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Positioning Universities as Engines of Innovation for Sustainable Development and Transformation

Paul Tiyambe Zeleza*

Abstract

This article seeks to place discourses about higher education and development in a comparative global context. It begins with brief reflections on development, by revisiting age-old debates about why some nations develop faster than others. This is an important backdrop to any meaningful discussion about the role of universities as engines of innovation for sustainable development and transformation. The article will focus mainly on the value proposition of university education and the ways in which this is reflected in its products, principally the quality of research and graduates. It will argue that, for universities to realize and sustain their institutional value, they need enabling resources, capacities and support from all key internal and external stakeholders.

Résumé

Cet article cherche à placer les discours sur l'enseignement supérieur et le développement dans un contexte comparatif mondial. Il commence par une brève réflexion sur le développement, en revisitant certains débats séculaires sur les raisons pour lesquelles certaines nations se développent plus rapidement que d'autres. C'est un cadre important pour toute discussion utile sur le rôle des universités en tant que moteurs d'innovation pour le développement et la transformation durables. Une grande partie de l'article portera sur la proposition de valeur de l'enseignement universitaire et sur la manière dont elle se reflète sur ses produits, principalement sur la qualité de la recherche et des diplômés. Toutefois, pour réaliser et préserver leur valeur institutionnelle, les universités ont besoin de ressources, de capacités et d'appui de tous ses principaux acteurs internes et externes.

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Introduction

Africa has an unprecedented opportunity to invent the future and contribute to the global search for workable models of higher education through serious, systemic, and strategic reflections. While the challenges facing higher education are indeed global, they are particularly pressing for African societies because of the relentless pressures of development. The enduring triple dreams of Pan-Africanism – self-determination, development, and democracy – find their current articulations in the African Union's Agenda 2063, various national visions including Kenya's Vision 2030, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These projects seek realization in the context of the youth bulge, the cruelties of climate change, and the convulsions of disruptive technologies, in a world characterized by social and political polarizations spawned by the relentless march and pulverizations of inequitable globalization.

This article seeks to place discourses about higher education and development in a comparative global context. It begins with brief reflections on development, by revisiting age-old debates about why some nations develop faster than others. This is an important backdrop to any meaningful discussion about the role of universities as engines of innovation for sustainable development and transformation. The bulk of the article will focus on the value proposition of university education and the ways in which this is reflected in its products, principally the quality of research and graduates. But to realize and sustain their institutional value, universities need enabling resources, capacities and support from all key internal and external stakeholders.

The Enigma of Development

In 1995, Arturo Escobar (1993), the Columbian-American anthropologist, reminded us in his influential book, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, that the vast global development industry emerged after the Second World War out of the West's discovery of poverty in what was soon christened the Third World as part of the Cold War. Through its modernization theories, whose technocratic thrust barely concealed ideological and cultural imperialism, the American-led Western alliance sought to project its economic, political, and cultural superiority to the emerging postcolonial countries desperately in search of development after decades of colonial underdevelopment. Fifty years later, Africa had little to show for its subjection to the edicts and experiments of developmentalism, as Dambisa Moyo (2010) bitterly proclaimed in her searing indictment, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Makes Things Worse and How There is Another Way for Africa*.

At the time this book was first published in 2009, development theory had long fallen from its intellectual and ideological pedestal. The post-development turn in development studies reflected the intellectual crisis of orthodox development theories and the perceived failures of development practice in Africa's "lost decades" of the 1980s and 1990s. Through draconian structural adjustment programs, African countries were forced to pray at the altar of neoliberalism, to the uncompromising gospel of the 'Washington Consensus'. It was a conjuncture that reflected the demise of Keynesian economics and the welfare state in the global North, the authoritarian developmental state in the global South, and the socialist experiment in Central and Eastern Europe.

But debates about development persisted: why do some nation develop and others remain underdeveloped? Why are some nations wealthy and others poor? Why do some nations grow and others are stagnant? Needless to say, there is a vast literature on this pressing question on the wealth and poverty of nations. Conventional explanations tend to offer the determinisms of geography, culture, and history. Once race and ethnicity were posited as explanations, but they are no longer entertained in the academy. According to the geographical hypothesis, a country's development is determined by its environment, terrain, and natural resources. Its advocates point to the fact many poor countries are in the tropics and rich ones in the temperate regions. A powerful example of this thesis can be found in Jared Diamond's (1999) bestseller, *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*.

The cultural thesis posits development emanates from a society's cultural norms, social conventions, and even religious beliefs. Max Weber, the German sociologist, famously attributed the development of the Anglo-Saxon countries to the Protestant work ethic, and some attribute the rise of Southeast Asian countries to Confucianism. David Landes (1998) stresses both geography and culture in his tome, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some are So Rich and Some So Poor*. The historicist perspective comes in many guises: Eurocentricists applaud the genius of European civilization for the West's wealth, while their critics blame the poverty in the global South on European colonialism and imperialism.

Undoubtedly, geography, culture, and history affect the processes and patterns of development. But they only offer partial explanations at best. Abundance of natural resources doesn't guarantee sustainable development. In fact, it may be a curse as it fosters the growth of corrupt rentier states and extractive economies that are structurally anti-development. The rapid growth of some tropical countries in Asia such as Singapore and in Africa such as Botswana undermines geographical determinism. Culture is equally insufficient as an explanation. The same Confucianism held as the secret to

Southeast Asia's economic miracles, was once blamed for the region's grinding poverty decades ago. History is a more compelling explanation. But formerly colonized countries in the world and in Africa have had different trajectories of development, even those colonized by the same imperial power. Moreover, the historic shift of global power from the West to Asia punctures the narrative of eternal Euroamerican superiority.

Contemporary scholarship remains as contentious as ever. Some continue to put faith in vague and ideological notions of market freedom as the driver of growth and development, as Robert Genetski (2017) does in his polemical *Rich Nation, Poor Nation: Why Some Nations Prosper While Others Fail*. Ali Mahmood (2013) in *Saints and Sinners: Why Some Countries Grow Rich, and Others Don't* argues that democracy is not a precondition for development as China's spectacular story demonstrates. Instead, he stresses as explanations variations in the levels of conflict and stability, patterns of corruption and investment, the presence of capable and committed leadership, and geopolitical affiliation to a superpower.

One of the most theoretically sophisticated and historically compelling analyses can be found in Acemglu and Robinson's (2012) voluminous treatise, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty.* They show that historically development prospects (not just rates of economic growth) have depended on the emergence and expansion of inclusive economic, political, and social institutions. Countries with extractive institutions have not fared as well in achieving sustained growth and development. To the quality of institutions, I would add two other critical factors: the quality of human capital and the quality of the social capital of trust.

Since the first Industrial Revolution in the mid-eighteenth century, all the subsequent revolutions – we are apparently in the fourth – have been dependent on the indestructible link between intellectual inquiry, research, and innovation. This is the hallowed province of the university as society's premier knowledge producing institution. The university is also the primary engine for producing high quality and innovative human capital. There is a growing body of research that shows a positive correlation between social trust and economic development including the accumulation of physical capital, total factor productivity, income, and human capital formation and effectiveness. There are of course strong connections between university education and the production and reproduction of social capital, and intriguing linkages between university learning and the generation of civic attitudes and engagement.

At best, university education goes beyond the provision of vocational, technical, and occupational training. It imparts flexible and lifelong values,

skills, competencies or literacies. In several essays, I have discussed four intersected values: intrinsic value (the sheer pleasure of learning, asking the big questions, making discoveries, and cultivating lifelong quest for learning); intellectual value (exposure to the vast treasures of human thought, experience, creativity and innovation across the expanses of time and space and academic disciplines); instrumental value (cultivation of critical thinking, communication, problem solving, and adaptability skills for employability); and idealistic values (nourishment of ethical reasoning, empathy, and moral and narrative imaginations for civic engagement and enlightened citizenship).

There are also four interconnected literacies that effective university education promises: interdisciplinary literacy (the ability to view phenomena and solve problems from multiple disciplinary or analytical angles); international literacy (the ability to understand the complex, contradictory and always changing connections among the world's regions, polities, societies, economies, cultures, movements, and environments); information literacy (the ability to locate, evaluate and use information that continues to explode exponentially); and intercultural literacy (the ability to understand and navigate effectively multicultural realities and relationships).

In short, universities are crucibles for forging the skills, competencies, and literacies that engendered economic development in some societies in the past and will generate sustainable development in the twenty-first century with its exceedingly complex demands and volatile changes. In so far as the jobs of the future are yet to be known, our educational systems must go beyond valorizing vocational and technical skills, by embracing the enduring values of the liberal arts.

The Value Proposition of African University Education: The Quality of Graduates and Research

In examining the value proposition of Kenyan and African universities, it is important to understand the way the sector has grown. As we all know, the number and size of universities has increased rapidly in recent years, which has had a discernible impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and not always for the better. It is often stated that Kenya has too many universities. This is simply incorrect. Kenya and Africa lag behind the rest of the world in the provision of university education. The issue is not necessarily the number of universities, but their capacity to deliver quality education and graduates.

The number of universities across the continent increased from 170 in 1969 to 446 in 1989. In the 1990s, 338 new institutions were established, and in the 2000s another 647. Currently, according to the World Higher

Education Database, there are 1,682 universities. Clearly, this is nothing short of phenomenal. Yet, in global terms, Africa has the smallest number of universities of any region, except Oceania. Worldwide there are 18,772 higher education institutions, putting Africa's share at 8.9 per cent. Asia boasts the largest share at 37 per cent, followed by Europe with 21.9 per cent, North America 20.4 per cent, Latin America and the Caribbean 12 per cent.

Equally revealing is data on enrollments. According to UNESCO data, enrolments in Africa remain small. The total number of students in African higher education institutions in 2017 stood at 14,654,667.7 million, out of 220,704,239.5 worldwide, or 6.6 per cent, which is less than the continent's share of institutions. Forty-five percent of the African students are in Northern Africa. To put it more graphically, Indonesia has nearly as many students in higher education institutions as the whole of sub-Saharan Africa (7.98 million to 8.03 million). Enrollment ratios tell the story differently. In 2017, the world's average enrollment ratio was 37.88 per cent, compared to 8.98 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa and 33.75 per cent in Northern Africa. Only Algeria and Mauritius boasted enrollment ratios higher than the world average, 47.72 per cent and 38.84 per cent, respectively. Kenya's stood at 11.66 per cent in 2016 behind twelve other African countries that had data.

Clearly, we have a long way to go. In 2017, the enrollment ratio of the high income countries was 77.13, for upper middle income countries it was 52.07 per cent, for the middle income countries 35.59 per cent, and for lower middle income countries 24.41 per cent. The proverbial development case of South Korea is instructive. As pundits never tire of pointing out, in 1960 the country's level of development was comparable to some African countries: its enrollment ratio in 2017 was 93.78 per cent! And China, the emerging colossus of the world economy had a ratio of 51.01 per cent. Put simply, not enough Africans are going to university. The continent needs to build more universities. The city of Boston alone has half the number of higher education institutions as Kenya.

But the challenge is not simply to grow the number of universities, which is essential for our countries to meet the pressures of the youth bulge, the fastest growing in the world, but to grow in a smart and sustainable way. Much of the growth in Africa's higher education sector has been haphazard. This has predictably led to declining educational quality. A critical measure of quality is the employability of university graduates. Reports on graduate employability show that there are glaring mismatches between what universities are producing and what the economy needs, resulting in graduates spending years "tarmacking," unemployed and underemployed.

A 2016 British Council Report, *Universities, Employability and Inclusive Development* covering Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa makes sobering reading. A story in *World University News* (Nganga 2018) quotes a survey by the Federation of Kenya Employers lamenting that "at least 70 per cent of entry-level recruits require a refresher course in order to start to deliver in their new jobs." Further, it notes that a study by the Inter-University Council for East Africa, "shows that Uganda has the worst record, with at least 63 per cent of graduates found to lack job market skills. It is followed closely by Tanzania, where 61 per cent of graduates were ill prepared. In Burundi and Rwanda, 55 per cent and 52 per cent of graduates respectively were perceived to not be competent. In Kenya, 51 per cent of graduates were believed to be unfit for jobs."

As noted in a recent essay by Zeleza (2018), employability entails the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attributes, in short, capabilities for gainful employment and self-employment. Essential employability qualities (EEQ) go beyond subject knowledge and technical competence. Acquisition of soft skills is paramount. Graduates with EEQ are good communicators, critical thinkers and problem solvers, inquirers and researchers, collaborators, adaptable, principled and ethical, responsible and professional, and continuous learners. Ironically, therefore, it is the much-derided liberal arts disciplines that can equip graduates with employability skills. That is why enlightened advocates of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education talk of STEAM, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.

Cultivation of employability skills raises questions about curriculum design, assessment, and teaching methods. It entails the intersection of the classroom, campus, and community as learning spaces for a holistic educational experience. The classroom requires a transforming pedagogy, adequate learning resources, curricular relevance, balance between theory and practice, passionate and enthusiastic teachers with high expectations, and motivated students. The campus needs robust career services, extra-curricular activities, student engagement, employer involvement, and innovation incubators. And the community contributes through the provision of internships and service learning opportunities.

In short, experiential learning, undergraduate research, and common learning experiences through a core curriculum and learning communities are among high impact pedagogical practices that can foster learning and acquisition of employability skills. To what extent are they embedded in our institutions? What opportunities do we provide our faculty for training and continuous improvement in teaching? How effective are faculty teaching

evaluations? How seriously do we take course and program assessments beyond obligatory genuflections to CUE inspection visits? How adequately do we measure learning over the rote memorization of examinations?

In many countries, the issue of teaching quality has leapfrogged to top of the agenda even for some of the leading research intensive universities as the value proposition of higher education comes under increased scrutiny by employers, politicians, and parents. In the United States, the book by Arum and Roksa (2010), *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College* Campuses triggered a storm of commentary and concern. An avalanche of critiques followed including the blistering attack on the Ivy Leagues by William Deresiewicz (2014), *Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life*. This gave an opening to private firms to enter the higher education teaching market aggressively, as noted by Goldie Blumenstyk (2018). It also provoked critiques against higher education rankings that put a premium on research, as noted by Suellen Pillay (2018) in the South African newsweekly, *Mail & Guardian*.

