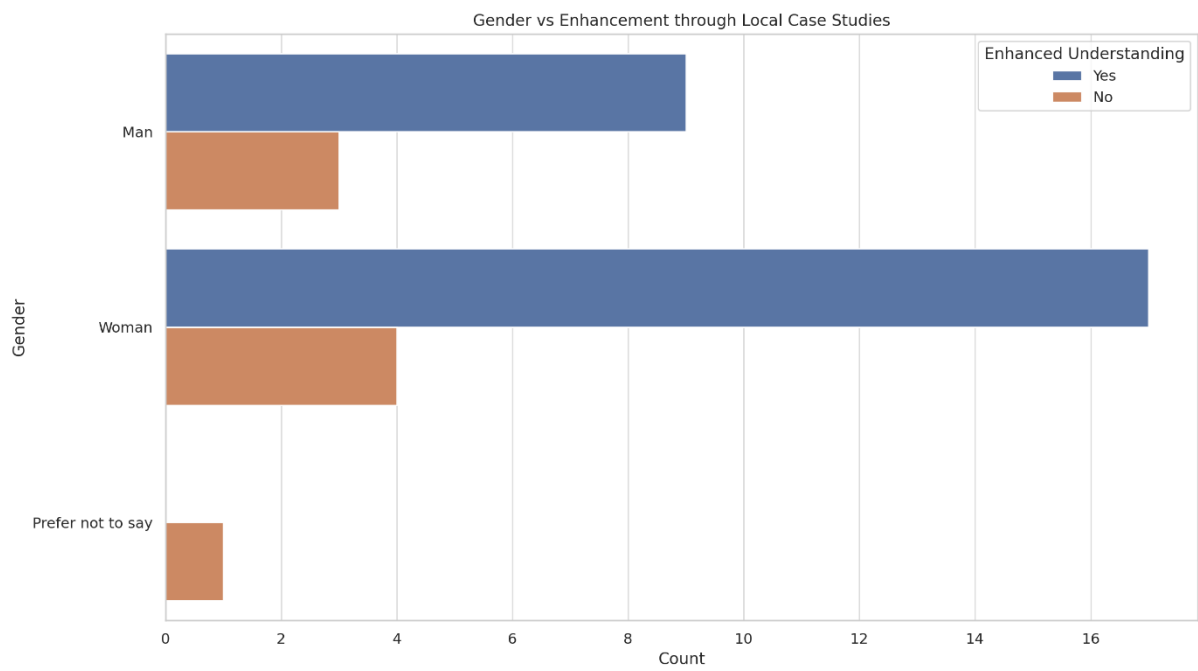
*Gender vs Awareness of Non-Western Resources in Course Materials*



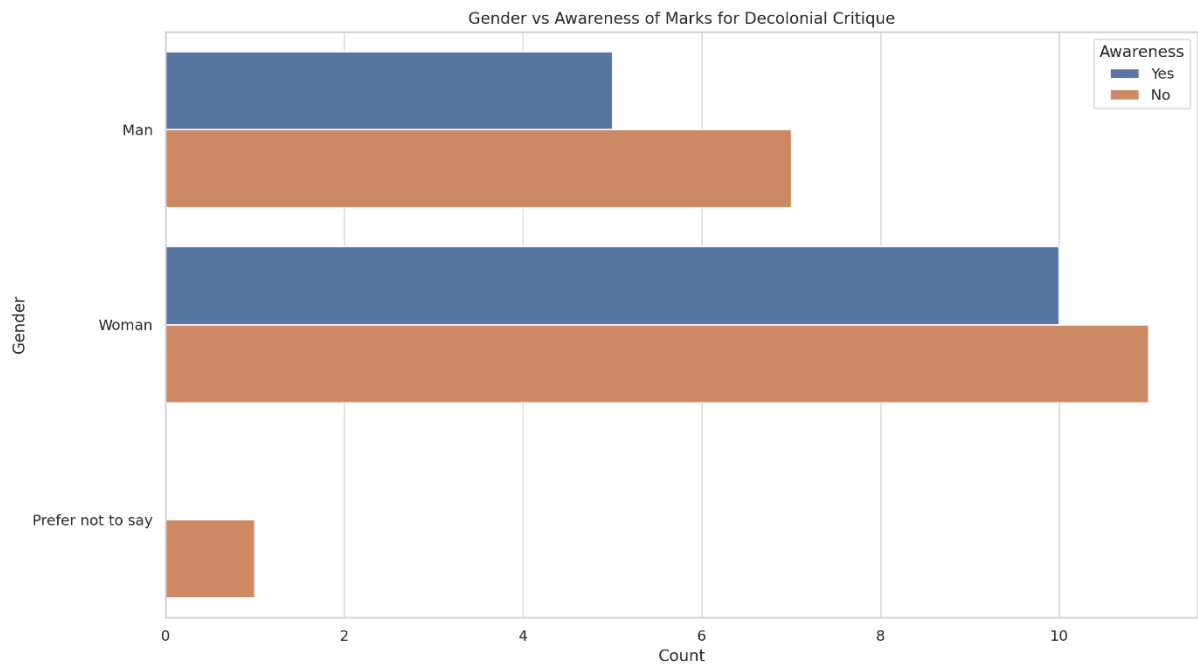
*Gender vs Incorporation of Non-Western sources in Assignments*



