



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

Promoting social inclusion through African languages affirmation in South African universities: The Wits Language Policy survey

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NGIYANIBINGELELA

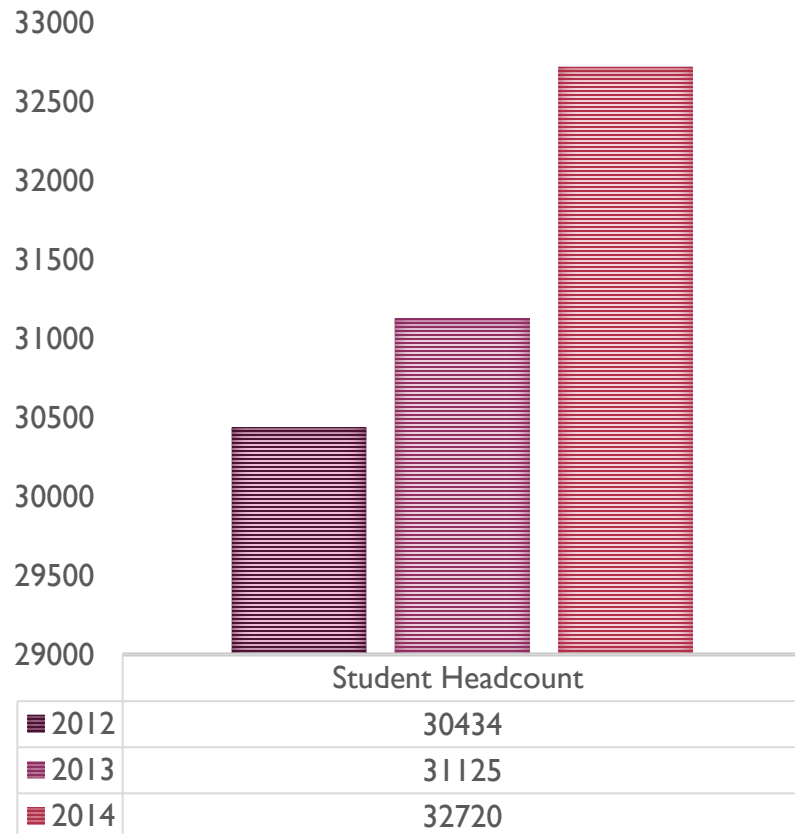
RIA VHA LUMELISA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2004 Wits Language policy – English and Sesotho
- Transformation as strategic priority (Wits 2010 Strategy) - a university to call our own
- Historically white university – student racial demographics changed – but academic staff still predominantly white – academic seniority statistics biased in favour of white males
- Internationalisation - main strategy

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

STUDENT HEADCOUNT

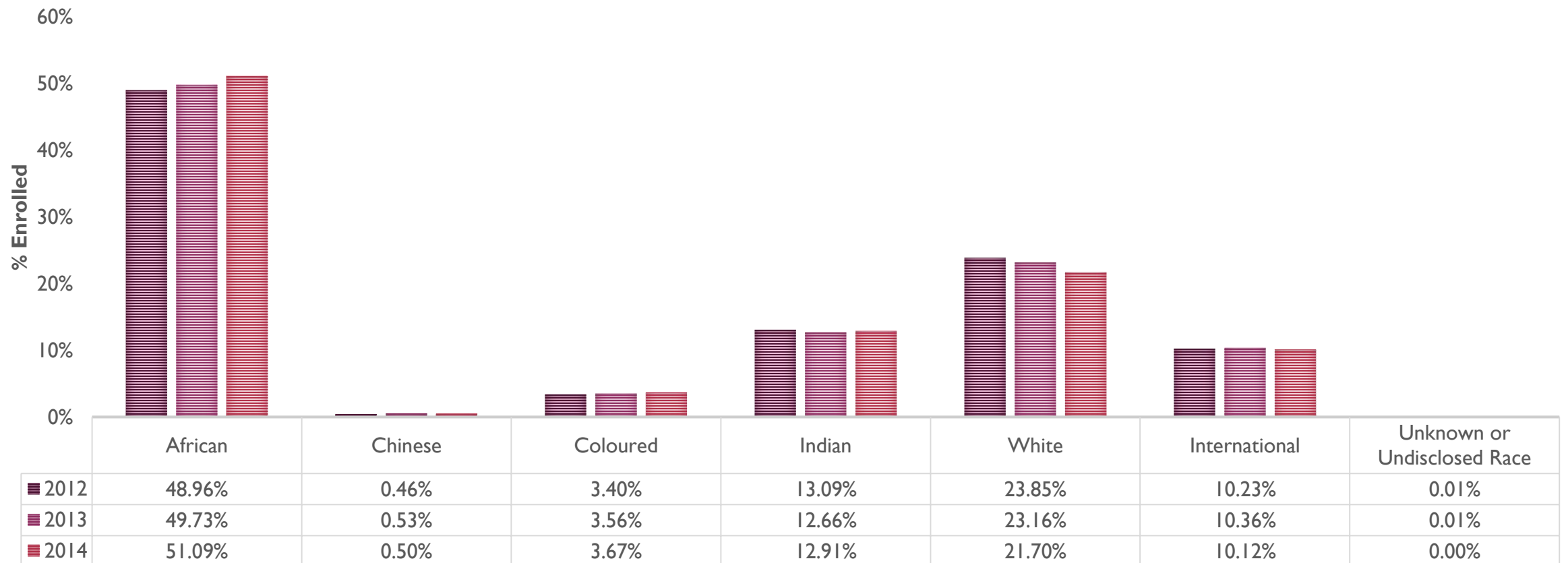


STAFF HEADCOUNTS



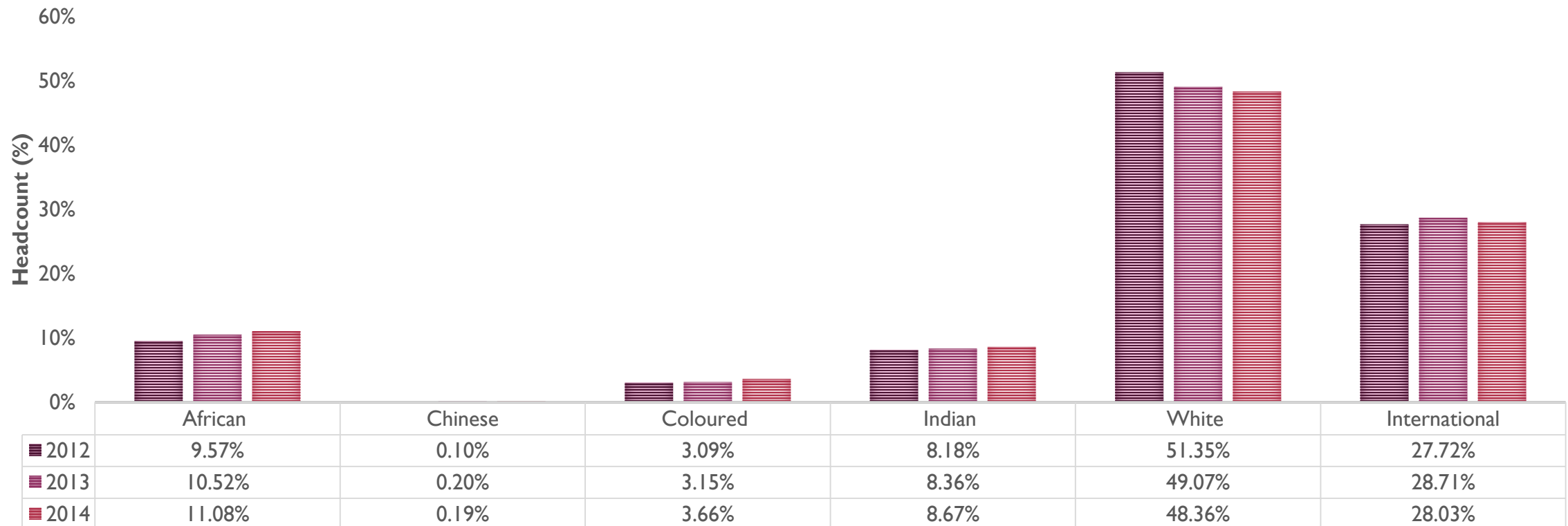
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