As for technology enhanced learning what is the state of our infrastructure and faculty preparedness? While the challenges are acute in many African universities, they are evident in some of the developed countries as well where faculty uptake of instructional technology remains problematic. Beyond the adoption of online learning from flipped classrooms to blended learning to online degrees, how prepared are we to meet the technological disruptions of the 4th industrial revolution of artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and robotics? How are we preparing our students for this brave new world of the twenty-first century when it is estimated "up to 50 per cent of jobs are predicted to disappear in the next 20 years," and the jobs of tomorrow are unknown?" (How do we provide what Robert Aoun (2017) calls a robot-proof education, one that "is not concerned solely with topping up students' minds with high-octane facts. Rather, it calibrates them with a creative mindset and the mental elasticity to invent, discover, or create something valuable to society." He calls the new model of education "humanics" that encompasses three new literacies, data, technological, and human. The new model embodies the humanities, communication and design.

Equally critical is the question of research, the other key product of higher education institutions. Here, too, African countries and universities face many challenges. According to UNESCO data, in 2013 gross domestic expenditure on research and development as a percentage of GDP in Africa was 0.5 per cent, compared to a world average of 1.7 per cent, and 2.7 per cent for North America, 1.8 per cent for Europe and 1.6 per cent for Asia. Africa accounted for a mere 1.3 per cent of global R&D. Global spending on R&D has now reached US$1.7 trillion, 80 per cent of which is accounted

for by only ten countries. In first place in terms of R&D expenditure as a share of GDP is South Korea with 4.3 per cent and in tenth place the United States with 2.7 per cent.

In terms of total expenditure, the United States leads with $476 billion followed by China with $371 billion. What is remarkable is that among the top 15 R&D spenders expenditure by the business sector is the most important source, ranging from 56 per cent in the Netherlands to 71.5 per cent in the United States. In contrast, for the 14 African countries that UNESCO has data, business as a source of R&D is more than 30 per cent in three countries led by South Africa with 38.90 per cent and is less than 1% in four countries. In most countries the biggest contributor of R&D is either government or the outside world. The former contributed more than 85 per cent in Egypt, Lesotho and Senegal, and more than 70 per cent in another two countries, while the latter contributed a third or more in four countries. Higher education and private non-profit hardly featured.

Not surprisingly, other research indicators are no less troubling. In 2013, Africa as a whole accounted for 2.4 of world researchers, compared to 42.8 per cent for Asia, 31.0 per cent for Europe, 22.2 per cent for the Americas and 1.6 per cent for Oceania. Equally low is the continent's share of scientific publications, which stood at 2.6 per cent in 2014, compared to 39.5 per cent for Asia, 39.3 per cent for Europe, 32.9 per cent for the Americas and 4.2 per cent for Oceania. The only area Africa claims dubious distinction is in the proportion of publications with international authors. While the world average was 24.9 per cent, for Africa it was 64.6 per cent, compared to 26.1 per cent for Asia, 42.1 per cent for Europe, 38.2 per cent for the Americas and 55.7 per cent for Oceania. Thus, like our dependent economies, African scholarship suffers from epistemic extraversion. As Zeleza (1997, 2006, 2007) has written, African knowledge production systems seem more beholden to problems, paradigms, and perspectives especially those derived from the intellectual traditions of Euroamerica, which limits the relevance and efficacy of local research.

In short, the project for intellectual decolonization remains as pressing as ever. Complicating the task are two key developments. First, is the emergence of global rankings which reproduce and sanctify the geographies and hierarchies of the international division of intellectual labor. The second is the explosion of predatory journals and conferences that ensnare uncompetitive and desperate academics. While these unsavory practices are evident around the world, African academics in underfunded universities with weak research support systems are particularly vulnerable (Allen 2018; Gillis 2018a, 2018b; Perlin *et al.* 2018).

Fostering Enabling Capacities and Conditions

Notwithstanding the challenges noted above, the African higher education sector has made significant strides from the days of structural adjustment in the 1980s when the very future of African universities seemed in doubt. But if African universities are to thrive, not just survive, a social compact needs to be forged between all the key stakeholders, namely, governments, the private sector, civil society, and the universities themselves. The object must be to position universities as engines of high-quality learning, rigorous research, and innovation for sustainable development and socio-economic transformation, the theme of this conference.

Advancing such a transformational project requires universities to address the pressing capacity challenges that severely curtail their potential and creating more enabling conditions throughout the ecosystem that sustains higher education. Specifically, the potential and promise of African universities is compromised by the persistent deficits in financial, infrastructural, human, and leadership resources. Ever since the neo-liberal turn in the 1980s, in many parts of the world the state progressively withdrew from being the sole funder of higher education, as the latter came to be seen as a private good rather than a public good.

The privatization craze manifested itself in the explosion of private universities, the growing privatization of public institutions, and emergence of the for-profit institutions. Worldwide the proportion of private universities grew from 40.6 per cent in 1969 to 57.5 per cent in 2015. During the same period the number of private universities in Africa grew from 35 in 1969 to 972. Thus the majority of African universities are now private and this trend will continue. UNESCO data shows that between 2000-2013 government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP fell in 39 countries, 12 of them in Africa. Expenditure on tertiary education as a percentage of total government expenditure fell in 34 countries, of which 11 were African. In the meantime, expenditure on tertiary education as a percentage of government expenditure on education fell in 33 countries, 12 in Africa, while government expenditure per tertiary student fell in 37 countries, 16 of them in Africa.

Clearly, many parts of the world were gripped by 'higher education austerity' as Johnstone and Marcucci (2007) call it. This was variously reflected in the deterioration of instructional resources and facilities, loss of secure faculty positions and declining morale, and rising student debt loads. To address the austerity pressures, higher education institutions were forced to adopt various strategies to rein in costs and raise alternative

sources of revenue. The former included "enlarging class sizes and teaching loads, deferring maintenance, substituting lower-cost part-time faculty for higher-cost full-time faculty, dropping low-priority programs and cutting or freezing financial assistance." On the revenue side, solutions included "instituting tuition fees (or rapidly raising them), encouraging faculty and institutional entrepreneurship, promoting philanthropy, and allowing or encouraging a demand-absorbing private sector."

As I've noted in my book mentioned earlier, in some countries implementing the cost-side and revenue-side solutions at the institutional level was increasingly accompanied at the system wide level by more radical strategies that encompassed sector diversification through greater differentiation among institutions to reduce costs for the lower tier, mergers, and the promotion of distance learning, technologically assisted instruction, and virtual universities. Above all, cost sharing assumed greater salience in the funding of higher education. The primary parties to the cost sharing equation were governments, parents, students, and individual or institutional donors including business.

Five forms of cost sharing emerged. First, the introduction or imposition of sharp increases in tuition fees; second, establishment of dual-track tuition fees for different groups of students; third, the imposition of user-charges for services that were previously free or heavily subsidized; fourth, the reduction in the value of student loans, grants, and other stipends; and fifth, the diminution in the size of the public sector and official encouragement of the expansion of tuition-dependent private institutions, both non-profit and for-profit. To its proponents cost sharing was justified in terms of social equity, efficiency, and needs of universities, while its critics charged it disadvantaged the poor and undermined access and equity.

In reality, the debate between the proponents and opponents of cost sharing was less about its desirability, but about its appropriate level. On the whole, cost sharing tended to be more accepted in countries that espoused aggressive forms of free market capitalism, had a robust private education sector, and enjoyed high rates of enrolment, as opposed to countries attached to welfare-state policies, where the higher education sector was predominantly public, or enrolments rates were low. In some countries, the government set tuition fees. More commonly, institutions set their own tuition fees subject to government approval, or within a range set by the government. In some countries tuition fees were linked to the rate of inflation.

The adoption of tuition fees was often accompanied by the development of student assistance schemes, many of them sponsored or subsidized by governments. Student financial assistance from governments took the

form of grants, loans, and through indirect family assistance programs and tax credits and deductions. Many countries used multiple student assistance programs to meet the needs of different groups of students and their families. In Africa, several countries, such as Ghana and Tanzania in 2005, established market-oriented loan trust funds or loan boards in the early 2000s. Generally, the grant or loan programs were means-tested, merit based, or universal. In addition to government supported financial aid schemes, in some countries both public and private institutions provided student financial aid.

The challenges of financing higher education are daunting. Even in the United States, many universities and colleges are facing financial and demographic peril and some are not expected to survive over the next decade (Eide 2018; Hildreth 2017; Selingo 2016). Moody's, the ratings agency, has given negative outlooks for the higher education sector for several years including in 2017 and 2018 (Chatlani and Donachie; Harris 2018). Student debt surpassed credit card debt years ago and reached $1.5 million in 2018. Thus, African countries are not alone in trying to devise more effective and sustainable models for financing higher education.

How can university funding be improved through increased government support and an enabling policy environment? The former can include providing full tuition for fewer and mostly needy students or allowing universities to charge the difference between government scholarships and the cost of education. Governments can also provide tax incentives to facilitate philanthropic support for universities. It is ironic that while society often accepts differentiated costs for lower levels of education, for university this is met with resistance. This reflects the legacy of public funding of higher education,

As for the private sector and high net worth individuals (HNIs) how can they be mobilized and motivated to increase support for higher education institutions through research funding, student scholarships, and endowed programs and faculty positions? I noted earlier that in the developed countries business is the major source of R&D. In several African countries private-public-partnerships are emerging as vehicles especially for financing infrastructural capital projects. Such partnerships are developing in Kenya (Patrinos *et al.* 2009; Pantheon 2017; Gudo 2014).

As for the high net worth individuals, according to the 2018 Africa Wealth Report, there "are approximately 148,000 HNWIs living in Africa, each with net assets of US$1 million or more" whose collective wealth is $920 billion, which represents 40 per cent of individual wealth on the continent (AfrAsia Bank 2018). Over the next decade private wealth is expected to grow by 34 per cent. How many of them invest in the African

higher education sector as do their counterparts in the global North that have helped build the enormous endowments of their alma maters. Harvard's endowment of about $39 billion is more than half Kenya's GDP and the GDP of 39 African countries! Need I mention African HNWIs are more likely to donate to the Harvards and Oxfords and Sorbonnes than to the cash-strapped universities in their own countries, including their alma maters? Can you imagine the impact if a fraction of the wealth of Africa's HNWIs was directed to universities?

The challenge of fundraising for African universities is related to both capacity and culture. With the notable exception of some South African institutions such as the universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand, and Stellenbosch, most universities simply do not have the personnel, skills and IT infrastructure to undertake fundraising (Nordling 2012; Pennington 2018; King Baudouin Foundation 2017; Makoni 2017). Typically, sophisticated fundraising operations involve dozens, and for the major universities hundreds, of professionals involved in a variety of roles. Major campaigns involve the governing Boards who are expected to contribute as much as a third of the fundraising target.

The culture of giving to higher education institutions is also underdeveloped. This is not because philanthropic cultures are weak as such. On the contrary, in many African communities giving to family members and even religious institutions is quite common. Making donations to universities is unusual given the fact that higher education was a state-funded enterprise for so long. And alumni were not socialized into institutional giving as students. In systems with well developed fundraising cultures, alumni provide up to 70 per cent of donations.

But securing adequate financial resources is only part of the story. The other is prudent financial management. How robust are the budgeting models and processes we use in our institutions? How prudent are we in our expenditures, in combining cost containment with growth in strategic areas, in focusing relentlessly on our core business of teaching and learning, research and scholarship? How immune are we from the rampant corruption that scars many of our economies and politics?

Time does not allow me to comment on the three other capacity challenges we need to address if universities are to contribute to the African renaissance. Massive investments are required to improve the physical and electronic infrastructures of many African universities. For some of the continent's older universities, deferred maintenance has turned them into depressing replicas of their golden years, while some of the newer fly-by-night universities can be worse than middling secondary schools. As for

electronic infrastructure, which in today's world is an essential institutional utility like water and power, not only are many of our universities awfully ill-quipped but the continent lags behind. One example will suffice.

As noted earlier, the world is in the middle of an economic revolution, and this revolution is largely digital. The catalyst for this revolution is the ability to process, and analyze the unpresented and current explosion of data. "Data is the new oil" headlines abound and countries that can harness this data to extract value will have a significant competitive advantage. High Performance Computing (HPC) is critical to harnessing big data, which is indispensable for research and innovation. Regrettably, Africa boasts a measly 0.2 per cent of global HPC capacity, while Asia has 42.4 per cent, followed by the Americas at 35.4 per cent, and Europe with 21 per cent.

In recognition of the potential that High Performance Computing has, we at USIU-Africa have a vision whose aim is to harness the power of HPC to provide support for research, policy making and innovation across Africa. To this end, we have implemented a continent-wide citizen science organisation that will employ HPC and big data analytics to solve African problems. On behalf of USIU-Africa, it therefore gives me great pleasure to invite you to collaborate with other like-minded organizations in a partnership that will help raise awareness and work towards setting up a Pan-African platform that will lead to the utilization and application of high performance computing in industry, research, academia, government and non-governmental organizations.

The challenges of human capital are especially evident when it comes to faculty. The rapid growth in the number of universities has outstripped the supply of faculty. While in several parts of the Global North such as the United States, there are more people with terminal degrees than there are academic jobs, across Africa there is a severe shortage of qualified faculty. In Kenya, for example, according to data from the Commission for University Education, in 2018 there were 18,005 faculty in the country's 74 universities and colleges, but only 34 per cent had doctoral degrees.

Finally, many African universities suffer from problems of governance and leadership that undermine their effectiveness and capacities to contribute meaningfully to national development. All too often despite the liberalization of the sector and declining state investment political interference especially in the appointment of university leaders remains rampant. Also, there are hardly opportunities for training and development for university leaders from heads of departments to school deans to DVCs and VCs all the way to members of University Councils and Boards of Trustees. This is another area we need to develop shared capacities. I am

pleased to announce that at USIU-Africa we are setting up an Institute for Higher Education Leadership Development in collaboration with various partners to cater for this need locally, in the region, and beyond.

Conclusion

In March 2015, the first African Higher Education Summit was held in Dakar, Senegal to plan for the future of higher education on the continent to realize the ambitions of the AU's Agenda 2063. The Framing Paper for the Summit (Zeleza 2015) laid out six key issues for deliberation, that were eventually incorporated into the *Summit Declaration and Action Plan* (Trust Africa 2015). First, moving from growth to quality massification; second, improving institutional financing and management; third, promoting articulation, harmonization, and quality assurance in African higher education systems; fourth, ensuring institutional autonomy and shared governance; fifth, enhancing research and innovation; and finally, strengthening internationalization and diaspora mobilization. Time doesn't allow me to elaborate.

Let me just address the third and final challenges and opportunities. African countries need well-articulated, diversified, and differentiated higher education systems combining flagship research-intensive and primarily graduate universities that train for the rest of the system and are globally competitive, and other universities that are primarily undergraduate and focused on high quality teaching. As for internationalization and diaspora mobilization, we need to position some of our top universities to become serious players in the lucrative international student market. Out of the 5.09 million internationally mobile students Africa accounted for a mere 4.39 per cent of inbound students, but 10.26 of outbound students.