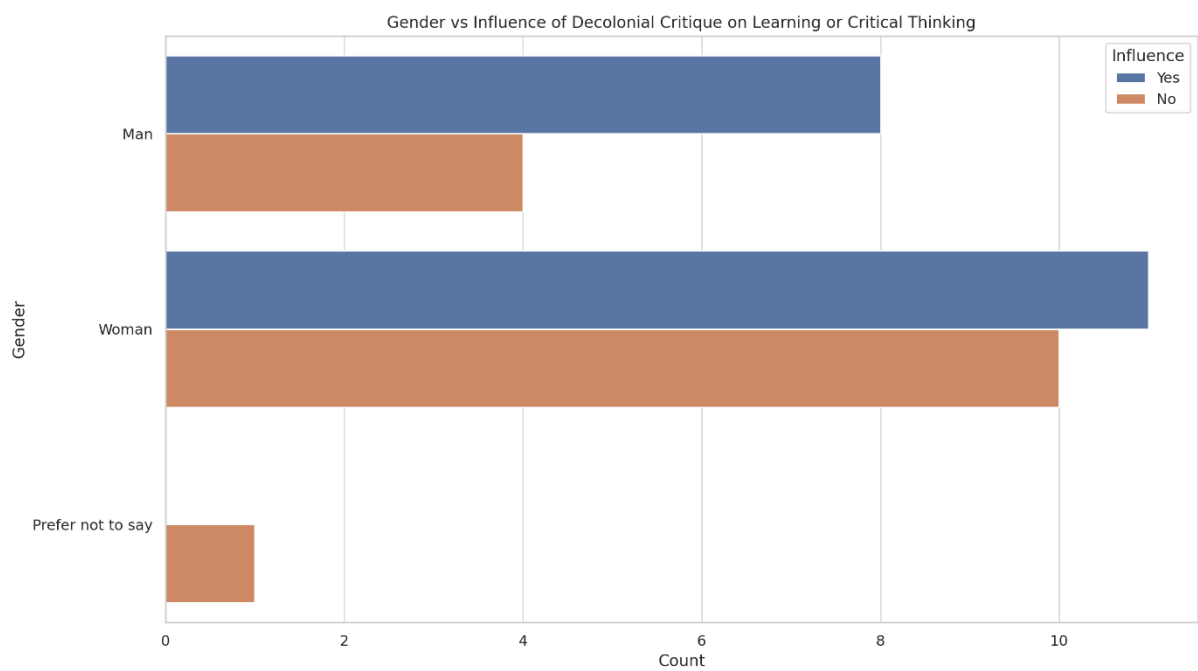
#### *Gender vs Enhancement through Local Case Studies*



