Negotiating “third space” during COVID-19: A decolonial African feminist analysis of higher education female students’ experiences in Malawi and Zimbabwe

A Work in Progress Session with Nyaradzai Changamire and Pempho Chinkondenji
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In Sub Saharan Africa, the impact of COVID-19 on tertiary education institutions is unparalleled, forcing institutions to shut down, some indefinitely, with adverse consequences on educational equity among other things. Women and girls, including female university students, bear the brunt of operational challenges due to university closures, gaps and limitations in technological advancements. This photovoice phenomenological study highlights how the young women, through various forms of negotiation, challenge and interrogate patriarchy and hegemonic dominance.

Nyaradzai Changamire, PhD is a Zimbabwean-born social scientist whose career has always been related to education in different ways, from public health training to community civic education, and now instructional design. She earned her Ph.D. in Education from UMass Amherst, where her research explored young women’s experiences with school-based sexual and reproductive health education in Kenya. Currently, she is an instructional designer at UMass where she teaches how to use learning technology in ways that engage diverse students in both online and in-person classroom contexts.

Pempho Chinkondenji is a PhD candidate in International Education at UMass Amherst. More broadly, her research examines the intersection between gender, education, and development. Pempho’s primary research focuses on school (re)integration for student mothers and in-school pregnancy-related policies and praxis in African contexts. She also has research interests in education in emergencies, higher education and technology, representations of African women, and gender and power dynamics in higher education both on the African continent and in the diaspora.