In short, African higher education systems hardly feature among those globalizing fastest according to a report in *Times Higher Education* (2018). There is an urgent need to articulate clear and comprehensive policies on internationalization at the national, intra-continental, and inter-continental levels that most benefit the continent's educational systems, students' learning, faculty, and research capacities. Critical in this endeavor are the removal of immigration barriers and the development of enabling policies for professional and academic mobility throughout the continent. Also important are policies on the transfer of academic credits and recognition of academic and professional qualifications.

African institutions need to develop multiple and innovative forms of internationalization in addition to traditional student and staff exchanges. This includes the creative use of information and communication technologies in the provision and expansion of distance and learning and open educational

resources. African higher education institutions must make regional and continental student and faculty exchanges and institutional collaboration in academic programs and research a priority. The establishment or expansion of regional learning centers and research networks is a critical part of internationalization.

The African academic diaspora must have a special place in the internationalization of African universities. The historic and new diasporas constitute the continent's biggest international resource. The diaspora possesses huge economic, political, social, cultural capitals that need to be fully harnessed. Economically, the new diasporas are Africa's biggest donor. In 2017, diaspora remittances to the continent reached $67.4 billion., and accounted for a significant portion of the GDP of several countries, including Kenya where the diaspora remitted $1.8 billion (2.4 per cent of GDP) (Zeleza 2017). Besides remittances, the diaspora also provides philanthropy, human, and investment capital.

As universities, we need to tap what Zeleza calls the diaspora's intellectual capital. The Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program has tried to do so. Since 2013 when the program was established out of a research project Zeleza conducted for the Carnegie Corporation of New York, has to date sponsored nearly 400 African-born academics in Canada and the United States to work with universities in six countries – Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. There are plans to scale up the program to sponsor at least 1,000 academics each year from the historic and new diasporas for the next ten years. It is being called the 10/10 program (MacGregor 2015, 2016; Marklein 2016; Frittelli 2018).

Undoubtedly, African universities face many challenges, but the flip side of every challenge is opportunity. They can turn their challenges into opportunities by refusing to be intimidated by the challenges and working together. As they do so they should always be focused on the singular project of positioning our universities as engines of the African renaissance, of the enduring Pan-African struggle to create integrated, inclusive, innovative, developmental and democratic states and societies that will bring the peoples of this continent well-being and make its diasporas truly proud.

Notes

1. The following articles are quite instructive: Dearmon and Grier (2009); Algan and Cahuc (2014); Hovath (2013); Jacon and Grier (2011); Baliamoune-Lutz (2011); Papagapitos and Riley (2009); and Bjørnskov and Mėon (2015).
2. See Helkliwell and Putnam (2007); Campbell (2006); Liu (2017).

3. See Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Cultivating Academic Excellence: The Power and Promise of the Liberal Arts," October 21, 2010; "Grounded in Our Past, Navigating Our Future," November 7, 2011; "Prioritizing Our Future: Mission, Election and Action," November 4, 2012.
4. The data in this section unless stated otherwise is from Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *The Transformation of Global Higher Education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, Chapter 2.
5. All the data in this and subsequent sections, unless indicated otherwise, is from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://data.uis.unesco.org/, accessed on November 28, 2018.
6. This is discussed at length in Zeleza (2016: Chapter 3). Also see the articles by McMurtrie (2018) and Basken (2018).
7. See *Trusteeship Magazine* (2018); also see Robinson (2018), and DePaul (2018).
8. The data used in this section is derived from Zeleza (2016 Chapter 3) and UNESCO (2015) and data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

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Enhancing Doctoral Supervision Practices in Africa: Reflection on the CARTA Approach

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Abstract

High quality research supervision is crucial for PhD training, yet it continues to pose challenges globally with important contextual factors impacting the quality of supervision. This article reports on responses to these challenges by a multi-institutional sub-Saharan Africa initiative (CARTA) at institutional, faculty and PhD fellow levels. The article describes the pedagogical approaches and structural mechanisms used to enhance supervision among supervisors of CARTA fellows. These include residential training for supervisors, and supervision contracts between primary supervisors and PhD fellows. The authors reflect on the processes and experiences of improving PhD supervision, and suggest research questions that CARTA and other training programmes could pursue in relation to PhD supervision in Africa and other lower- and middle-income countries.

Keywords: African higher education, doctoral training, collaboration, supervision, contracts, research capacity strengthening

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Résumé

La supervision de recherches de haute qualité est cruciale pour la formation en doctorat, mais elle demeure un problème au niveau mondial, avec des facteurs contextuels importants qui impactent la qualité de la supervision. Cet article rend compte de réponses à ces défis par une initiative multi-institutionnelle pour l'Afrique subsaharienne (CARTA) aux niveaux institutionnel, professoral et des doctorants. Il décrit les approches pédagogiques et les mécanismes structurels que nous avons utilisés pour améliorer la supervision de boursiers à travers le programme CARTA. Ceux-ci incluent la formation résidentielle des superviseurs et les contrats de supervision entre superviseurs principaux et doctorants. Les auteurs réfléchissent au processus et aux expériences d'amélioration de la supervision de doctorants et suggérons des questions de recherche que CARTA et d'autres programmes de formation pourraient approfondir dans la supervision de doctorants en Afrique et dans d'autres pays à revenu faible ou intermédiaire.

Mots-clés : enseignement supérieur africain, formation doctorale, collaboration, supervision, contrats, renforcement des capacités de recherche

Supervision is central to PhD training, amidst the plethora of models of doctorates worldwide (Louw and Muller 2014, Powell and Green 2007). Even with coursework, individual success is influenced by the quality of supervision, professional support, and guidance to students on their research, analysis and writing (Kiley 2011). Growing attention has been paid to the relationship of supervision progress through doctoral candidature, and its association with throughput and completion (Kandiko and Kinchin 2012; Platow 2012; Gill and Burnard 2008; Hockey 1996). This has been especially important where PhD level enrolment, quality of training and completion rates are linked to university infrastructure funds and prestige (McCallin and Nayar 2012; Hakala 2009).

In many universities in Anglophone Africa, the duration of studies, the role of coursework, the role of primary or sole supervisor, and dissertation examination are modeled on doctoral education as delivered historically in the United Kingdom (UK), or other European universities (Cross and Backhouse 2014). In general, the supervisor is expected to guide their student through: identifying and critically interpreting relevant literature; developing the research protocol and gaining skills in appropriate methods; conducting original research; managing and analysing the data; and writing up their research for external examination. However, not all supervisors recognize these responsibilities (Lessing 2011). Postgraduate students may, in some cases, rank such supervision as having limited importance (Duze 2010), although in other cases, they recognize its importance along with other support during

doctoral training (Nakanjako *et al.* 2014). Good supervision, however, includes constructive criticism to which a PhD candidate is able to respond (Ives and Rowley 2005; Li and Seale 2007), the socialisation of students into academia, and the provision of institutional and personal support to the candidate as an emerging and critical scholar (Dietz *et al.* 2006). These are ideals, though they are not always met (Powell and Green 2007).

Although many challenges in doctoral training are generic, universities and research institutions in Africa face particular difficulties of a greater scale (Guwatudde *et al.* 2013). Academics typically have large classes of undergraduate and graduate students, and limited time for individual supervision and their own research and writing. Senior academics often carry substantial professional and administrative duties and may be required to participate in university governance. Conditions of employment – and in some settings the need to take on additional work to supplement income – may limit their capacity to supervise effectively. Departmental hierarchies may influence who is available for and can accept graduate students, reflecting the status associated with higher degree supervision compared with classroom teaching. Furthermore, senior academic attitudes towards graduate students, including in relation to gender and family obligations, can shape their ideas of student capacity, decisions about the research topic, expectations regarding independent work, and the frequency and quality of advice. Often, supervisors simply interact with their own students as they were supervised, and/or they learn by doing (Halse 2011). As noted by Dietz and colleagues, reflecting on South African PhD supervisors (2006: 11):

> Few supervisors are selected on, let alone trained in, advanced methods of supervision. Appointed supervisors therefore seldom have a conceptual map of what constitutes acceptable supervision. Supervisors themselves are often the products of poor supervision, and do not therefore hold experience of what constitutes competent supervision.

Worldwide, universities have moved to make supervisor training compulsory to enhance the quality of doctoral training. In Europe, this has been addressed in discussions on strengthening research capacity within a 'Europe of Knowledge', leading to the Salzburg Principles of 2005, and its later iterations, of (inter alia) research excellence, interdisciplinary options and transferability of skills (EUA (European Universities Association), 2005, 2010). Similar reflection and practical steps have been taken at a country level, for example, in Spain (Mora *et al.* 2011) and Australia (Kiley 2011; Marsh *et al.* 2002; Pearson 1996). In Kenya, public universities have been asked by the Ministry of Higher Education and the Commission for Higher Education to examine and improve higher degree training and supervision.

In this article, we report on our experience in enhancing doctoral supervision within a more comprehensive program designed to strengthen research capacity in nine universities and three research institutes across seven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The field of Population and Public Health was chosen based on the following rationale (Ezeh *et al.* 2010: 2):

To address the rising burden of diseases, improve health systems, and attain better health, the continent needs strong public health research capacity. Countries with a weak population and public health research capacity have limited capacity to identify and prioritize their health needs and, hence, are unable to develop and implement effective interventions to promote well-being. Strengthened capacity to understand the determinants of health in relation to gender, ethnicity, cohorts, and communities among different African populations holds the key to effective interventions to improve health outcomes and health systems in the region.

Carta's Doctoral Fellow and Supervisor Training

In the Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa – hereafter, CARTA – a number of universities and affiliated research institutes collaborate to provide doctoral training and institutional capacity building in population and public health. This was conceptualised as a strategy to increase local research strength and reduce the drift of highly trained scholars from African countries to other ('northern') research settings (Ezeh *et al.* 2010). The first cohort of CARTA fellows, from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, commenced their doctoral studies in early 2010. They set out their experience of the programme as a complement to that of their training institution (Adedokun *et al*. 2014). By the fifth cohort, 148 academics from the member institutions – from Kenya, Nigeria, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda – were awarded doctoral fellowships. These fellowships included four residential study programmes of three to four weeks, interim online training, a stipend which supplemented their usual salary, financial support for field research, publishing and conference attendance, post-doctoral fellowship opportunities and re-entry grants. Below, we briefly describe our multidisciplinary approach to training fellows (see also Fonn *et al*. 2016), before discussing our approach to supporting supervisors and strengthening supervision relationships.

In the CARTA programme, fellows are provided with extensive skills-based training and ways of developing cognitive competencies, including the capacity to theorise and develop critical thinking through a specific pedagogic model centred on the participants (Fonn *et al.* 2016). Upon

enrolment, the fellows are set online tasks, while they also choose or meet their supervisor(s). In March, they participate in intensive training in disciplinary, epistemological, conceptual and theoretical perspectives of public and population health, at a residential programme referred to as JAS 1 (Joint Advanced Seminars). In November of the same year, in JAS 2, fellows reconvene for a month for methods training and to finalise their research protocol. After data collection is complete (about one and a half years later), fellows attend JAS 3, which is held over three weeks and focuses on data analysis and writing. In the final residential programme, JAS 4, completing fellows participate in the facilitation of a new cohort of JAS 1 fellows and attend their own sessions on grant writing and professional development, including reflection on supervision.

The majority of CARTA fellows already have experience in training and supervising the research projects of master's students; in some cases, they have also supported PhD students' research due to their own unique skills. We have developed strategies that recognise these diverse experiences of fellows and their supervisors. The four JASs provide fellows from their own and other cohorts with opportunities to compare supervisory and other PhD experiences, and to share how to address supervisory problems and improve their own practices. Parallel with the fellows' curriculum summarised above, we designed a set of activities involving supervisors in order to inform them about the CARTA programme, exemplify its values and pedagogic approach, and support good quality supervision. As set out in Table 1, during the period under review, 179 academics from CARTA institutions were involved as supervisors to CARTA fellows, and so participated in the programme designed to support them in this capacity.

Table 1: Number of supervisors by entry year of CARTA doctoral fellows

Entry year of CARTA fellows	Cohort	Supervisors*
2010-2011	1	40
2011-2012	2	39
2012-2013	3	28
2013-2014	4	30
2014-2015	5	42
Total		**179**

*Admitted fellows N=148. Some fellows had or have > 2 supervisors, and some supervisors supervise > 1 CARTA fellow in different cohorts

In CARTA institutions, there is considerable variation in the number of PhDs supervised by individual supervisors, the administrative structures supporting graduate student training, research infrastructure, academic opportunities to lead research programmes and publish, and the research culture of departments. CARTA fellows and supervisors come from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, reflecting the multi-disciplinary and mix of fields in public and population health. With this diversity, however, challenges within supervision are more likely to occur. Supervisors bring to their practice different epistemologies and methodologies reflecting their own backgrounds, but also different expectations of students and traditions of and pedagogical approaches to supervision (Lee 2008, 2012). This may include their desire to emulate perceived 'best practice' supervision, but what constitutes 'best practice' is hard to codify, can vary substantially by discipline, and may not meet the shifting needs of students at different points in their candidature. Even so, as we argue below, structures, processes and support systems provide the mechanisms to minimise the subjectivities of doctoral supervision, in order to ensure quality training, good research, and student success.

Evaluation Methods

The challenge in evaluating a programme to support supervision is the reality that assessment of success is relative, and higher degree students may withdraw or proceed, submit and graduate despite a wide variation in the quality of their supervision. The research data on which we draw in this article derive from process documentation, formal and informal interviews conducted as a component of commissioned evaluations, 'town hall' discussions and other individual and group discussions with doctoral fellows and supervisors, graduates, and seminar and workshop facilitators. These meetings, conversations, and evaluations were gathered from the inception of the CARTA programme, with the documentation and summary reports presented to annual CARTA Board of Management meetings. Data also derive from RAND evaluations conducted for the Wellcome Trust (the primary funding agency), with such information incorporated into further funding applications and used to shape the curriculum as it continually evolved. Additionally, when starting this article, all authors met together in Malawi from 13-15 September 2014, following three months of preliminary online discussion and data collection. We also drew on a review of CARTA conducted in 2015 by the consulting company Indevelop Sweden (Christoplos *et al.* 2015), particularly the review's interviews of CARTA fellows and supervisors.