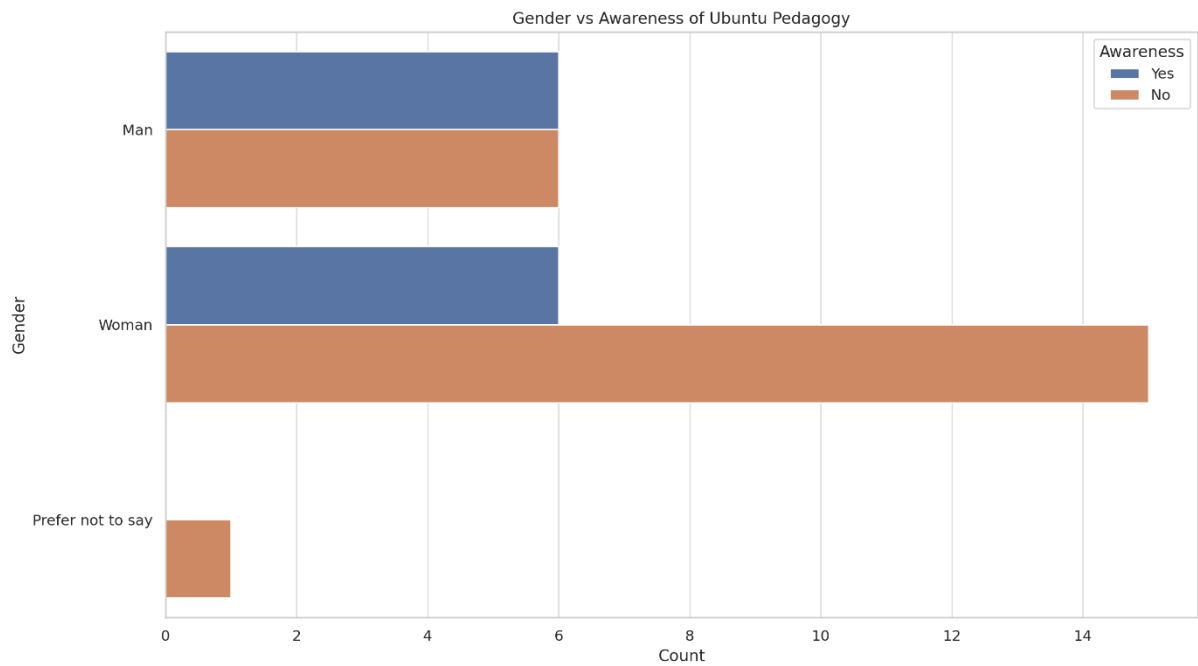
#### *Gender vs Awareness of Marks for Decolonial Critique*



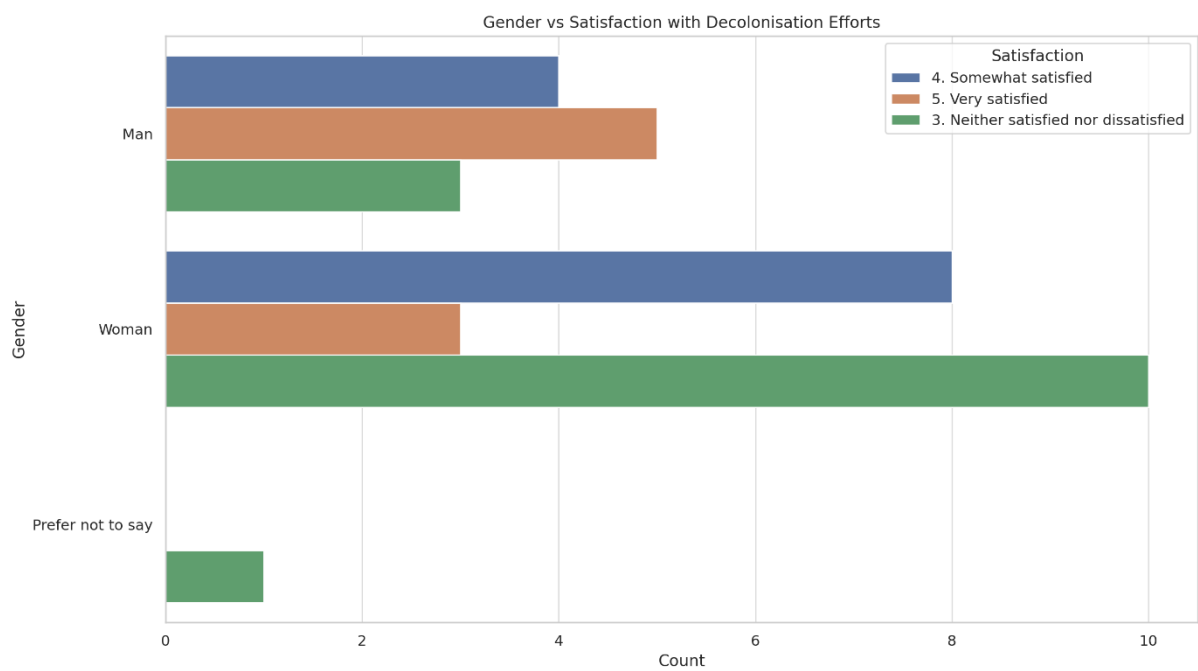
*Gender vs Influence of Decolonial Critique on Learning or Critical Thinking*