STUDENT HEADCOUNT BY NATIONALITY AND RACE



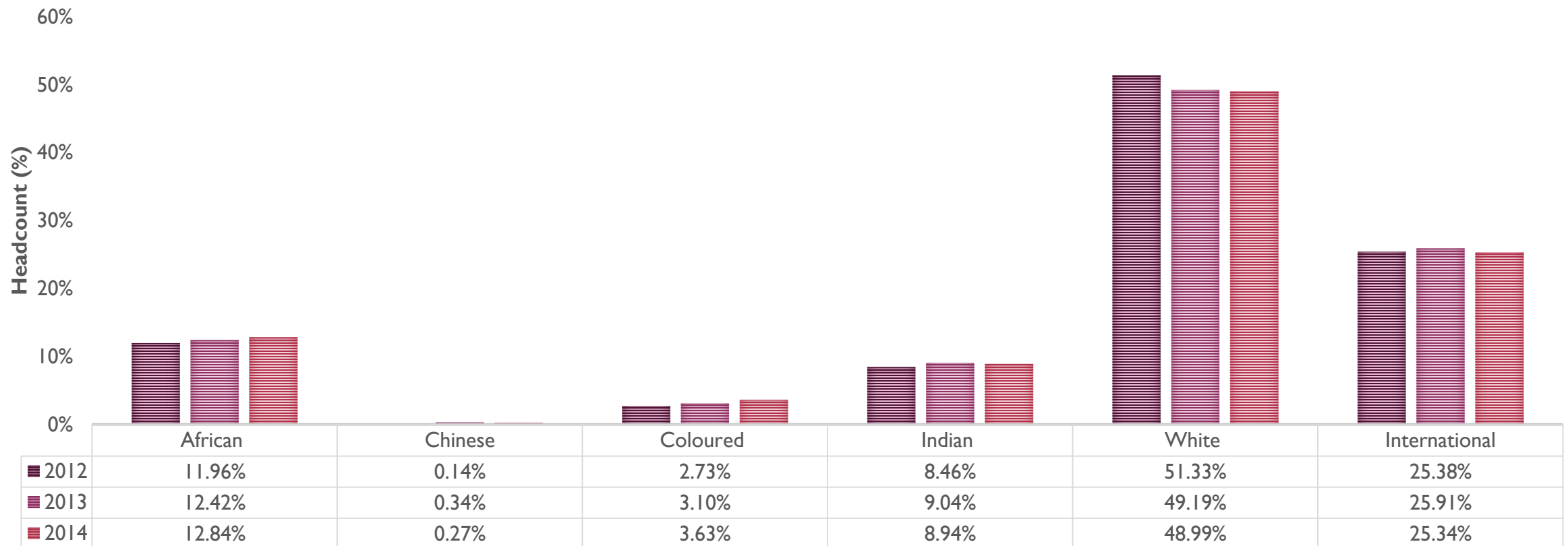
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

FULL-TIME & PERMANENT ACADEMIC STAFF BY NATIONALITY AND RACE



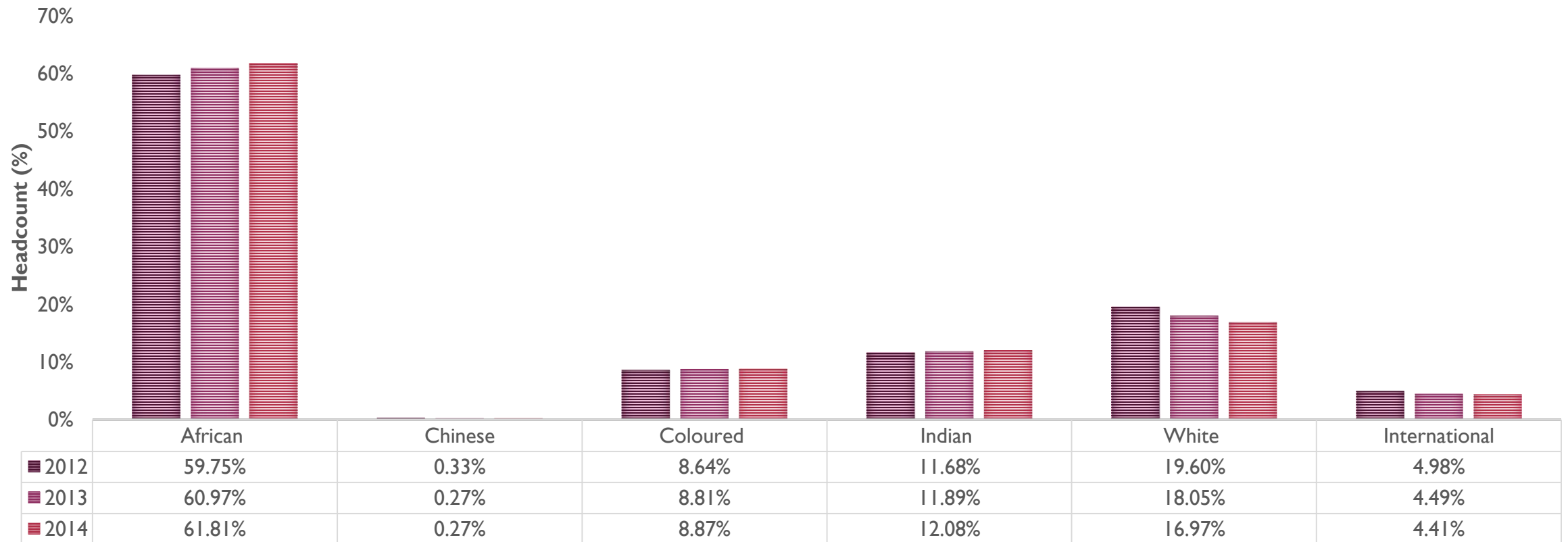
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ACADEMIC STAFF WHERE FTE≥50% BY NATIONALITY AND RACE



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF BY NATIONALITY AND RACE



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- New Language Policy
- University is not located in Australia, USA or United Kingdom
- Transformation imperative (social inclusion)
- Throughput rates – epistemological access
- Take part in the development of African languages for scientific use

METHODOLOGY – CRITICAL QUESTIONS

- What is the preferred status of English in the University business (teaching and learning, research, administration and social engagement)?
- What is/are the preferred African language/s in the new official language policy at Wits?
- How should that language be used for educational, research and business purposes?
- How should that language be developed for business and scientific use within the University?

METHODOLOGY – RESEARCH DESIGN

- Survey targeted all Wits undergraduate and postgraduate students; academic staff; professional and support-services staff; and outsourced services employees
- Comprehensive questionnaire available in English, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Tshivenda, Sesotho, Sepedi, and Setswana
- Electronic platform for Wits staff and paper based for staff in outsourced services
- Quantitative and qualitative questions