Supervisor Workshops

For each cohort, as described further below, all supervisors have been invited and funded to attend a supervisor workshop, interact with CARTA fellows and facilitators, and sit in on lectures and roundtables. Through these, CARTA facilitators (including members of the authorship team) were able engage in dialogue with supervisors and share CARTA values and aspirations. The supervisor workshops, based on internationally benchmarked content (Dietz *et al.* 2006) and adapted to African universities and research context, addressed certain skills needed and challenges faced by supervisors in the course of supervising, and by students, when pursuing a doctorate with CARTA. Within a broader framework of "what range and level of work constitutes a PhD", discussions with supervisors included the following topics: adequate description of the research problem; the process and nature of a comprehensive and critical literature review; development of the research protocol; execution of the project; awareness of diverse ethical issues (Lofstrom and Pyhalto 2014; Kjellstrom *et al.* 2010); skilful analysis and interpretation of data; timely writing and completion; and examination and responding to negative evaluations of the dissertation. Questions related to research design and robustness of data were most often addressed in sessions with fellows attended by supervisors, including research 'clinics' that also involved other academics with content expertise.

In workshop sessions, facilitators and participating supervisors also explored the social, economic and personal reasons that affected student progress, with opportunities provided for supervisors to discuss challenges that they have already experienced or that they might anticipate: conflicts with students or co-supervisors in terms of research paradigms or progress; personality differences and conflict resolution; communication and responsibility (Gill and Burnard 2008; Gunnarsson *et al.* 2013). Financial difficulties, the competing demands of different academic tasks (teaching and research, for instance), and personal versus professional responsibilities were also discussed. These are important considerations for CARTA fellows as all belong to faculties and remain employed in teaching positions, although, ideally with a lighter load. Many also have young families and so have multiple responsibilities.

Interest in the supervisors' workshops has been high, with substantial participation for a voluntary programme (see Table 2 below). Two CARTA partner universities have supplemented these workshops with their own institutional events – Moi University, Kenya, and the College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, and workshops and support group meetings have been held regularly at the faculty level at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Table 2: Participation in CARTA supervisor workshops, by gender

Workshop Date	Male	Female	Total*
April 2011	10	4	14
December 2011	15	4	19
November 2012	14	7	21
March 2013	17	6	23
November 2014	14	12	26
November 2015	15	3	18
Overall	**85**	**36**	**121**

*Ten supervisors attended more than one workshop; hence overall attendance proportion for the period was 111/179=62%

Creating Space for Supervisor-Supervisee Interaction

From 2011-2013, with the first three cohorts of students, supervisors' workshops were conducted during both JAS 1 and JAS 2, so that facilitators interacted with supervisors from the commencement of the fellows' (supervisees') training. In the first year (March 2011), the supervision workshops were conducted during JAS 1 over two days, while fellows undertook independent work; supervisors were present when fellows presented their protocols as developed or expanded during the first three weeks of this initial JAS. The supervisory workshop provided opportunities for discussion around milestones, monitoring progress, and ways to resolve difficulties in supervision. In workshop evaluations and feedback sessions, supervisors openly spoke about their initial expectations, the workshop, opportunities for improvement, and areas for future reflections. Workshop facilitators (experienced supervisors) took notes of points raised during these sessions in order to inform adaptions over subsequent years. As a result of this feedback, at JAS 1 in 2012, the supervision workshops were conducted over three mornings while fellows were in other sessions. Consequently, supervisors were also able to participate together in the fellows' curriculum held in the afternoons, gaining the opportunity to engage with fellows' work, see their fellows in action presenting posters, and listening to the responses from other fellows and JAS faculty.

Supervisors and fellows regularly met and participated in focused "clinics" with CARTA facilitators about a fellow's potential research projects and the challenges of operationalising particular research questions. Such discussions sought to avoid conflicting approaches between those advocated by CARTA resource persons and the supervisors. By maximising opportunities at

JAS for exchanges of ideas about possible research questions, outcomes, epistemology and methods, we aimed to encourage respect for different standpoints and to support the idea of the doctoral project as evolving rather than fixed. This lesson was as important for supervisors as is was for the fellows since many were unfamiliar with the multiple methods and diverse approaches promoted at the JASs. From 2013 onwards, supervisors attended the second residential programme only (i.e. JAS 2), in order to ensure that by the time of the supervision workshops, all fellows had supervisors and that the two already had some experience of working together, including one inter-JAS tasks around writing the literature review and formulating the research question and objectives.

In providing fellows with comprehensive training, and encouraging critical engagement and questioning (Fonn *et al.* 2016), we were mindful of the potential for fellows to challenge the authority of supervisors. At the same time, we were careful to include aspects of supervision, like the personal and cognitive development necessary for day-to-day research work, as important for CARTA fellows. Supervisors did not always recognise the relevance of this, however, nor were all as comfortable providing this kind of support to those they supervised; their understanding of supervision often reflected their own experience as students when interactions were formal and limited to academic advice only. Comments made by fellows, drawing their own experience, indicated an over-emphasis on the gate-keeping and quality-control aspects of supervision. As a result, from November 2014 onwards, we placed greater emphasis on discussions with supervisor/supervisee pairs to build the relationship between the two. Informal interactions between supervisors, their own supervisees, and other fellows also provided opportunities for participants to reflect on supervisory relationships, expectations, processes and outcomes in a non-confrontational way and build a supportive community of research practice among those involved in each cohort (de Lange *et al.* 2011).

Specific Themes in Supervisors' Workshops

Within most universities, not only CARTA member institutions, there are limited formal opportunities for academic staff to meet and discuss problems of supervision, and for students and supervisors to seek mediation and support. We encouraged supervisors to talk about the challenges they faced in balancing their various time commitments and to reflect upon the place of time advising students. Additionally, we discussed co-supervision, since students might have more than one supervisor, sometimes from different disciplinary backgrounds and traditions, potentially with different

expectations, practices and styles of supervision (Lee 2012). In many cases, doctoral fellows enrol in CARTA member universities other than their own and have a local university co-supervisor as well as an enrolled university lead supervisor. Cross-institutional supervision has offered an important networking tool for fellows, supervisors and institutions. CARTA fosters different kinds of relationships between fellows and supervisors, which, in interviews fellows, was characterised as particularly collegial. Supervisors also described their relationships with fellows as 'fantastic' and 'two-way' and applauded the valuable opportunities for networking that cross-institutional co-supervising provides. 'Focal point' academics within the CARTA institutions also described CARTA's cross-institutional supervision as a 'unique experience of networking and support'.

Since fellows often aspire to produce scholarly publications as part of their work for their PhD (thesis by publication), time was also spent on different models of PhD theses (Louw and Muller 2014). This allowed for conversations among supervisors about the kinds of work worthy of a PhD. In the process, it became clear that most supervisors were comfortable with the skills component of PhD training, while at times they were uncomfortable with their students being more knowledgeable than them in some areas. They were more likely to be challenged by the multi-disciplinarity encouraged by the CARTA programme, the challenges around epistemological stances and recognition of multiple knowledges, and the broad professional competences and values that we expected of fellows.

Discussions around epistemology, methods and approaches to co-supervision fed into what we regard as the informal curriculum of CARTA supervisor training: one which challenged hierarchies and highlighted the importance of good supervision and mentorship in order to socialise CARTA fellows and other PhD students into an academic world of public health scholarship with an emphasis on social justice. The values and processes integral to CARTA training – interactive teaching methods, participant-centred learning, critical inquiry and scholarship, social accountability, engagement with policy-makers, and collaborations with civil society – were integral to these discussions. Since we expect our fellows, upon graduation, to advocate for such values, their supervisors needed to understand our approach, and hopefully support it. To promote this, we used andragogical (adult education) methods in the supervision workshops such as small group discussions and roundtables rather than formal lectures.

Facilitators also raised topics which some supervisors found difficult to address: sexual harassment; violence against a student on campus and/or in the field; plagiarism and tensions around intellectual property; and ethical

issues associated with where and how a student might conduct research (Titus and Ballou 2014). The workshops provided an important space to consider any personal experiences and to generate appropriate responses. While facilitating discussions about these interpersonal and personal challenges, facilitators emphasised that there were no easy ways to resolve these within doctoral programmes. Rather, facilitators hoped to illustrate that each supervisory relationship was a new, distinctive personal relationship, and that there were no simple ways to ensure that this would proceed smoothly. Facilitators were able to draw on their own experiences of supervision, to at least reassure participants, by example, that supervising was neither easy nor predictable. Also used was a film, 'The PhD Movie' (www.phdcomics.com/movie/, 2015), to illustrate typical problems in supervision and provide a neutral point of departure for discussion.

The Supervision Contract and Memoranda of Understanding

Mutual acknowledgement of tensions around supervision among fellows and supervisors at the first supervisory workshop in 2011 prompted workshop facilitators and participating supervisors to develop a draft agreement that would promote timely progress and appropriate performance, as advocated by other authors (Hockey 1996). The Contractual Agreement for PhD Studies (see supplementary file) distinguishes between the principles and actions that apply to the doctoral candidate, the supervisor(s), and agreements between the two. The CARTA supervision contract, as it has come to be called despite not being legally binding, sets out the mechanisms to support responsibility and communication, and elucidates processes to resolve any disagreements.

Points specifically for a doctoral candidate include adherence to university rules and regulations concerning enrolment, attendance on campus and at courses and seminars, the regular submission of written work (at a negotiated frequency), and ethical obligations. The contract states explicitly that the student has the right to intellectual, administrative, and practical support to undertake his or her research, holds ownership of his or her work, and is responsible for its content and presentation. The contract specifies that, through discussion, the supervisor and candidate will develop and agree on a work plan, modes of communication, timely feedback, the regularity and duration of meetings, technical and other support, and publication plans to ensure clear timelines, benchmarks and pathways to facilitate the smooth process of research and the completion and successful submission of the thesis. It includes clear statements of the obligation of the supervisor to guide and support the PhD candidate, including supplementary technical

training as required, assistance in relation to equipment and services, intellectual support and (if needed) counselling. It includes additional clauses relating to the authorship and publication of articles and other outputs (e.g. abstracts, posters).

The contract tacitly acknowledges difficulties in supervisory relationships and PhD programmes at given points – difficulty in undertaking the literature review, gaps in face-to-face advisory meetings, failure to keep pace with plans for analysis, and delays in submitting or returning comments on written work; these difficulties and possible resolutions are discussed during the supervision workshops. Since disagreements between supervisors and candidates tend to change over the duration of candidature (Gunnarsson *et al.* 2013), the contract needed to be a comprehensive resource. It, therefore, made explicit the right of the student to change supervisory arrangements for any reason, with the permission of the appropriate university representative, without penalty. The contract also sets out what a supervisor can expect from a supervisee, and that a supervisor has the right to take steps to withdraw from supervision or terminate candidature if the candidate fails to meet his or her contractual obligations. Although this summary implies an emphasis on penalties and control, the document has been welcomed, clarifying for both supervisor and candidate how they should work together in productive and positive relationships.

The contract was designed, among other things, to ensure the wellbeing of the PhD fellow and supervisor (Juniper *et al.* 2012), rather than simply focusing on progress and output. Fellows and supervisors sign this contract at the beginning of working together, with modifications as needed. Since the contract is used for CARTA fellows to govern supervisory relationships regardless of the university or research institute of employment of supervisors (and regardless of where the supervisor is located), it provides a clear and shared understanding of obligations, rights, responsibilities and opportunities to build an effective relationship between the two (Gill and Burnard 2008). On this basis, supervisors are able to build their capacity in supervision (Halse 2011; Calma 2007). Fellows have found the contract especially helpful, referring to it as a mechanism that they can use to ensure quality supervision. At the same time, from interviews, it emerged that some fellows have been disappointed, largely because CARTA, through the workshops, contracts, and rhetoric, had raised expectations of quality supervision, and they wanted greater engagement from supervisors than they received.

At the outset, some supervisors resisted the idea of a contract and resented CARTA's apparent intrusion into standard academic practices and institutional authority; they were adamant that they comply firstly with

the rules of their employing university. CARTA always acknowledged this priority. It cannot overrule the university in which the CARTA fellow is enrolled, and the university retains responsibility for quality control and is the final arbiter when there is conflict. CARTA, in the first year especially, was seen by at least some supervisors and fellows as comparable with other funding agencies, with roles limited to the payment of stipends and occasional other forms of financial assistance. Additionally, many supervisors had other students and they wished all students to follow the same processes, hence their resistance to CARTA requirements, including the contract. In the second year, we addressed these potential points of discord by encouraging fellows and proposed supervisors to discuss the contract together. Cohort 1 fellows noted its utility in their final JAS 4, both for their own supervision experience and their role as supervisors (Adedokun *et al.* 2014). Supervisors have reported, in discussion sessions and in evaluations, that they appreciated the emphasis on values and standards and felt proud to be held to account for quality standards in contrast to less well defined approaches that they felt prevailed otherwise. Acting as guidelines and statements of expectations, the contracts have come to be invaluable for enhancing understanding and respect between supervisors and fellows.

Hence, despite some initial concerns, the contract has been institutionalised within the CARTA programme and adopted by all nine universities, as indicated in annual CARTA reports to the secretariat. The latter often refer to the contract as a benefit of participation in CARTA that universities are applying with post-graduate students other than CARTA fellows.

Achievements

As reflected in the report of the review of CARTA (Christoplos *et al.* 2015), the perceived value of the supervision model stems from both its structure and from CARTA's networking opportunities. In terms of structure, the contract – an innovation for most participating universities – provides clear guidelines in terms of time, communication and inputs, and expected outputs. It kept fellows 'on track' and gave their supervisors a guideline of what to expect and revert to when they faced problems in terms of communication or process. According to fellows and supervisors, in interviews conducted for evaluation purposes and in informal discussions, it has facilitated greater mutual accountability between supervisors; at the same time, it has fostered collegiality. This has occurred despite some resistance from those supervisors who felt that the CARTA model was being imposed on them, and that it was an unnecessary instrument of surveillance, as noted above.

By December 2015, 33 fellows had graduated, 24 of whom remained in their own departments to continue their academic careers, four with CARTA re-entry grants to build their research careers. Nine graduates took up post-doctoral fellowships in other CARTA institutions prior to returning to their home departments. Over this period, only eight fellows (5%) left the programme for other fellowships or had been terminated for lack of progress. Thus, completion and re-integration into academic roles has occurred for most graduates. Although we cannot directly attribute these outputs to the quality of supervision, or the extent to which the different curricular components or supervision initiatives contributed to these successes, the literature cited above strongly suggests a relationship between good supervision and student retention and throughput. As CARTA encourages mobility within its participating institutions, some graduates may move to other institutions, potentially (positively) impacting the development of cultures of supervision at their home institutions but continuing to strengthen African scholarship (Adedokun *et al.* 2014). Given the perceived value of cross-institutional supervision, we might expect more joint, associate or collaborative supervision arrangements, with potential enrichment of supervision experiences and graduate success.