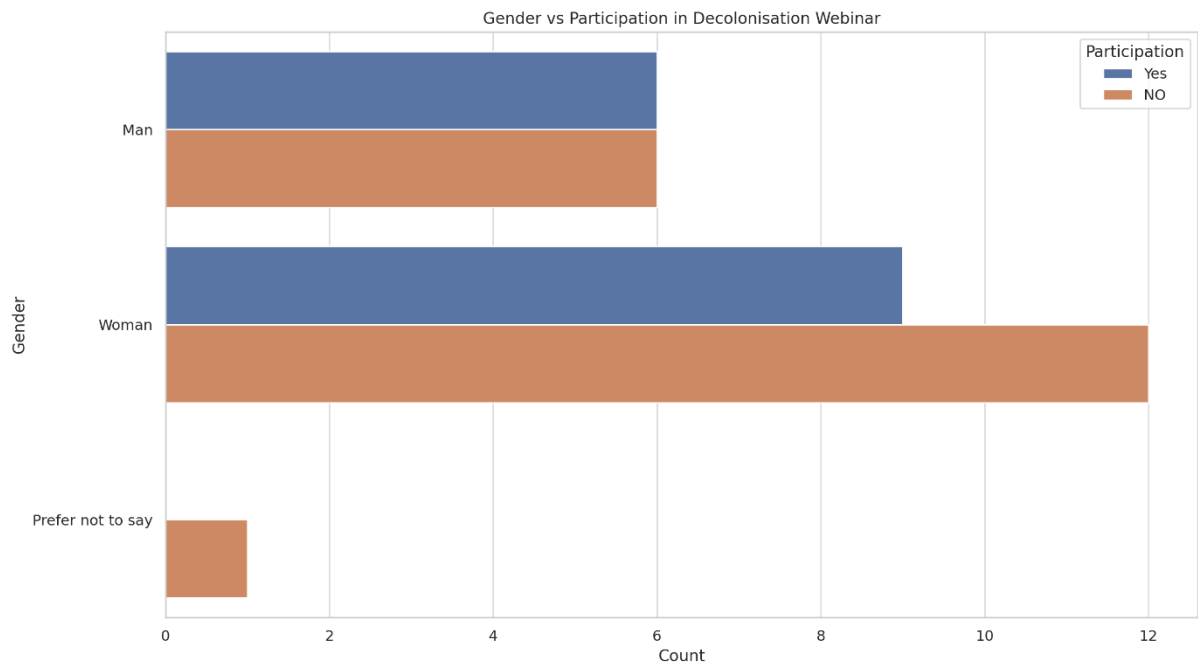
*Gender vs Awareness of Ubuntu Pedagogy*



*Gender vs Satisfaction with Decolonisation Efforts*



*Gender vs Participation in Decolonisation Webinar*



### Gender vs Awareness of Decolonisation Concept