TEACHING EVERYBODY'S CHILDREN

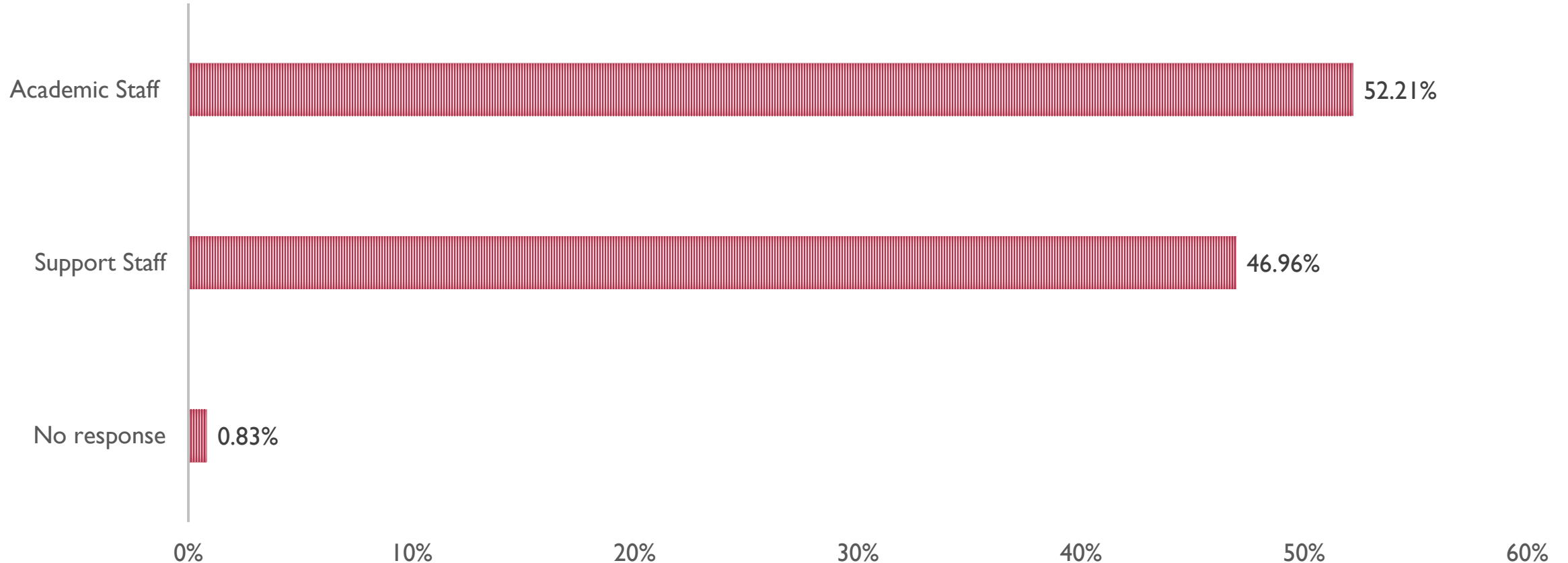
SmaNdebele re Batswana we are English re Basotho singamaZulu
ons is Afrikaners hi Batsonga singamaSwati re Bapedi
ri vha Venda we are South Africans



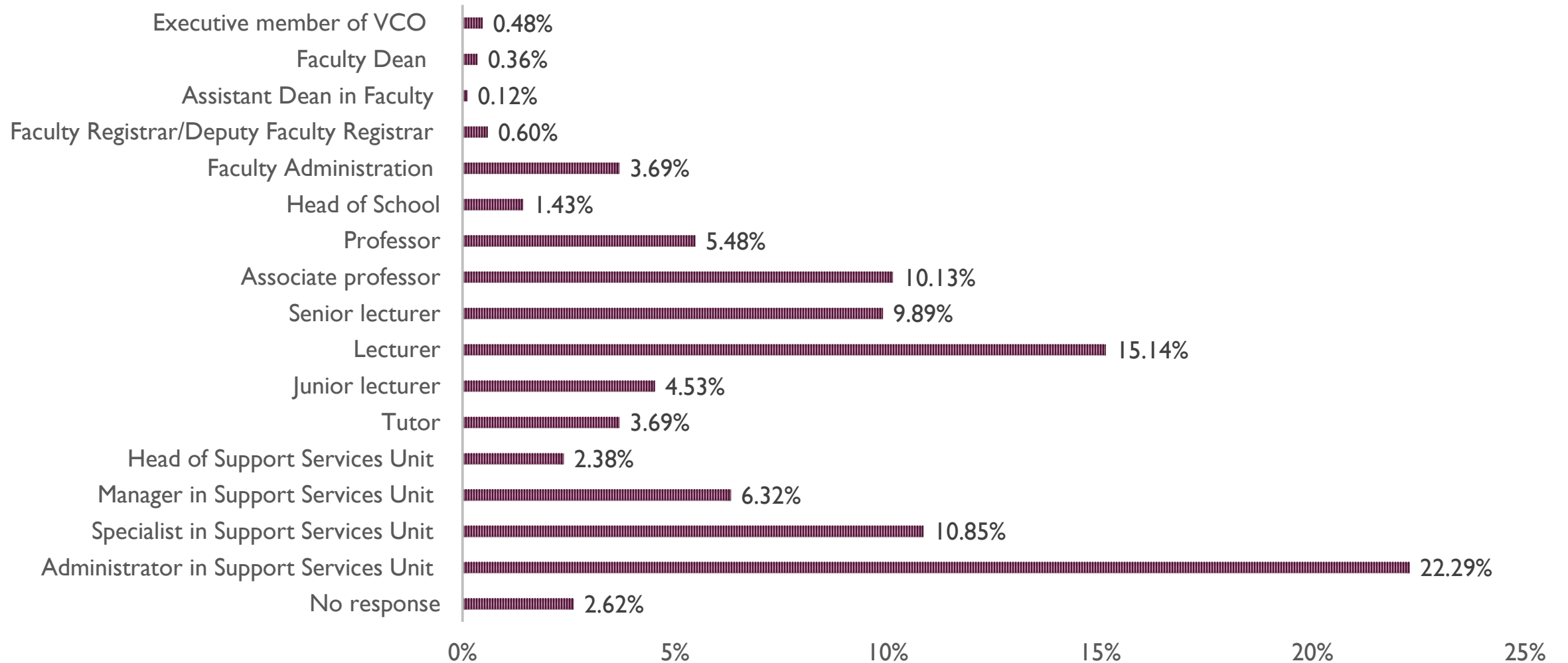
SAMPLE AND RESPONSE RATE

TARGET SAMPLE	HEADCOUNT	RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE RATE
Total headcount undergraduate enrolments	21 883	5 411	24.73%
Total headcount postgraduate enrolments	9 814	1 014	10.33%
>50% fte academic staff	1 464	438	29.92%
>50% fte administrative staff	2 242	394	17.57%
Outsourced services workers	1 015	234	23.05%
GRAND TOTAL	36 418	7 491	20.57%

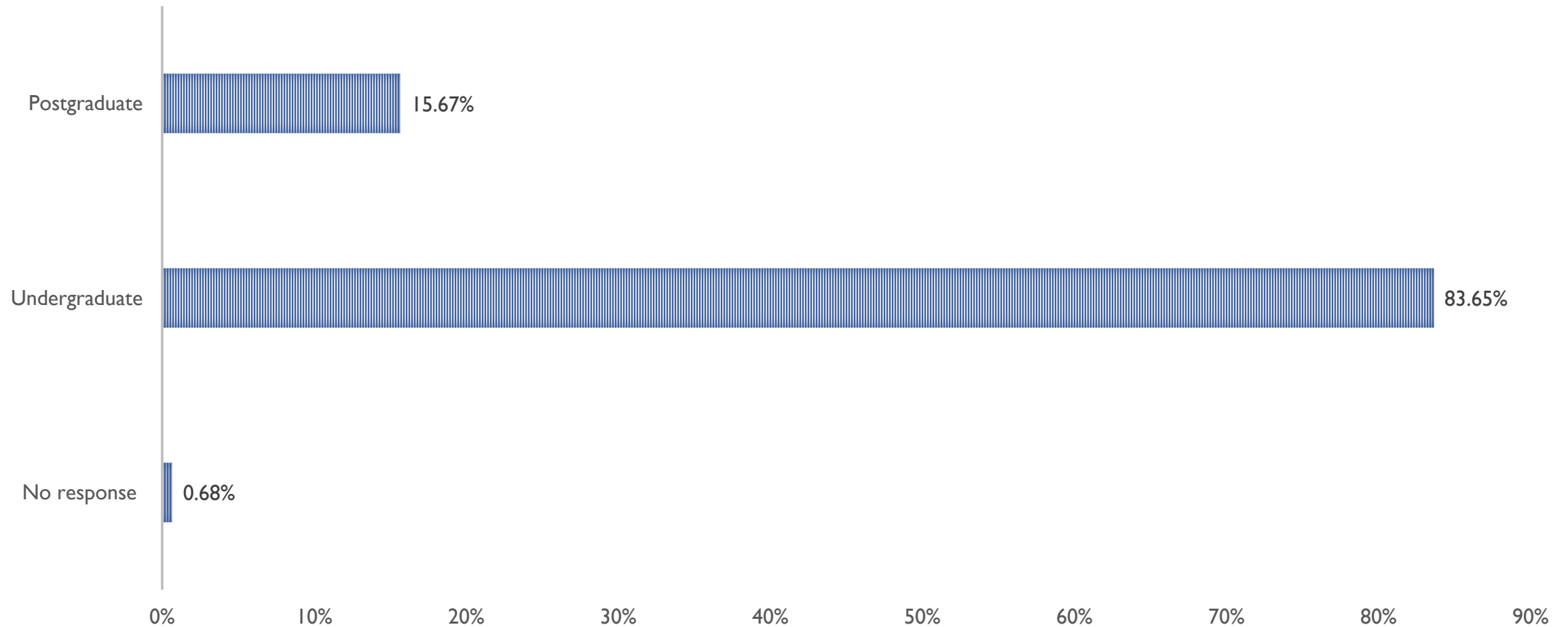
RESEARCH FINDINGS (STAFF).....