Limitations and Directions

The extended period of time that fellows and supervisors have spent with CARTA facilitators has enabled both groups to explore core CARTA values around scholarship, critical thinking, professional development and the ethics of academic practice, both in research and in practice, teaching settings, the institution and society as a whole. Although this enthusiasm gives cause for optimism, the replicability and sustainability of this central aspect of CARTA-led supervisory reforms are difficult to verify at this point, given the limited data available, and duration of CARTA as a programme. The approaches are valued, but it is recognised that they will need to be adjusted to local needs and conditions to be more widely applied, just as CARTA's training and support for supervision continues to be refined each year. While it seems plausible that these reforms will be adopted by current supportive supervisors and future supervisors (former fellows), this will be influenced by their ability to adapt the norms to their different universities and countries, in light of other reforms in supervision and doctoral education. How this model also influences ideas about scholarship among emerging scholars, their institutions and trainees, has yet to be examined in the sub-Saharan African context and elsewhere.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Nevertheless, some preliminary implications can be drawn from our experience. First and foremost, most supervisors and their fellows relished a chance for both formal, constructive engagement around challenges in doctoral supervision, and informal interaction in which to share experiences and generate helpful responses. Providing forums for such dialogue should be a priority of the more commonly appearing Post-Graduate Studies units in sub-Saharan African universities (Nerad 2011). Second, familiarization among all supervisors with guides and manuals on supervision and the use of contracts could facilitate more cognizance of promising practices among both supervisors and their supervisees. Third, closer tracking of supervision experiences among both supervisors and doctoral trainees at all institutions conducting doctoral training could provide helpful indicators of areas of success and those requiring more attention. Fourth, among a critical mass of supervisors at African institutions beyond those in South Africa, familiarity with the scholarly literature and explicit research on supervision, in keeping with the scholarship of teaching and learning field, could provide the needed research to inform indigenous styles and modes of doctoral supervision in Africa.

Notes

1. The African universities that belong to CARTA are: Makerere University, Uganda; Moi University, Kenya; National University of Rwanda; Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria; University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; University of Ibadan, Nigeria; University of Malawi; University of Nairobi, Kenya, and University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; the four African research institutions are: African Population & Health Research Center (APHRC), South Africa; Agincourt Population and Health Unit, South Africa; Ifakara Health Institute (IHI), Tanzania, and KEMRI/Wellcome Trust Research Programme, Kenya. For further details, see Authors (2010).
2. We do not have data on number of supervisees per supervisor, over a career or at beginning of their involvement in CARTA, but at any time, there is a range of one to ten or more.
3. CARTA supervisors have been drawn from the following disciplines: Anthropology; Behavioural Sciences; Biochemistry; Clinical Epidemiology; Demography and Social Statistics; Entomology; Environmental Health; Epidemiology and Biostatistics; Health Policy Planning and Management; Geography; Immunology; Library, Archival and Information Studies; Mass Communication; Medical Anthropology; Microbiology; Mental Health; Molecular pathology; Nursing Science; Nutrition; Pediatrics and Child Health; Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Chemistry; Political Science; Population Studies; Psychology; Public Health; Social Work; Sociology; Statistics; Zoology.

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Performative Injunctions in the Higher Education Body: The Discursive Career of Research Capacity Development in a South African University Faculty of Education

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Abstract

This article discusses Research Capacity Development (RCD), in a Faculty of Education at a South African university. It employs the notions of performativity and performance to argue that specific local sites at universities have complex stories to tell about their responsiveness to research output imperatives. The article emphasizes that there is a formative relationship between the specific RCD discursive text of this Faculty and the performance-based activities of its management and academics. The career of RCD in the Faculty is established in the light of specific activities against the background of a small Faculty environment. The article specifically considers the basis for its relative success in the area of doctoral completion by its academic staff and its diminishing article writing output. It draws the conclusion that efforts to secure a vigorous RCD platform depend on the ability to establish a nurturing institutional environment in which a scholarly culture can be encouraged and protected.

Keywords: Universities, Faculty of Education, Research Capacity Development, performativity, performance

Résumé

Cet article traite du développement de capacités de recherche (RCD) dans la Faculté d'éducation d'une université sud-africaine. Il utilise les notions de performativité et de performance pour affirmer que des lieux spécifiques dans les universités ont des histoires complexes à raconter sur leur réactivité aux impératifs de production de recherche. L'article souligne qu'il existe

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une relation formative entre le discours spécifique de cette faculté sur le développement de capacités de recherche et les activités de performance de son personnel administratif et de ses universitaires. Le processus de développement de capacités de recherche au sein de la faculté est établi à la lumière d'activités spécifiques dans un environnement facultaire restreint. L'article examine en particulier les raisons de son succès relatif dans la complétion en doctorat par son personnel académique et la baisse de sa production d'articles. Il en conclut que la mise en place d'une plateforme dynamique de développement de capacités de recherche dépend de la capacité à créer un environnement institutionnel stimulant dans lequel une culture savante peut être encouragée et protégée.

Mots-clés : Universités, Faculté d'éducation, développement de capacités de recherche, performativité, performance

Introduction

Research secures universities their distinctive place in society. Generating new knowledge remains one of their core purposes despite questions about their public utility (see Cloete, Mouton & Sheppard 2015) and increased research productivity outside universities (Cowen 1996: 247). The National Research Foundation (NRF), South Africa's premier Research Capacity Development (RCD), affirmed the centrality of university-based research in national development (see NRF 2008). The NRF has evolved a supportive systemic approach to leveraging RCD. It regards the country's university system as the motor of scientific or knowledge development. The majority of the NRF's RCD funding is channelled through universities, which, in turn, are expected to do cutting edge research and develop the country's next layer of researchers and knowledge producers. Universities can, therefore, be regarded as the country's primary knowledge and research production incubators.

This article questions the view of universities as relatively functional and uniform institutional environments. It suggests that the variegated institutional adaptations across the country's university sector, in response to the research imperative, are largely unknown. If research and knowledge output is meant to be one of the primary defining priorities of universities, it is by no means certain that the extant RCD platforms of universities are aligned to this priority. A cursory glance at the extant literature shows that research production across South Africa's universities is highly variegated and uneven, mapped onto institutional legacies in interaction with complex contemporary dynamics. Not all universities can be regarded as research-led, nor have all been supported to become research-intensive, and it cannot

be assumed that they have internally homogenous and undifferentiated RCD environments. Universities have differentiated pockets of RCD functionality, with some Faculties, Departments or Units more productive than others. This article advances an understanding of the intersecting and formative institutional dynamics that can account for this variegated RCD landscape.

The focus of the article is on RCD processes in a small Faculty of Education at a South African university. The article is based on reflections on my work as a former Director of Research Development in this Faculty from 2003 to 2009. I present this story as an insider fully cognizant of the limitations imposed by my own subjectivity in its narration (see Reed-Danahay 1997). My intention with this narration is not generalisation. Rather, I present it as a think-piece about the goings-on in one institutional site that could stimulate discussion about, and research into, the make-up of the RCD practices in specific contexts. I proceed by discussing RCD with special reference to the Faculty's academic staff, which encompassed a large part of my management work. Doctoral completion and article publication by academic staff are two markers that I use as a reference for understanding RCD success. In other words, for the purpose of the article, these two referents are used as a backdrop for understanding the complex and contested manner in which RCD is lived by academic staff in this Faculty at a specific moment in time. I offer this analysis as a way of highlighting the discursive environment in which universities have to transact their RCD responsibilities. Remarking on the universities as dynamics systems of contradictory functions, Castells (2001: 211) argues that "because universities are social systems and historically produced institutions, all their functions take place simultaneously within the same structure, although with different emphases. It is not possible to have a pure, or quasi-pure, model of a university". Similarly, RCD in South African universities is constituted in intricate historically defined discursive processes and uneven material circumstances. This article suggests that it is the particular texture of specific institutional processes that determines the way RCD plays out, and the 'lived' dynamics inside institutions that make up RCD orientations and practices.

I proceed in the next section by locating the discussion inside a nascent body of literature on RCD at South African universities, from where I develop the notion of performativity as a heuristic tool for understanding RCD in this Faculty. I then go on to describe the impact of the broader regulatory environment on the Faculty, delineating what I argue is the Faculty's performative contours. This is followed by a discussion of the particular discursive character of the Faculty that enabled a certain type of

academic deportment, which, I argue set up the Faculty's RCD platform in a particular way, and enabled a certain type of RCD behaviour. Finally, I offer a reading of RCD in the Faculty as 'performance'. I suggest that it was the struggle for over ever-diminishing 'head space' in respect of which RCD was established in this Faculty.

Performativity as Lens to Understand RCD Institutional Discursivity

This article explores the institutional adaptation of universities, specifically as it pertains to the research imperative and RCD in particular. A small body of literature, published mainly in the *South African Journal of Higher Education* (SAJHE), has emerged in recent years around the RCD responsiveness of local universities. A generalised anxiety underpins this literature based on questions about the efficacy of universities' RCD capacity and a decontextualised notion of what is regarded as markers of academic success or achievement (see Bitzer 2006; Dison 2004; Chetty 2003; Ilorah 2006; Lues & Lategan 2006; Ruth 2001). Bitzer (2006), for example, argued that the strong drive towards research at one self identified research-orientated university, valorised by performance incentives that are solely based on research ratings and outputs, will undervalue the status of teaching as a scholarly practice. Bitzer warned about the impact of the obsession with research outputs. Marginalising university teaching is one potential consequence. Another consequence is the discounting of the impact of intricate environmental dynamics on the ability of universities to fulfil their research mandates (see Chetty 2003; Ilorah 2006; Lues & Lategan 2006; Ruth 2001).

A crude focus on outputs deflects from attention to RCD as process. The SAJHE literature cited above describe the chequered history of research and knowledge production in the former technikons (now universities of technology) and black universities. Universities of technology, were founded as technology-teaching institutions (see Chetty 2003; Lues & Lategan 2006), while the research capacity at black universities had to overcome an uneven legacy (Ruth 2001), which is a consequence of the apartheid government's neglect of encouraging and funding research at these institutions. Formerly white universities are not uniformly productive despite their financial and infrastructural advantage (Cloete, Maassen, Fehnel, Moja, Gibbon & Perold 2006). What emerges from the literature are highly uneven RCD platforms across the country's university landscape. The normative ideal as espoused in authoritative policy documents (see NRF 2008; 2009) about the importance of the role of universities in producing research, is seemingly not aligned with the challenges that the uneven RCD landscape

presents. The missing dimension in this story, as presented in the extant literature, and arguably in policy quarters and among many universities, is an appreciation of RCD in relation to the extant institutional dynamics at universities. There is a paucity of research on the iterative and formative processes that constitute RCD at universities.

One exception is Balfour and Lenta's (2009: 8-20) portrayal of RCD in a unit in a merged Faculty of Education at the University of Kwazulu Natal (UKZN). They discuss the unit's concerted RCD approach particularly in support of those staff members who joined it from a College of Education without a research profile. The article highlights the various RCD procedures and mechanisms that were employed, and the consequent outcomes, especially for the acquisition of higher degrees and published work by staff in the unit. Building on this work, I set out to provide an analysis of constitutive RCD discourses and processes in another Faculty of Education. I favour the notion of 'performativity' as an analytical lens which allows me to interrogate the relationship between the changing regulative basis of universities and their institutional adaptations. According to Ball (2003: 16), performativity refers to behaviour that are subjected to a mode of regulation that functions inside institutions through the use of judgements, incentive, surveillance, control, rewards and sanctions. Such a mode of regulation determines what type of behaviour is generally operable in institutions and performativity refers to the discursive parameters in respect of which individuals or groups are able to construct their institutional behaviour and practices. I employ 'performativity' to enable me to perform an analysis RCD in this Faculty as the iterative outcome of the Faculty's functional or operational context on the one hand, and the agential processes of staff on the other.

Performativity brings together a focus on underlying structural and regulative processes that affect institutions such as universities, how people inside them are positioned by these processes, and the reflexive responses enacted by academic staff. The conceptual origins of performativity lie in Lyotard's famous work, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984), in which he persuasively argued that the commodification of knowledge is a key characteristic of the postmodern condition, which involves what he calls a "thorough exteriorization of knowledge" (4). As Lyotard explained, "the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the post-industrial age" (3). Knowledge and knowledge relations, he argued, including relations among university staff, are 'desocialised' (7), where professional relations based on trust are replaced by a new commercialised professionalism (8). Consistent with the commodified form, this type of professionalism is driven by the desire

to increase competitiveness and profitability. In line with this reasoning, Cowen (1996) suggested that universities have undergone major reform pressures which have altered their knowledge configurations and internal modes of self organisation. He argued that university reform has centred on questions of systemic efficiency and relevance, both of which are governed by a regime of measurement and debates about the usefulness of research to the national economy.

While the urgency of governments to tie their university systems more tightly to a changing global economy has provided the major impetus for performative injunctions in universities, a key consideration of this article is to understand the adaptive behaviour of academics in their work contexts. I argue that a performativity lens captures the circumscribed positioning of subjects on the one hand, and the ability of these subjects to establish reflexive counter-positionings on the other. I suggest that it is out of the dialectic between *performative positioning* and *counter positioning as performance* that RCD in university environment can be understood.

With regard to performative positioning I draw on Ball (2001: 210) who argues convincingly that,

> Performativity is a technology, a culture, a mode of regulation, or even a system of 'terror' ... that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances of – individual, subjects or organisations – serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection.

Ball describes this new regulative mode as defined by a flow of spectacle-like performativities. He suggests that "it is not the possible certainty of being seen that is the issue, as in the panopticon. Instead, it is the uncertainty and instability of being judged in different ways, by different means, through different agents" (e.g. the appraisal meeting, the peer reviewed article, the quality audit)" (2001: 211). This involves enacting performances through the flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that make us continually accountable and constantly recorded. University RCD practices are, therefore, based on the principle of uncertainty and inevitability, which lays the basis for what Ball (2001: 211) calls "ontological insecurity", posing questions such as; are we doing enough? are we doing the right thing? how will we measure up? The resultant performative environment is saturated by unstable expectations and contradictory purposes. People have a sense of feeling permanently visible as they veer between their commitment to the search for an institutional culture aligned to newly defined objectives, while being set up for internal competitive behaviour which is elicited by a language of publication outputs, rankings and ratings.

