

Abstract

The paper interrogates the issue of language and social justice in South Africa's higher education using quantitative and qualitative data collected at the University of the Free State (UFS). Data were collected using questionnaires. Through purposive sampling based on South African and UFS demographics, 120 questionnaires were administered to UFS students. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The results show that language is a critical component in the conceptualisation and actualisation of social justice in South Africa's higher education. The results further indicate that language continues to play the role of privileging access to higher education for some, while curtailing access to higher education for others, in South Africa. The paper concludes that this reality is contrary to the principles of social justice and recommends a radical overhaul of the language dispensation in South Africa's higher education within the framework of social justice.