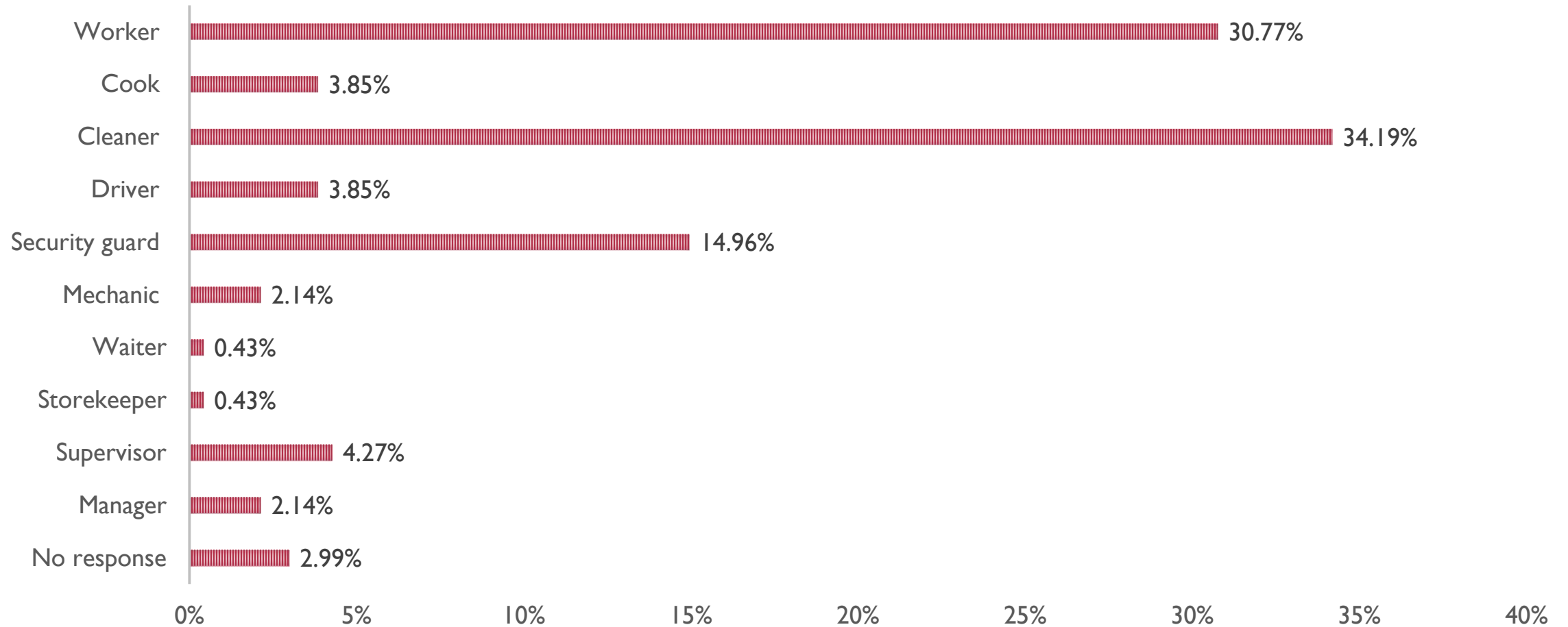
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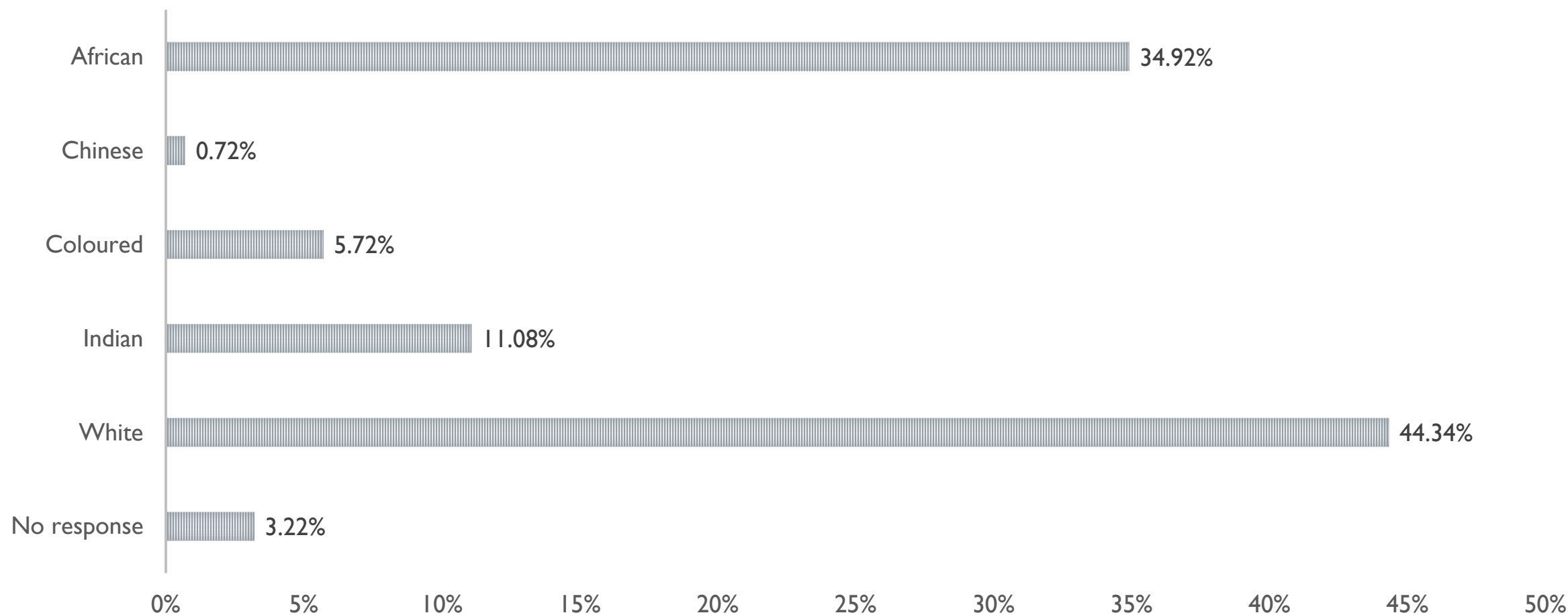
RESEARCH FINDINGS (STUDENTS).....