It is clear that performative positioning in the university environment is set up by institutional interaction with the contemporary regulatory environment. In other words, university settings have to be understood in light of the impact of broader dynamics. Performativity captures the impact of these dynamics on university organisation cultures, which is the focus of the next section. However, I suggest that performativity must also be understood in light of subjective counter positionings that occur inside university settings. Contrary to Ball, who is surprisingly silent on agency, I draw on Kohli's (1999) notion of performance to understand reflexive processes in light of performative imperatives. I look at how subjective processes co-constitute RCD institutional processes.

An analysis of performativity has to capture the constitutive or dialectical relationship between regulative or performative impact and the agential processes inside settings. Turning to such an analytic, I draw on Gole who proffered the view that the "public sphere is not simply a preestablished arena: it is constituted and negotiated through performance" (2002: 183). The notion of performance, a complement to performativity, is offered in order to provide an agency-oriented account of RCD discursivity in the Faculty under consideration. Performance draws on Butler's (1990: 40) construction of performativity in reference to acts of repetition that are socially validated and discursively established in everyday practices. Performance-based reflexivity refers to a situation where human beings "reflect back on themselves, their relations with others ... and those socio-cultural components which make up their public selves" (Gole 2002: 181). Their social practices are based on acute readings of the discursive delimitations in their environment. I suggest that these type of readings and generative practices in the Faculty co-constitute its RDP environment.

Institutional discursivity is, thus, not pre-established by performative processes that originate in the external environment. Internal contestation and agency, captured by the lens of performance, play an equally important role. Kohli's (1999) work on performance in educational institutions provides valuable theoretical insight into the formation of educational subjectivity. Kohli offers what she terms a nonreifying analysis of bodily performance that stresses the constitutive powers of repeated processes of interpellation. These interpellations are brought about in a matrix of relations. She offers the example of "how a girl is girled, (that is) brought into the domain of language and kinship through the interpellation of gender" (320-322). Key to this interpellation process is what is called iterability, which is "regularized and constrained repetition of norms ... rituals reiterated under and through constraints" (321). Kohli points out that places like schools and universities

are sites for identity formation "through repeated acts of norming" (321). These norm-attributing acts are performed by actors, and eventually create a particular type of institutional text. The final point is the suggestion that interpellation and iterability take place in human acts of 'normalising' through inclusive and exclusive power relations that determine what can and cannot be said and done in specific environments (324), what Ball (1994) calls the 'discourse that speaks us'. Human agency processes, their daily performances, are never neutral or benign. They have consequences for the type of environments that get established and what is possible and allowable in them. In sum, applying the lenses of performativity and performance enables me to present an analysis of the complex constitutive processes out of which the travails of RCD in this Faculty environment have been established. Key to the analysis is an understanding of the complex intersections among the external regulatory dynamics and the agential RCD processes inside the Faculty.

Shifting Regulation and Performativity in the Faculty of Education

Dison (2004) presented the view that RCD has only recently emerged in South Africa as a term in reference to those learning and developmental activities that facilitate the academic immersion of staff members into university environments. This specific Faculty's RCD performative text was impacted by the regulative winds that buffeted South African universities in the late 1990s. During this decade and earlier, junior staff members without PhDs were appointed, in my opinion, in the Faculty because of their potential academic expertise and commitment to a broadly democratic educational politics. They entered a lively, contested and sometimes fractious intellectual terrain which was the result of various epistemic communities, some associated with older conservative politics and others with liberal and radical approaches, that established themselves in the Faculty. Various contending academic discourses animated the Faculty's intellectual culture. Ritual-like enactments of the Faculty's RCD iterability took place in the Faculty's various intellectual fora, including places like its Faculty Board, executive meetings which every staff member could attend, and its higher degrees and research committees. The weekly staff seminar constituted its main performative stage on which academics presented draft conference papers and articles. These papers were copied and circulated before the seminar and Faculty members came armed with questions and critical comments. Seminar presentations were vigorously discussed.

Although academic conversations in the Faculty were robust and at times derogatory, they remained fairly cohesive and inclusive. What kept the conversational tone in the Faculty relatively productive was the general

commitment to transformative possibility in and through education. The Faculty's RCD script was normalised in the 1990s through repeated interpellations of this transformative commitment in its intellectual fora. Its RCD culture remained cohesive during most of the 1990s despite the university living through a challenging combination of large student numbers, financial problems, unstable administrative systems and constant interruptions by protesting students (Anderson 2002). Staff members were inducted into a vigorous and contesting academic climate, which turned on democratic political imperatives, whether in the form of the recuperating vision of those academics who practiced rational philosophy, the radical pedagogical commitments of the Action Research Masters programme in school improvement, or the application of a political economy critique by another loose academic grouping. I suggest that the Faculty's deliberative culture was the consequence of a scholarly tone that was informed by intellectual commitments to democratic politics. This was informed by what I label a 'politicist' analytic, in reference to scholarship that aimed at addressing political problems, especially in the form of policy critique and transformation-oriented educational analyses. While there were deep scholarly disagreements over appropriate transformation routes, the commitment to a politicist analytical posture remained hegemonic. This posture maintained an attenuated presence during the post 2000 era, with attenuated consequences for RCD in the Faculty.

The research learning culture of the Faculty during most of the 1990s can be described as having occurred on the basis of a combination of 'learning by emulation' and 'voice-facilitation'. In the Faculty's 'flat' hierarchy, young black and female academics felt encouraged and unconstrained to express themselves freely and experiment with new ideas, which were reciprocated by a critical and supportive conversational Faculty tone. Exposure to the discoursing of senior academics was crucial to those younger academics who participated in this developmental culture. Practising academic-becoming though emulation, rehearsal and 'voicing' on a supportive performative stage was, therefore, crucial to the junior staff's scholarly immersion. In the language of Lave and Wenger, it could be argued that the RCD stage on which scholarly becoming was practised was akin to a rich and supportive form of 'legitimate peripheral participation' (quoted in Dison 2004: 90), in terms of which staff members could become part of a critical scholarly culture. A context conducive to academic immersion was, therefore, a key dimension of the Faculty's academic culture.

Departmentally supported academic initiatives played an important role in inducting young academics into scholarly routes, providing academic

support for postgraduate study and article writing. The outcomes of these Faculty RCD processes were varied. Many of the young academics went on to attain their doctorates and publish important articles. Some moved on to other academic or governmental environments. Others either struggled to finish their studies or left academia entirely. The university's struggle for resources and a precarious systemic environment negatively impacted the Faculty's research culture. It is, however, undeniable, that its institutional culture as it pertained to RCD was cohesive and relatively free from performative requirements that crudely emphasised research outputs. The Faculty's success in producing good academics and a steady, if not voluminous, stream of research articles can be attributed to the existence of a nurturing and supportive scholarly environment in which academics could rehearse their scholarly becoming, while, in my view, its shortcomings in RCD were the result of academics having to work in an unstable and challenging university environment caused by a reduction in state funding.

By the end of the 1990s this university was caught at the pernicious end of financial cutbacks, the non-arrival of much anticipated state redress money, and the departure of many of its traditional students for other universities (see Anderson 2002; Koen 2007). The dramatic drop in student numbers led directly to academic retrenchments in 1998. The impact of neo-liberal regulation, from the global scale and shepherded by state policy, began to cut deep into the university and Faculty from the late 1990s (see Fataar 2003). The regulatory impact was received and re-organised by the Faculty's existing institutional culture.

In response to the National Commission on Higher Education's (NCHE 1996) call for, and the university's subsequent clamour to organise its academic offerings on the basis of programmes, the Faculty launched a fully fledged reorganising of its one-year Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE, then known as the Higher Diploma in Education) along interdisciplinary lines, substantially reorganising its courses and producing expository texts for this purpose. This initiative was driven by rigorous pedagogical engagement and conversation that characterised Faculty work during the 1990s. This culture of collegial engagement, together with the desire for relevance in the newly configuring higher educational environment, provided a fertile launching pad for the redesign of the Faculty, which occured during 1998 and 1999. The Faculty moved from a departmental design to one that resembled a 'Faculty without walls', a kind of School of Education organised around teaching and research divisions. Doing away with departments would later come to haunt the Faculty when, after 2000, fragmentation increasingly began to characterise its professional context.

The prior existing robust collegial and intellectual culture started to morph from around 2000 into a culture of academic atomism. This was hastened by the departure from the Faculty of around ten academics for greener pastures (see Small, Smith, Williams, & Fataar 2009). Its RCD platform was confronted with the challenge of facilitating the academic immersion of a number of black members of staff without PhDs, the majority of them female. Most were appointed in the early years of the new decade on the basis of a combination of a commitment to diversifying the Faculty's staff and other academic and teaching expertise considerations.

The big event that signposted the end of the Faculty's rich contrarian era of the 1990s was the retrenchment of some of our academic colleagues. Having lived in somewhat of a 'splendid isolation', misreading the policy mood and the winds of fiscal reduction, the university was abruptly forced to cut back on staff to address its bankrupt status. Neo-liberal regulation began to bite deep into our Faculty. The turn of the century heralded the triumph of instrumental rationality in the national education policy environment, which was associated with a markedly narrowing reform orientation. Outcomes Basis Education, quality audits, labour market responsiveness, and the straightjacket of the National Qualifications Framework, came to settle powerfully on the discursive terrain. The closure of Colleges of Education and the downscaling of governmental commitment to teacher education signalled a swing around in the functional priorities of Education Faculties, whether through their incorporation and mergers with former Colleges, the reorganisaton of their staff, or rapid fluctuations in student numbers. This Faculty experienced a sharp drop in teacher education students.

From about 2000 onwards it entered into a period of what Small *et al.* (2009: 561-562) called 'bits and pieces' survivalism. In-service teacher upgrading and re-skilling courses were offered partly to compensate for the drop in student numbers on the pre-service courses. The Faculty started to take on a number of these in-service courses, which caused most of the younger academics to have to teach in often unconventional arrangements and timeslots. This situation had a marked impact on the RCD environment of the Faculty in the post-2000 period. The Faculty's research output dwindled significantly, although it exercised great commitment and accomplishment in respect to postgraduate theses output. Those academics who continued to publish were settled senior scholars who were able to withstand the worst consequences of the Faculty's survival mode. Its adaptive agency was mapped onto the performative expectations associated with the shifted institutional regulatory context, setting the stage for a challenging RCD environment.

The Faculty's Performative RCD Text in Light of a Residual Politicist Deportment

This section focuses on the Faculty's underpinning intellectual environment during the post-2000 period. It presents a consideration of the Faculty's discursive character, which is an outflow of the re-arranging impact of performative dynamics that emanated from the regulatory environment. I present the view that the discursive text provided the interactive and formative backdrop for understanding associated RCD practices in the period. These practices are discussed in the next section. This section provides a consideration of the way this Faculty's discourses positioned and delimited its RCD practices and outcomes. I privilege Ball's view about the norm-attributing role of discourses when he argued that, "discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (1994: 21). Ball explained that "we are the subjectivities, the voices, the knowledge, the power relations that a discourse constructs and allows" (22). Hence, discourse is here a referent for the complex ways institutional contexts, and the people in them, are positioned and the practices that are operable and allowable in these contexts. The Faculty's discursivity enables a particular set of expressions of RCD, what can be done in its pursuit, how and by whom. Not suggesting determinism, the Faculty's RCD discursive text constituted the formative backdrop for its performative practices.

With regard to its discursive text, I suggest that the Faculty's politicist academic posture continued to play a formative role, now fundamentally re-arranged in light of changing contingent dynamics. The tight coupling between its scholarly culture and transformation commitments was dislodged. The high moral grounding that informed its scholarly culture began to recede in light of the complexity that accompanied democratic transformation. The state's swing around to a neoliberal policy platform and acceptance of a narrow performative orientation impacted heavily on the Faculty's intellectual stances. Whereas during the 1990s its transformation commitments issued into a productive scholarly culture, the politicist posture in the post-2000 period atrophied into a fragmented and diffused scholarly environment. The staging ground for this type of posture remained the weekly staff seminar but its performance also took place in Faculty-based workshops and symposia, and its systemic spaces. A theorising day organised by the Research Directorate in 2003, for example, displayed an intensive grappling with appropriate theoretical approaches for the new period. Participants grappled with the appropriate intellectual stances that the Faculty ought to take towards educational transformation in the face of a failing state and the rapid closure of policy spaces. It lamented

the increasingly technicist approach to policy-making. Discussion at the theorising day represented the type of discoursing that coursed its way through the post-2000 period. Debate veered from considerations about descriptive languages and appropriate theories to inform reconstruction on the one hand, to fundamental critiques of the neoliberal state on the other. A call was made for the Faculty's scholarship to move beyond the university's earlier political attachment to transformation. Scholarship had to, more rigorously, embrace the complexity and messiness associated with educational reform.

The search for appropriate intellectual stances took on a staccato and uneven form in the absence of a concerted and galvanising scholarly culture. I argue that the Faculty's performative text conformed to what I label a 'residual politicist comportment', which informed its RCD activities. This refers to an ongoing search for political relevance which now found expression in an atomistic Faculty environment. Its residual existence, diffused inside the Faculty, although not always explicit, found divergent expression. This was facilitated by the collapsed departmental boundaries in the faculty's new school-like systemic environment. In contra-distinction to Becher and Trowler's (see 1989) view that departments provide academics with tribe-like identities wherein academics practice their research identities, the new seamless Faculty structure neglected to provide its young and newly appointed academics with a socialising academic home. Academic clustering in some areas emerged to mitigate the atomising consequences of a Faculty without departments.

A residual politicist deportment nonetheless continued to play an important role in setting the scholarly tone. The Faculty's academic discoursing continued to genuflect to political commitment. Analytical ties to a statist focus on transformation remained a key thread. The difference now was that in an atrophied political environment the discoursing resulted in a number of divergent expressions in the Faculty. A shift to analytical commitment untrammelled by 'politicism' remained a challenge. Attempts by some to establish their scholarship on the basis of sophisticated analytical approaches were often stymied by intermittent staging of politicist critiques. Efforts at analytical approaches by some Faculty members and seminar presentations by guests, for example, were filtered through a language of radical critique. It seemed that analyses that deflected from a critique of the neoliberal state and the negative effects of globalisation were treated with suspicion. Scholarly debate was subjected to the veracity of political critique, which stymied the emergence of a commitment to scholarly analysis. This politicist critique was performed by a relatively small number of influential academic members in

the Faculty's more generic fora such as the seminar spaces, workshops and periodic symposia. It, nonetheless, had a negative impact on the Faculty's scholarly discursivity. One consequence of this residual politcism was the halting commitment to sophisticated analyses and theoretical application in light of the country's newer educational complexities.