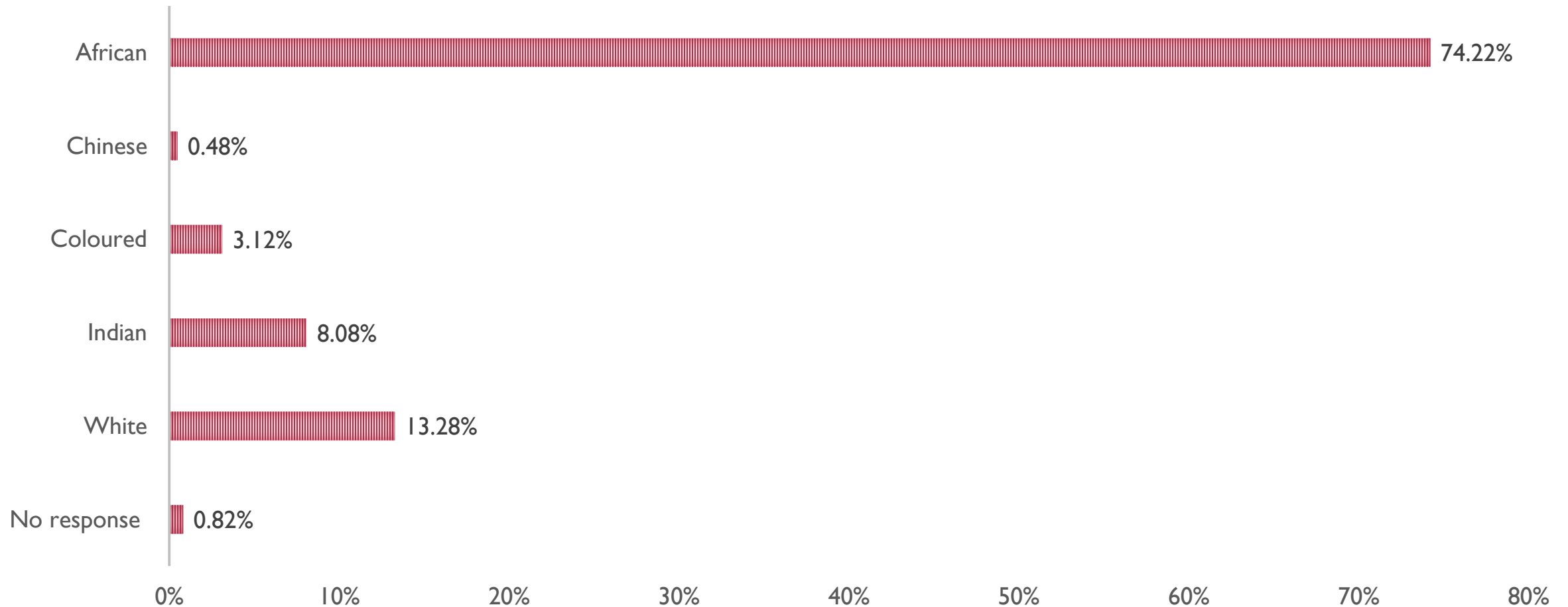
RESEARCH FINDINGS (OUTSOURCED STAFF).....



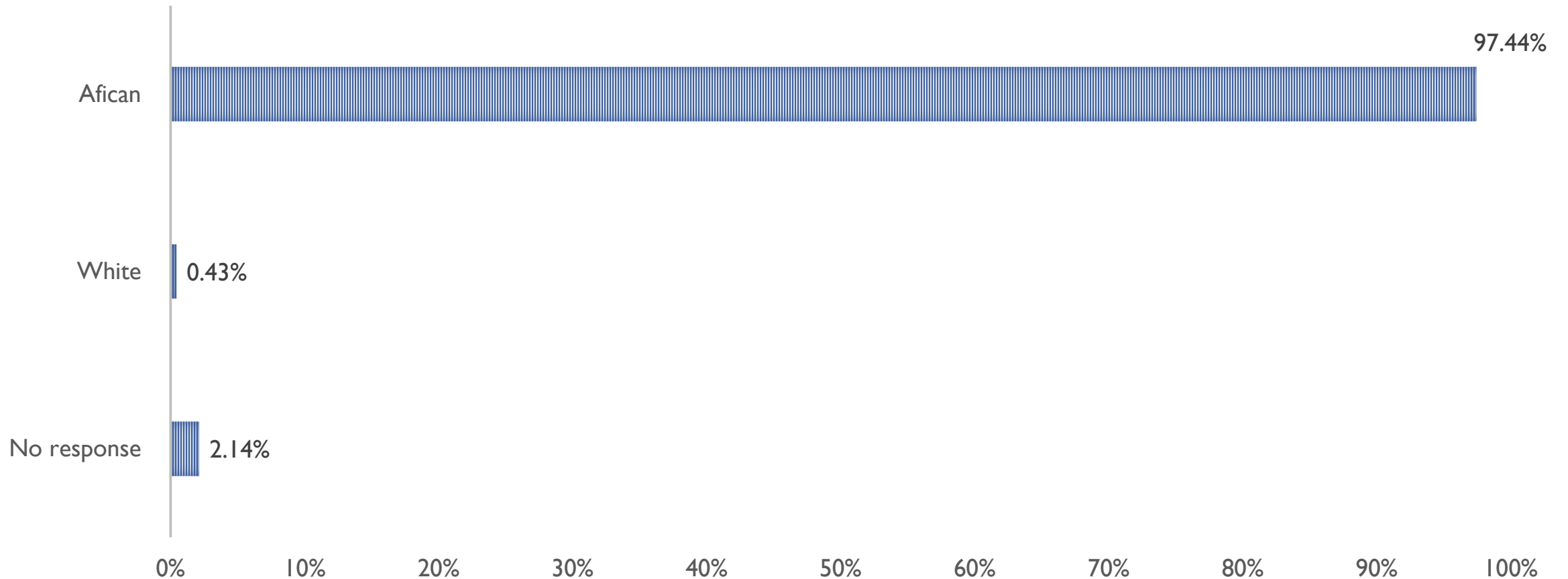
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RESEARCH FINDINGS (STUDENTS).....

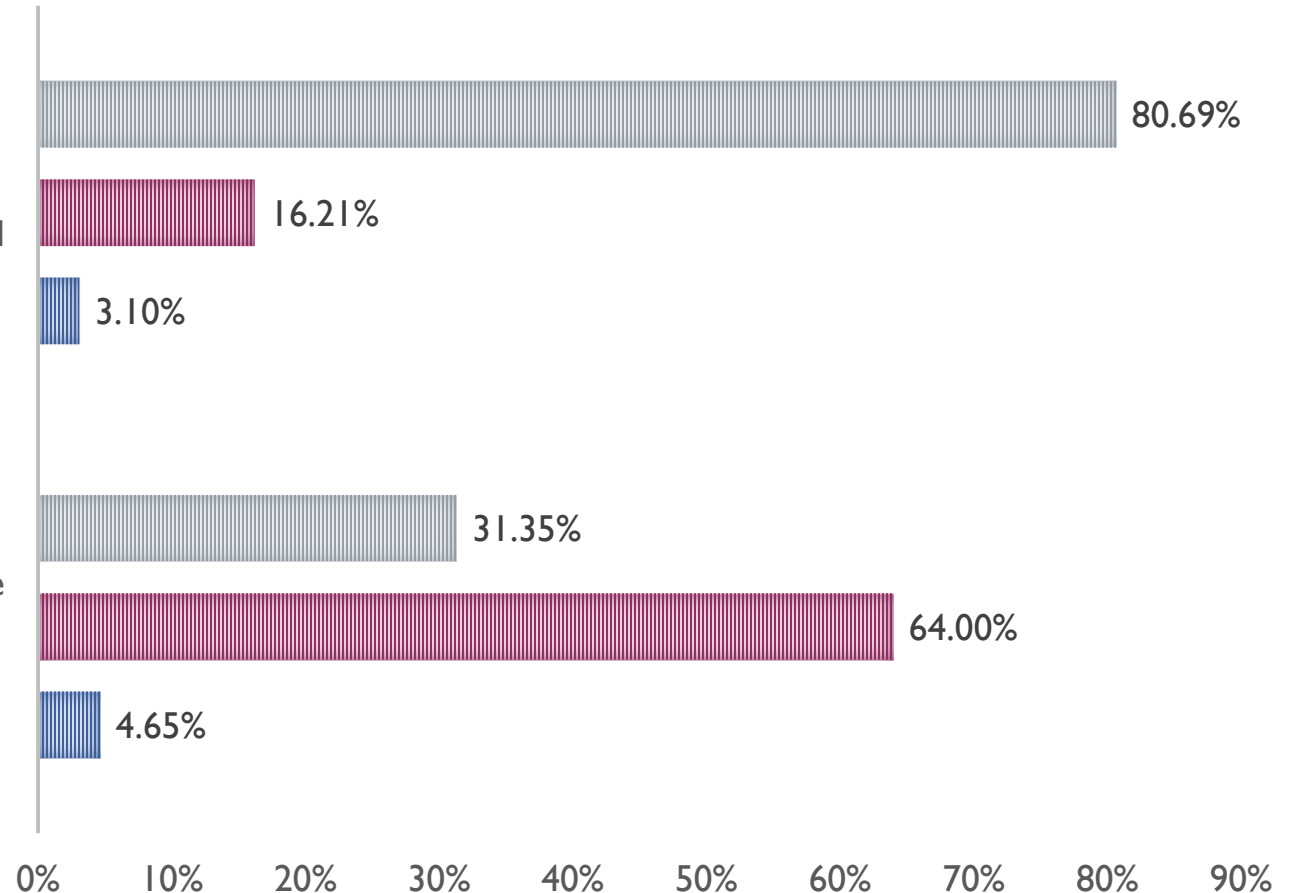


RESEARCH FINDINGS (OUTSOURCED STAFF).....

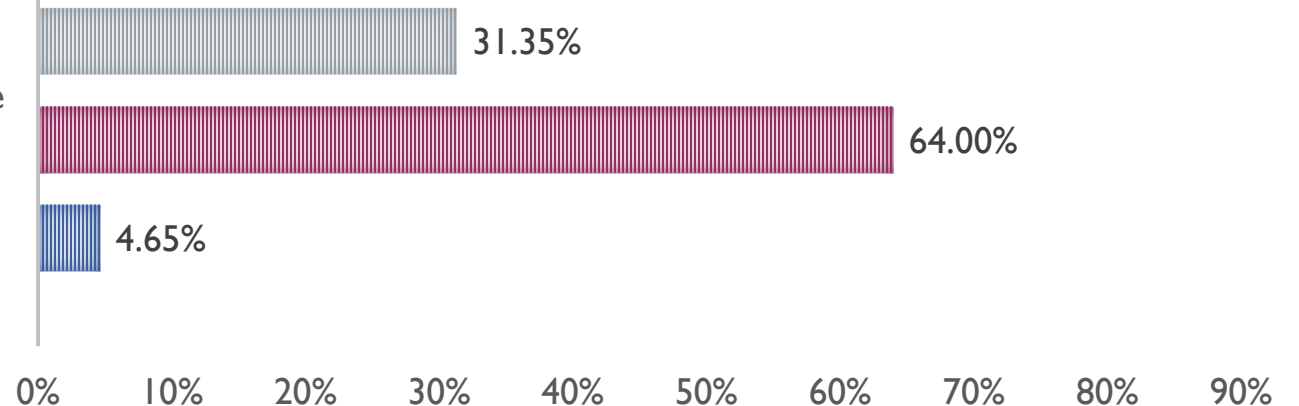


RESEARCH FINDINGS (STAFF).....

Do you support the choice of English as the only medium of instruction at Wits until such a time that it can be used together with Sesotho (once Sesotho has been developed sufficiently for the purposes of university instruction)

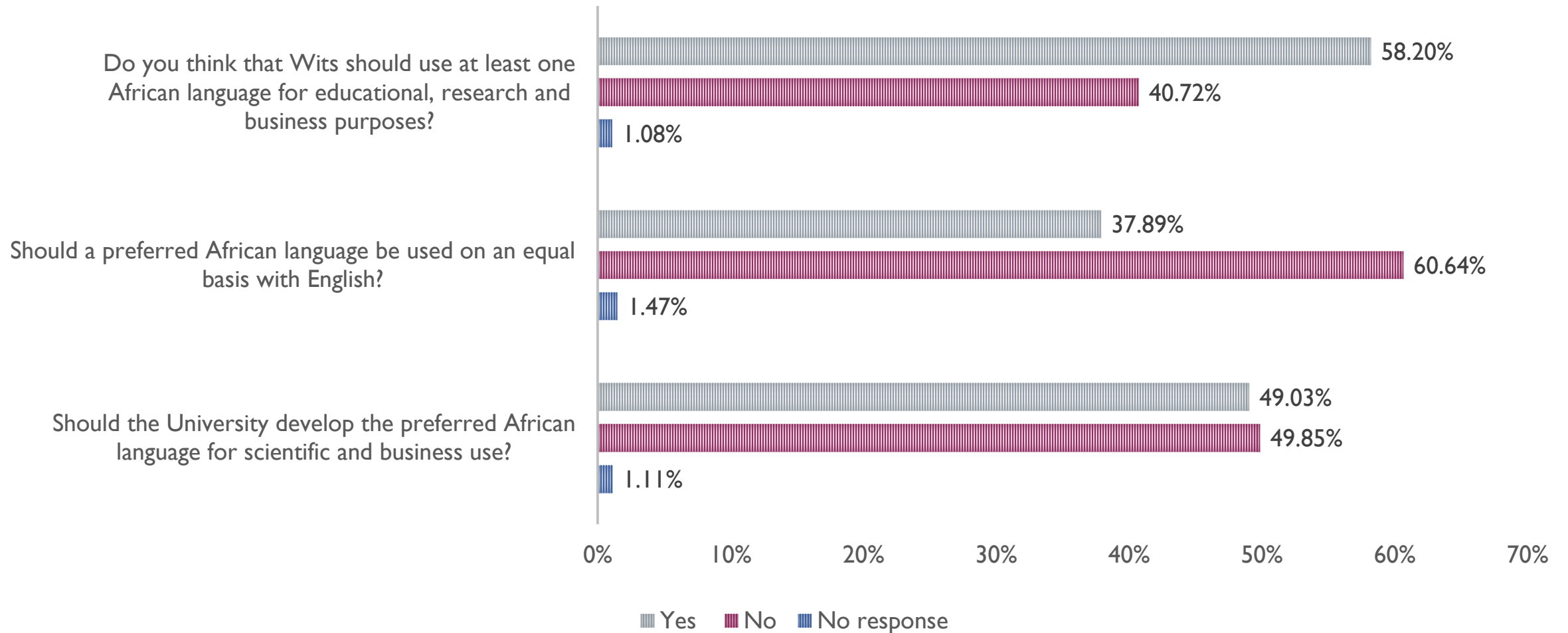


Do you support the choice of Sesotho by Wits as the language designated for development for scientific (including academic usage) and business use



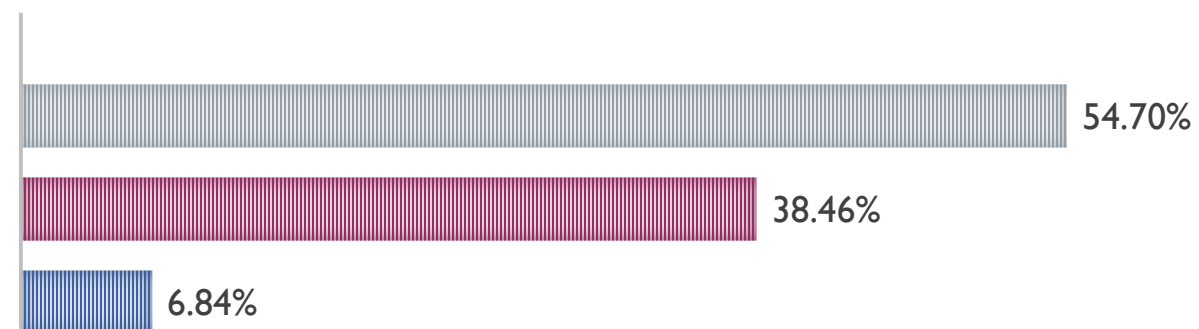
■ Yes ■ No ■ No response

RESEARCH FINDINGS (STUDENTS).....