Doing away with departments had its most pernicious impact on academics in the areas related to Educational Foundations. Many of those academics who departed during and after the late 1990s worked in these areas. Those who remained had expertise in Sociology, History and Philosophy of Education, Comparative Education, Management and Leadership, Curriculum Studies and Higher Education. The difficulty associated with organising academics with disparate disciplinary interests into a cluster and the lack of a cohesive epistemological focus mitigated the emergence of academic cohesion in this area. Consequently, these academics mostly continued to pursue their research in isolation without collegial support.

This section argued that the Faculty's generic discursive text was informed by a residual politicist deportment which stymied the development of a scholarly culture across the Faculty. It prevented the emergence of novel theoretical approaches and incisive knowledge questions responsive to newer educational complexities. The intellectual culture struggled to immerse young academics into a substantial and cohesive scholarly environment. Instead, many academics had to contend with an atomised and pressurised work environment. Academic clustering provided different groups of academics a socialisational context in the absence of cohesive departments. Scholarly work occurred in some of these clusters, but cluster efforts were impacted by the negative effects associated with an atomistic environment. The next section features a discussion of the impact of the Faculty's residual discursivity and its atomistic environment on specific RCD activities during the post-2000 period.

The Career of RCD Performance and the Struggle for 'Head Space'

The previous section discussed the discursive text of the Faculty against which specific RCD activities took place. In this section I consider specific RCD behaviour in the Faculty in light of its discursive text. I view this behaviour through the lens of performance, which enables me to provide an agency-oriented account of specific developmental activity, of how the Faculty's RCD platform was co-constituted by the iterative performances of its staff members. I view these performances by way of a consideration of concerted attempts, led by the RCD Directorate, in two developmental

areas. First was the effort to facilitate the completion of doctoral theses by staff members and the second area is the facilitation of article writing and publishing. I argue that it is the constant struggle over 'head space' that trumped the Faculty's RCD activities. Head space refers to the existence of a rich and focused intellectual environment necessary for sustained academic work. These two areas highlight the outcome of the Faculty's concerted RCD endeavours in light of the discursive text of the new context.

I consider RCD as performance through a conceptual optic advanced by Collins (see 2000: 19-53) who theorises about the formative dynamics of academic communities. He argued that such communities were constituted by interaction ritual chains (IRC) which positioned academics in their intellectual context. IRCs are regarded as micro events that happen ubiquitously in daily academic contexts. According to Collins, they are made up of "formal rituals which bind members in a moral community, and which create symbols that act as lenses through which members view the world, and as codes by which they communicate" (22). These chains are defined by two elements, namely *emotional energy* which refers to the interactive relational processes inside the ritual chains which imbue participants with the energy to focus on their academic immersion, and *cultural capital* which is the academic 'know how' of the specific community (24). The quality of these two elements determines successful academic immersion. Both have to be present. The presence of each in an IRC will more likely lead to a qualitatively enhanced academic environment with positive consequences for RCD activity, while conversely low levels of emotional energy and cultural capital would impact such activity negatively.

With regard to doctoral completion, this Faculty appointed a number of academics without PhDs in lecturer positions. Its commitment to employment equity meant that most of these appointees were black and/or female. Many of them were of a relatively mature age. They came to the Faculty with firm professional identities that were generated in their previous work contexts. The literature (see Heath 2002; Wright & Cochrane 2000) shows that those people who come to academia later in life experience challenges in adapting to the rudiments of a scholarly environment. The developmental conversations and interactions that I had with many of them over the years in my capacity as Research Director, highlighted the difficulty of their transition into academia. They had difficulty in taking on the appropriate deportment, finding their scholarly voice in the context of high-sounding academic discoursing, and generally finding their feet in a new professional environment. Adapting to a different cultural context initially proved difficult. The women appointees spoke about the challenges

associated with becoming an academic while having to negotiate their domestic spaces as primary caregivers of their families. They could not always depend on quality time at home to dedicate to their academic work.

Moreover, doctoral study by academics who teach in the Faculty had to be transacted in a complicated work terrain. Each of these academics had large teaching loads. They taught in the Faculty's pre-service and in-service programmes. They were involved in multi-site teaching, had enormous marking loads, were expected to supervise Masters theses, serve on programme committees and do post-graduate teaching. Most of them coordinated teaching courses. They experienced high levels of stress associated with administering and teaching their courses. Progress in their doctoral studies, therefore, had to contend with high teaching and administration workloads which ate away at their ability to pay sustained attention to their studies. This is one of main reasons why time-to-degree for many academic staff members exceeded the expected four years.

The Faculty remained committed to doctoral completion of its academic staff. It provided concerted support and academic infrastructure. It insisted that they register for their PhDs early on in their academic careers. Its RCD performances lay in its active and deliberate cultivation of space to have academics work towards completion. Activities organised by the Research Division, faculty clusters, and doctoral support groups, played a crucial role in establishing head space for concentrated work on their PhDs. The Faculty organised month-long writing sabbaticals at Ohio University, a partner university in the USA, where staff members could work with concentration on their PhDs. Attempts were made to organise workloads in such a manner that space could be opened for productive head space. The timing of sabbaticals went a long way to facilitate doctoral completion. Academics were encouraged to take sabbaticals of up to a year when they were ready to do their research and writing up of at least a first draft of the thesis. Sabbaticals were discouraged if the Faculty's research committee felt that the time would not be spent optimally on thesis production. Firm and collegial thesis supervision played a crucial role. As Research Director, I tried to play a supportive mentoring role. I consulted with staff members throughout the process about their needs and requirements. I served as a sounding board for some about the ideas they were pursuing in their doctoral work. It was my job to alert them to funding that was available for their research, bursaries, and developmental opportunities in areas such as literature reviews, methodological application, and data capturing and coding. The university's Postgraduate Enrolment and Throughput project played a productive role in presenting short courses on aspects of their PhD work.

The real story of success, though, is in the manner in which these academics responded to the institutional imperative to acquire their PhDs. This performative requirement placed them under considerable strain. They understood that their academic worth was tied to PhD success. They often spoke about their feelings of academic inadequacy. Their performances in response to the imperative were not uncomplicated nor without pain. Their stories speak of great sacrifice, of having to give up on sleep and family time, and of having to find space in their busy working days to concentrate on academic work. Sabbaticals and short periods without teaching proved to be key. They experienced many domestic, personal and professional challenges which impacted their ability to remain focused during these periods. The Faculty managed to remain supportive despite workload, budgetary and systemic constrains. These staff members were able, on the basis of intense commitment and marshalling of personal resources, to retain commitment to their doctoral work. This resulted in a high completion rate of doctoral study among academics appointed in the post-2000 period. This Faculty's PhD rate among academic staff stood at 70 per cent in 2009, then considerably higher than the average rate in other comparable Faculties in the country.

Doctoral completion by academic staff resembles a case of RCD as performance. The Faculty and the affected staff members were able to establish environmental conditions that facilitated thesis completion, in spite of the Faculty's atomistic work conditions. These academics were able to enact a series of performances that mitigated the Faculty's conditions. I would suggest that their performances and agency-inspired behaviour, were successfully accomplished on the basis of a combination of their personal commitments and the Faculty's RCD behaviour which provided active support and space for substantial doctoral work. The emotional energy that was generated succeeded precisely because it enabled these academics to work off the Faculty stage, relatively insulated from its atrophied RCD discursive text. They were allowed to work for specifically protected periods of time in relative isolation under firm supervision by their thesis supervisors. Furthermore, their Research Director protected them from the worst consequences of interference by issues such as workload, energy sapping meetings and administrative obligations. The emotional energy to complete their PhDs was, thus, actively facilitated and performed by the Faculty's management, while the intellectual capital was furnished off stage by supervisors and support groups where these existed. Doctoral completion success was achieved in light of the personal performances of these academics in their tough and complex personal and professional terrains.

The story was entirely different for RCD activity with respect to article writing for accredited journals. The Faculty's performativity in this regard was limited to a low average annual rate in the post-2000 period. The rate veered between 40 per cent and 50 per cent in proportion to full-time academics. Some of these articles were written by academics on the periphery of the Faculty, such as contract staff, postdoctoral students, and academics in university units with some association with the Faculty. The rate of publication by full-time academic staff was low. This was notwithstanding concerted attempts to improve the publications rate. The Faculty provided numerous and ongoing developmental opportunities to improve article publication. Most notable were the university funded writing weekends where academics were invited to participate in active writing processes that were facilitated by expert writing coaches. Staff members were encouraged to submit abstracts or drafts of their papers beforehand with the intention of moving them forward to publication over these weekends. The weekends were intended to role model article writing processes in addition to providing space for active writing augmented by support from senior staff members and writing coaches. A key aim was to build confidence in the art of academic writing and to establish a cohesive faculty wide and productive writing conversation. The intention was to generate the requisite emotional energy in a supportive environment, which Collins (2000) argued was a necessary ingredient for success. Other efforts to generate emotional energy were the short-lived attempts at providing an informal weekly article writing discussion forum, peer mentoring and support, writing workshops, and blocked-time for concerted writing.

Article writing in the Faculty can be said to have occurred in an environment saturated with low emotional capital. The Faculty was unable to provide a sustained environment for academic writing. It struggled with variable success to establish consistent head space in terms of which academics could apply a concerted focus on article production. Those academics in the Faculty who published consistently were networked into academic communities off campus. I suggest that the intellectual capital of the Faculty was stymied by institutional factors such as the teaching and administrative loads of academics. The intermittent systemic challenges faced by a university with resource constraints also negatively impact its scholarly culture.

In my opinion, the Faculty's RCD performances, in its attempt to secure an environment that supports article writing and novel scholarship more generally, came up against institutional constraints. The residual politicist deportment also had a mitigating impact on the emergence of an intellectual

culture throughout the Faculty. It deflected attention from establishing scholarship based on theoretical sophistication. Where sophisticated work did occur it happened off stage in a specific cluster and by academics who were integrated into productive networks outside the university. Whereas the Faculty's performances in doctoral completion by its staff were successful precisely because it managed to isolate emotional energy for access off the Faculty stage, the opposite is true for article writing. It fell victim to what I believe became an atomistic Faculty environment on the one hand, and the Faculty's inability to secure a generic and rigorous scholarly culture necessary for successful publishing of academic work on the other.

Conclusion

Universities are intricate environments. They are not readily available for the enactment of performative injunctions. This article has challenged the assumption that the imperative for research outputs will find an easy reception in these environments. I have presented a view that attempted to expose how a specific site in one university responded to performative imperatives. The discussion of one Faculty, based on my autoethnographic reflections, was meant to show how historical fashioning interacted with contemporary dynamics to construct its performative RCD text. The Faculty was fundamentally re-arranged in light of the regulatory winds that buffeted universities in the late 1990s. I showed how the resulting atomistic environment gave rise to a residual politicist scholarly deportment which positioned the career of RCD in the Faculty during the period. An incisive scholarly culture struggled to emerge.

I went on to employ the notion of performance to describe RCD activity in the Faculty. I showed how human processes interacted with the Faculty's performative text to co-constitute its research development career. I argued that doctoral completion was accomplished on the basis of a set of Faculty performances that moved RCD processes off the Faculty stage, and I showed that the personal agency of individual staff members was decisive in pulling off the completion of their theses. However, performances in the area of article writing succumbed to what I believe was a halting scholarly climate in the Faculty. Atomistic work conditions and the lack of deep scholarly engagement prevented the emergence of a productive scholarly culture.

A discussion of the travails of RCD in this small Faculty is one illustration of how performative dynamics work in a specific university context. I suggest that there is a need for in depth research into RCD practices across a diverse range of university sites. I have provided one example of the intricate dynamics at play when a Faculty is confronted with multiple

policy and institutional challenges. RCD is a constitutive key to flourishing universities. Research into different university contexts would show how difficult it is to substantially protect and develop the soft infrastructure that is crucial for RCD processes. One key requirement is the need to evolve a developmental platform that takes account of the complexities involved in securing the necessary conditions for RCD. As this article shows, another requirement is to enable performance-orientated development processes among academics that can engender an intellectual environment conducive to incisive and responsive scholarship.

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Implications of Social Media on Student Activism: The South African Experience in a Digital Age

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Abstract

While the phenomenon of student protest in South Africa is not new, what characterizes the current wave is the successful use of social media to communicate and galvanize students to participate in protests across the country. Recent studies on the use of social media have noted that this form of communication greatly enhances the strength of student movements. However, some scholars have argued that the resulting leadership vacuum, undermines the achievement of their demands and makes it more difficult for the government and higher education authorities to effectively respond to such action. Through the lens of the learning community theory, this article reviews the current literature on social media and student activism in order to establish the effectiveness of its use and the shortcomings thereof. It argues that higher education institutions and the government need to become more conversant with the implications of digital infrastructure. It further suggests that these institutions should create an environment that supports and encourages effective use of social media through provision of the necessary infrastructure. The article provides a deeper understanding of the role that social media can play to galvanize students to advance their causes.

Keywords: Student activism, social media, student movements, social movements, internet-age activism, learning community

Résumé

Bien que le phénomène des manifestations estudiantines en Afrique du Sud ne soit pas nouveau, ce qui caractérise la vague actuelle, c'est l'utilisation réussie des médias sociaux pour communiquer et inciter les étudiants à participer à des manifestations à travers le pays. Des études récentes sur

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l'utilisation des médias sociaux ont montré que cette forme de communication renforce considérablement la force des mouvements étudiants. Cependant, des chercheurs ont fait valoir que le vide de leadership qui en résultait compromettait la réalisation de leurs revendications et rendait plus difficile pour le gouvernement et les autorités de l'enseignement supérieur de réagir efficacement à de telles actions. À travers le prisme de la théorie de la communauté d'apprentissage, cet article passe en revue la littérature actuelle sur les médias sociaux et l'activisme étudiant afin d'établir l'efficacité de son utilisation et ses inconvénients. Il fait valoir que les établissements d'enseignement supérieur et le gouvernement devraient s'informer des implications de l'infrastructure numérique. Il suggère en outre que ces institutions devraient créer un environnement qui soutienne et encourage l'utilisation efficace des médias sociaux en fournissant l'infrastructure nécessaire. L'article fournit une compréhension plus profonde du rôle des médias sociaux dans l'incitation des étudiants à faire avancer leurs causes.

Mots-clés : activisme étudiant, médias sociaux, mouvements étudiants, mouvements sociaux, activisme de l'Internet, communauté d'apprenants

Introduction

Social media technologies have become an important feature of student activism. Student movements use social media as a communication and mobilization tool to highlight social justice issues and material conditions. This has been central to a wave of protests through social movements to challenge globalisation and neoliberal discourses (Callinicos 2006; Della Porta & Diani 2006; Starr 2000).