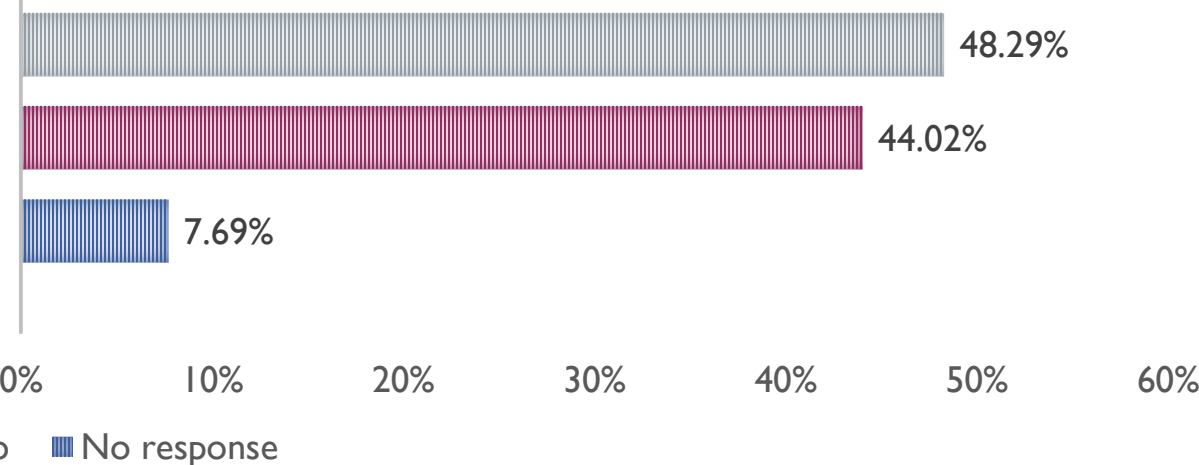


RESEARCH FINDINGS (OUTSOURCED STAFF).....

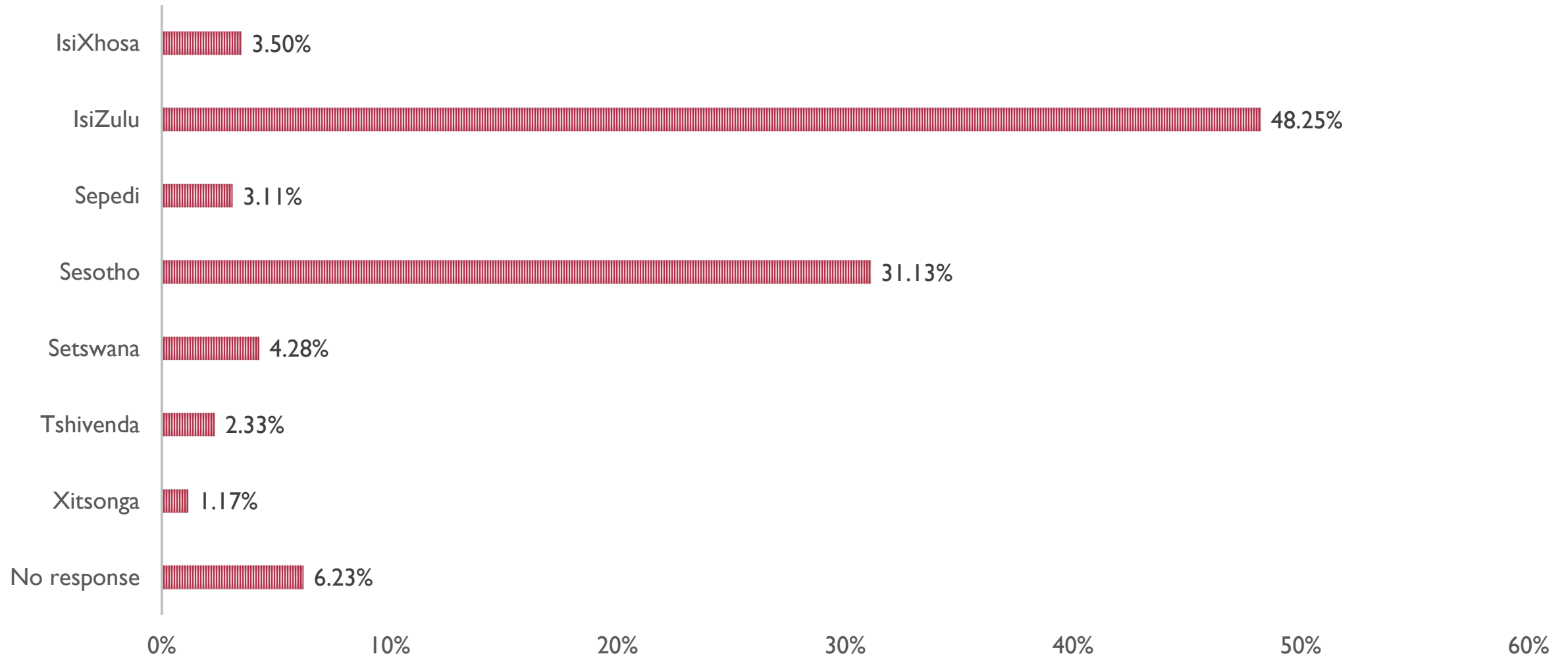
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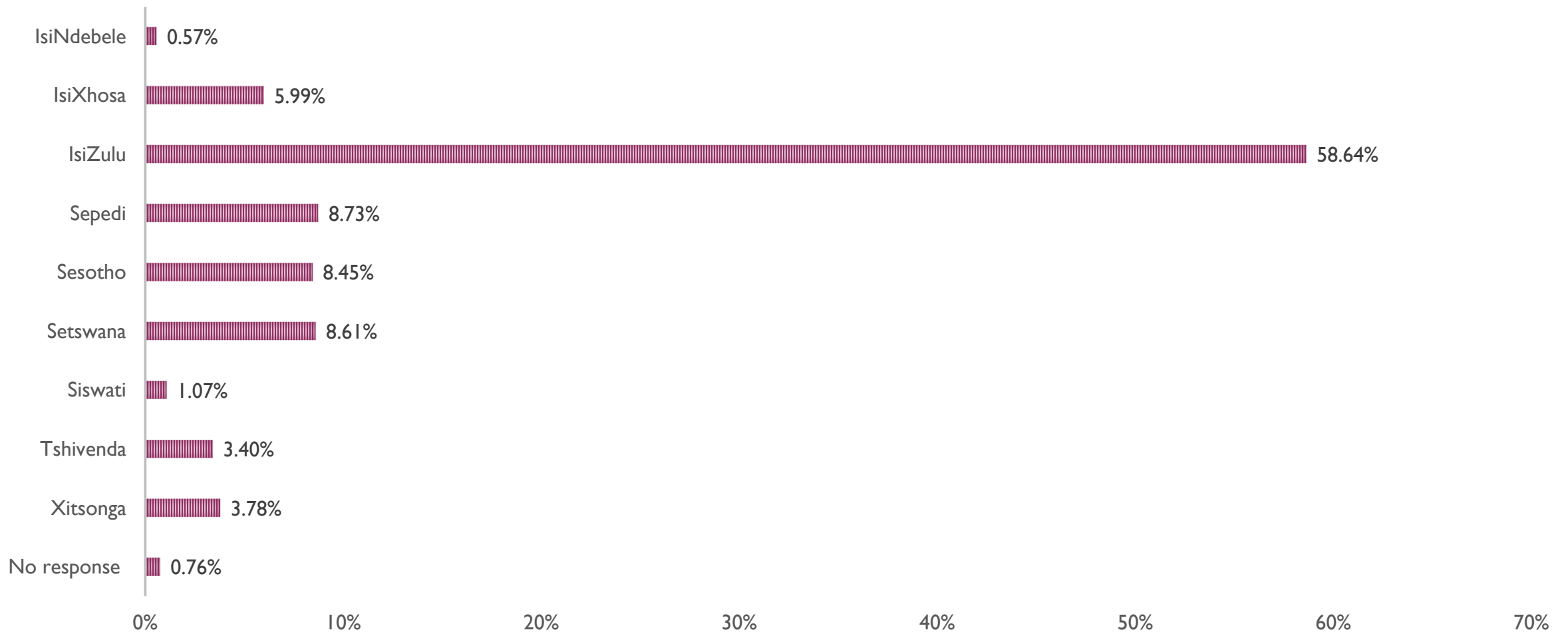
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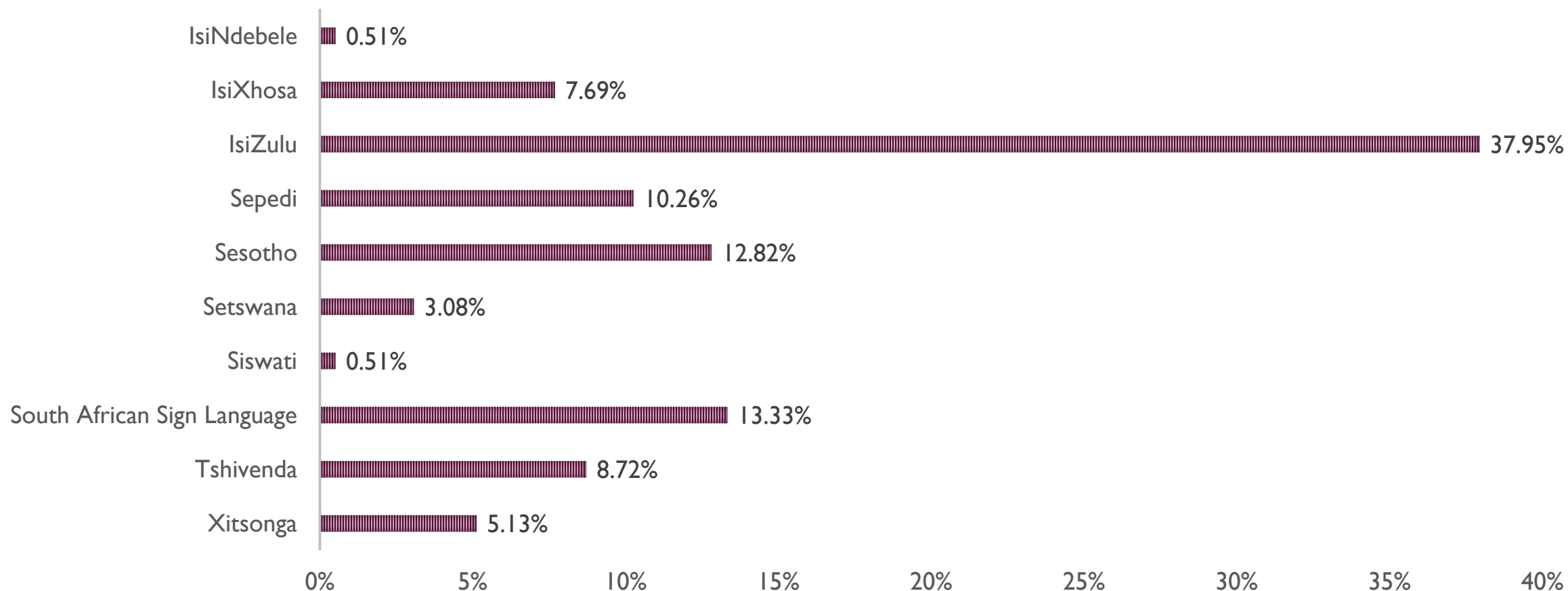
RESEARCH FINDINGS (STAFF).....



RESEARCH FINDINGS (STUDENTS)...



RESEARCH FINDINGS (OUTSOURCED STAFF).....



RESEARCH FINDINGS

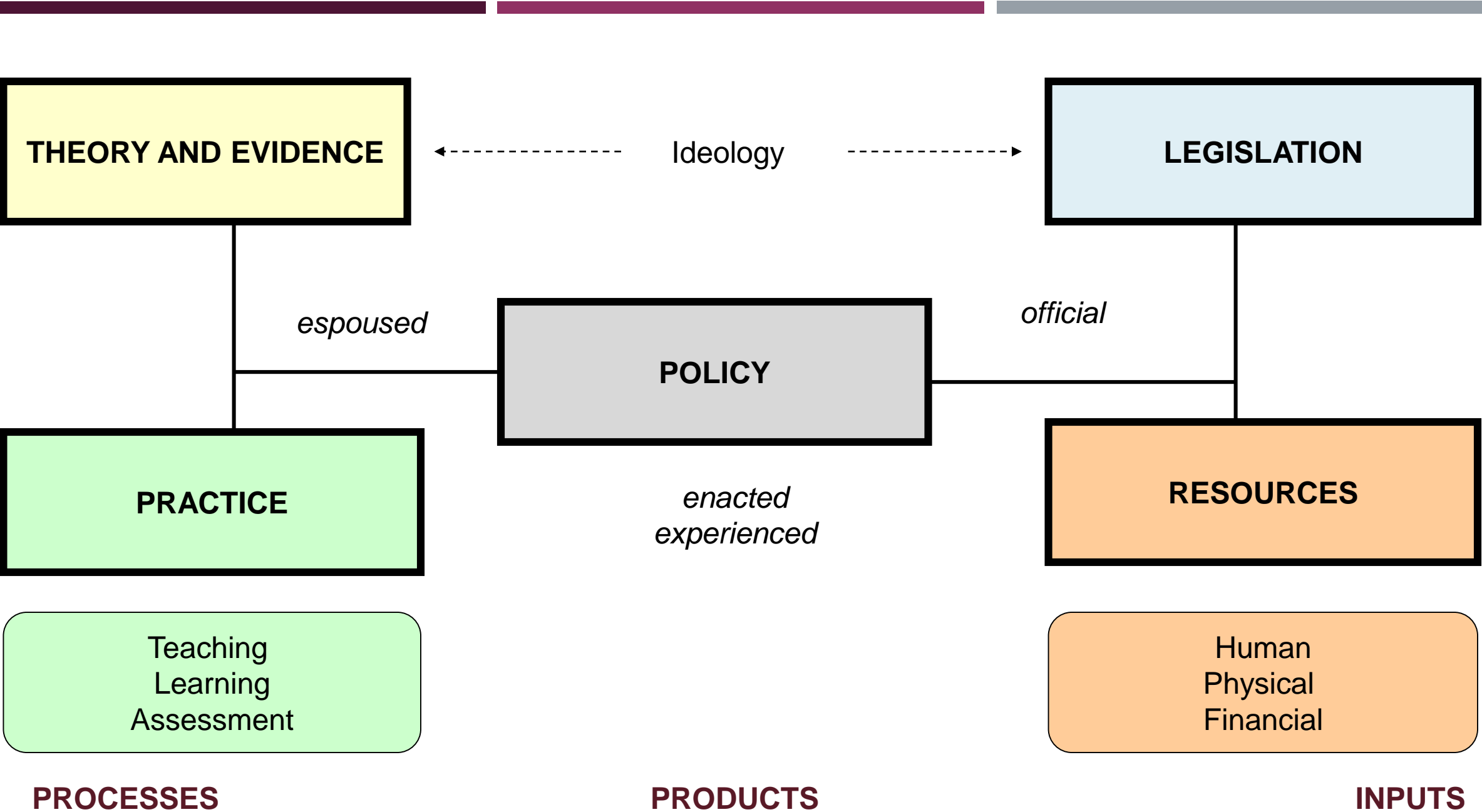
- Teach everybody's children good English, teach them in English
- Use English, isiZulu, Sesotho and sign language as official languages to enhance quality of teaching and learning, and broaden social inclusion
- Use of the South African sign language as part of the mainstream language policy
- Use of French to address language needs of the majority of international staff and students
- Develop the preferred African languages for scientific use/ language intellectualisation

RESEARCH FINDINGS.....


- All academic staff be required to demonstrate reasonable English proficiency as a requirement for employment confirmation
- The majority of staff (58.88%) recommended that the chosen African language (isiZulu) be used on equal basis with English
- Most of the University staff community (91.30%) believe that Wits should require all students to achieve full competence in written and spoken English by the end of their first degree.

RESEARCH FINDINGS.....

- The majority of Wits staff (89.63%) also indicated that it was important for the University to require international students who can not demonstrate full competence in English to complete non-credit-bearing courses in English as a foreign language
- Local students who can not demonstrate full competence in English to complete non-credit-bearing courses in English
- Students who could not demonstrate full competence in one of the two preferred African languages - to complete non-credit-bearing courses
- Academic staff required to go through language development programmes (isiZulu or Sesotho)



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- Practical implementation of the policy (prioritization)
 - Development of the two preferred African languages for scientific use
 - Institutionalization of the new language policy (official communication; formal teaching; research; branding and signage; forms of language development programmes)
 - Resources to support the implementation
 - Implications for duty-loads (academic staff) and good teaching
 - How will language proficiency be assessed (staff and students)
 - Structural location of the African languages development programme
 - Motivation for staff and students to learn the two preferred languages
 - “Overloading” the curriculum (academic support/English/isiZulu or Sesotho



“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”

Nelson Mandela

NGIYABONGA BAKWETHU

RIA LIVHUWA



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