Student activists are vocal in defending their interests and benefits, and fighting alleged social, political, economic and personal injustices. On the African continent, student activism entails a wave of protests against alleged injustices (Teferra & Altbach 2004).

This article examines the extent to which student movements make use of new media technologies. It illuminates the interplay between these digital technologies and the operation of student movements, including communication and mobilization to advance a struggle (van de Donk, Loader, Nixon and Rucht 2004). Digital technology such as the internet, assists students mobilizing for political engagement (Dahlgren 2013). However, while the utilisation of virtual activism strengthens social movements and mobilization, digital technology can weaken student activism in the classical space (Tufekci 2014).

This article seeks to contribute a new dimension on the use of social media and its implications for social movements. It is presented in six parts:

section one states the study's objectives while section two presents a review of the literature on social networks and student activism. The third section outlines the research methodology employed.

The fourth section presents the learning community theory that was employed in this study as a lens through which to investigate this phenomenon. The fifth section provides a detailed analysis of the internet-age in South Africa, with a focus on recent hashtag movements, #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. The sixth and final section discusses the findings and their implications, and presents a conclusion, recommendations, the study's limitations and suggestions for future research.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to analyse the use of social media in student movements for communication and mobilization. It further aimed to examine the empowering as well as disempowering effects of using social media on such movements. The study also sought to provide a deeper understanding of how higher education institutions (henceforth, HEIs) could provide digital facilities to service student activism on one hand and be conversant with it on the other. Furthermore, this could facilitate communication across all stakeholders, including the government, university management and student activists themselves.

Literature Review

Social movements can be defined as "networks of individuals and groups, based on shared collective identities" which engage in collective action in pursuit of political and social goals (Gill & DeFronzo 2009: 208). Student movements are one of the typical platforms from which student activism is collectively organized (Gill & DeFronzo 2009). Their dynamics are not dissimilar to those of other social movements, although the specific aspects of campus life – an age-graded population, a fairly close-knit community, common social class backgrounds and other elements – make student movements somewhat unusual (Altbach 1991).

The history of student activism on the African continent shows that different forms of extra-parliamentary oppositional politics became part of the political equation (Altbach 1984; Byaruhanga 2013). Such political activities have been evident in the history of democratic societies in western countries where stagnation of democracy was evident, particularly in the mid-1990s. With some historical reflection, this may make reference to the beginning of a new wave of social movements and alternative politics (van de Donk *et al.* 2004).

Alongside the rising crisis of democracy, the internet and other digital technologies emerged during the 1990s. They appeared to be utilised as a novel "strategic platform" to help student movements to mobilize and coordinate protests (Warkentin 2001). The internet has been credited by certain scholars with launching a communication revolution that has impacted virtually all spheres of society (Dahlgren 2013; Tufekci 2014). There are indications that social media is playing a significant role in the extra-parliamentarian context and the mobilization of social movements outside formal structures. It enables forms of participation that would have previously been impossible (Dahlgren 2013).

Governments in a number of countries have responded to this new information environment, which allows for fewer gatekeeper controls, by aggressively countering these new movements, traditional repression and novel methods are often combined and used towards curtailing online media. Their initial ignorance and misunderstanding of the use of social media quickly gave way to learning about its strengths and weaknesses, as well as developing new methods to counter dissent (Tufekci 2014).

Activist involvement in the Twenty-first Century

The use of digital technologies has contributed to political participation, civic engagement and governance processes in the twenty-first century. Digital infrastructure such as E-democracy, E-governance and on-line politics have been employed to boost citizen involvement in democratic processes (Bannister and Connolly 2012).

The environmental movement in the 1990s marked the start of a new era for civic engagement. Mass demonstrations and protests were organized to coincide with summits or fora where world leaders discussed, negotiated and reached agreements on "green" issues. The "Arab Spring", "Indignados" in Madrid, "Occupy Wall Street" in the United States of America (USA), and revolts in Europe opposing austerity measures and cuts in social assistance, are current versions of civic action (Della Porta & Diani 2006; Diaz Romero 2013; van de Donk *et al.* 2004).

Although each of these social movements responds to particular causes and presents unique types of activism, some common and unifying elements can be identified. Firstly, they all use new technologies. Secondly, they employ internet politics and digital activism through electronic voting, digital campaigns, chat-rooms, or virtual mobilization through Facebook and Twitter. Certainly, the new tools of social media have reinvented social activism (Gladwell 2010).

Media technology is indispensable to attain identity and mutual targets, considering that members or supporters of these social movements might be on different continents while they convoke political action simultaneously around the world (Agre 2002).

Digital Infrastructure and Devices

Typically, devices used in activism include Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), such as computers and mobile phones that connect to all internet applications. While simple mobile phones allow only texting and calling, smart phones and tablets have increased the potential and capacity of mobile phones, making them more similar to computers and, thus, vital for social change (Joyce 2010).

The mobile devices used by these movements offer high "speed" for communication and mobilization. This enables more rapid coordination and organization; hence the term *"mobil(e)isation*" (Hands 2011).

Social networks provide opportunities for individuals to, among other activities, become members of pressure groups, join organizations, contribute funds, receive and respond to emails, make proposals to authorities, intervene in "online" discussions, circulate electronic petitions, exchange views, circulate announcements or activities, and call for demonstrations (Diaz Romero 2013). For instance, Castells concluded that the Zapatistas (in Mexico), which he described as "the first informational guerrilla movement" effectively used new technologies to instantly diffuse information throughout the world and to develop a network of support groups whose efforts crystallised in a movement of international public opinion (Castells 2015).

Activist Involvement and the digital technology

The literature on activist involvement suggests that novel and differentiated forms of participation have emerged in which students display their activism using the cyber space for political engagement (Dalton 2013; Muntean 2015; Phillimore & McCabe 2015).

Activist participation via the internet may involve electronic versions of traditional forms of participation, such as signing petitions online, but also new forms of cyber involvement such as politically motivated hackings (Jordan & Taylor 2004). New social networking platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook offer unforeseen possibilities for the exchange of information on on-going activism or campaigns (Christensen 2011; Phillimore & McCabe 2015).

It is also worth mentioning that studies have shown that the internet is a positive factor. In particular, they suggest that the internet can help mobilize the participation into off-line forms, which suggests that its effect can grow stronger over time. More recent studies are generally more positive, although still cautiously so (Christensen 2011).

A meta-analysis of studies on the impact of internet use on activist involvement suggests that social networks have a positive effect on participation in activism. Furthermore, it suggests that the impact is increasing over time (Boulianne 2009; Heggart 2015; Phillimore & McCabe 2015). However, there is little doubt that the possibilities offered by the digital technologies have increased only in the recent years. Thus, it seems fair to state that most evidence in recent years points to the internet having a positive effect on off-line mobilization, even if it has by no means fulfilled the expectations of the most optimistic scholars (Christensen 2011; Heggart 2015; Phillimore & McCabe 2015).

Despite the positive effects of social media on student activism and social movements in general, this phenomenon has not been without its critics. This included the argument that the digital age does not help to mobilize previously passive citizens (Bimber 2001).

A related line of critique sees the internet as creating a digital divide (Norris 2001; Singh 2004). According to these critics, while it impacts participation, it may exacerbate existing differences among citizens in terms of their level of activity and stratum, since it is generally the well-educated and politically interested who take advantage of technological possibilities (Christensen 2011). It is argued that even if the internet does trigger activism, it does so in a pointless way, since the activities do not have any impact on political outcomes in real terms, hence, accusations of "slacktivism" (Shulman 2004; Morozov 2011).

However, there is no evidence of the internet having a negative effect on off-line participation, with even the most skeptical scholars finding a weak and non-significant linkage. Accordingly, there is no evidence to suggest that internet activism is replacing traditional political participation. Hence, it helps to mobilize citizens by increasing awareness of contemporary issues (Christensen 2011).

Research Methodology

This study employed document analysis to explore the state and trajectory of student activism in South Africa through social media. An extensive review of the relevant scholarly literature was conducted by accessing major relevant

databases and platforms using key words including student activism, digital age, social media, student movements, social movements, information and communication technology (ICT) and internet age social movements. The search generated rich material covering the past two decades, which was systematically organized and critically reviewed.

The selection of sources was predominantly guided by the learning community theory and the study's objectives. Preference was given to peer-reviewed journal articles and books that showcased the debate within the academic community, both locally and internationally. Other sources such as newspapers, including the *Mail & Guardian* and *University World News*, were also employed.

Limitations of the Study

The study was wholly sourced from both published scholarly literature and popular, but credible, news sources.

Theoretical Framework

The learning community theory was introduced by Bielaczy & Collins (1999) and was used as a lens in a HEI as a learning community which advances individual and collective knowledge. The theory is based on the premise that an institution promotes a culture of learning among the university community members in which everyone is involved in a collective effort of understanding. The university determines a goal to advance the collective knowledge and, in that way, to support the growth of individual knowledge (Bielaczyc & Collins 1999).

In this context, the culture of learning in relation to all members of the university community's use of social media and becoming conversant with the digital infrastructure could be of paramount importance. Such knowledge could be a prime factor in understanding the implications of social media for student activism. There are four key elements of a learning community as discussed below (MacMillan & Chavis 1986).

Membership

This element of the learning community theory reveals that participants must feel some sense of loyalty and belonging to the group (membership). This drives their desire to continue working and helping others. Furthermore, what each participant does affects what happens in the community. In similar vein, a university consists of individuals who constitute the "membership" of the university community. These individuals have different needs and

belong to different stakeholder groups within the university community which is alluded to in the stakeholder theory (Freeman & Reed 1984).

The stakeholder groups include students, management, academics, support staff, parents, donors, government and others. These groups are glued together by the common goal of the university's survival, and ensuring its sustainability and reputation. A student dissent and protest that disrupt university business could pose a serious threat in the institutional survival.

Influence

This element suggests that a learning community must enable its individual members and stakeholder groups to pursue and achieve their interests and needs.

Participative democracy advocates for university governance in which all stakeholders are represented in decision-making. The Higher Education Act of 1997, as amended, refers to this as democratisation of higher education (henceforth, HE). Through their representatives, stakeholders are able to influence university decisions to fulfil their particular needs.

Fulfilment of Individual Needs

Individual needs are fulfilled by means of the influence that individuals may have in the university community. By participating in university governance through their elected representatives, individuals can promote their interests.

Shared Meaning

This element refers to the notion that individuals and stakeholders are interconnected in the university community, creating a nexus among these individuals and groups. For example, while the members of the university community may have different individual or group needs, they create a culture and values that are shared by all about how things are done in the university. They thus share compelling culture and values which result in shared events and an emotional connection to the university community (Freeman & Reed 1984). Figure 1 provides a diagrammatical illustration of the learning community theory.

Murnane and Levy (1996) investigated the kinds of skills and knowledge required in a twenty-first century learning community. Their findings revealed that the members of a learning community should have the ability to direct their own learning, work with and listen to others and have ways of dealing with complex issues and problems that require different kinds of expertise.

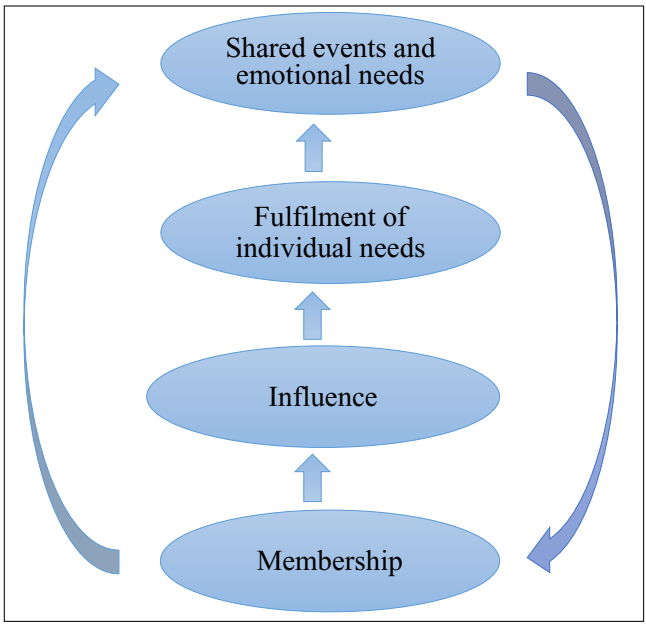

Figure 1: Learning Community: Adapted from MacMillan and Chavis (1986)

Some scholars emphasise the need for ideas, theories, and procedures to be co-constructed by means of negotiation among members of the community, with arguments resolved by the application of logic and evidence (Brown & Campione 1996; Collins 1998; Bereiter & Scardamalia 2014).

The learning community theory provides a lens through which to understand the interplay between social media and student activism. This can assist in determining the implications of the former on the latter. Knowledge and skills in using digital communication and being conversant with the digital structure can impact the nature of student activism in the learning community.

Internet-Age Student Movements: The Case of South Africa

The student movements during the 2015 and 2016 academic years caught South African higher education institutions (henceforth, HEIs) by surprise. Altbach posits that the role of HEIs as "factories of new ideas" and the "structural realities of academic life", have an effect on student political thinking and organizing. This could create a tendency for students to be idealist, oppositional, and impatient for change. The transient nature of the student population and rapid turnover in student activists, have a powerful impact on student movements that emerge suddenly, and are difficult to sustain, short-lived, and erratic (Altbach 1991: 249).

The notion of student activism powerfully invokes the idea of political engagement through *public* action. It is essentially a public expression of new ideas aimed at shaping public debate on a topic, and is thus typically achieved through publications, public speaking, campaigns, the use of mass media, and through demonstrations and other forms of public agitation (Altbach 1991). Student movements, thus, present one of the typical forms for mobilizing collective student political action and should be distinguished from student organizations (Badat 1999).

A study by Altbach (1991) highlighted that publicizing student activism was immensely important for mobilizing students and provoking a response by the relevant authorities (e.g., government or university leadership). Thus, the value of effective communication in the development of such movements cannot be overemphasised. Furthermore, the digital technology employed does not have to be "expensive and complex". "Students are one of the most difficult groups to control partly because of the ease with which they can communicate among themselves" (Altbach 1966: 178).

Castells (2015), revealed a vital shift in the manner in which social movements communicate and mobilize. He displayed how incensed citizens mobilized using the internet in the process of responding to the 2009 economic crisis, (e.g., the Occupy Wall Street Movement). He stated that the internet-age networked movements had a number of features. These movements occupied both physical and virtual space - cyberspace, which allowed student activists to share, communicate, and amplify their experiences using the internet, thus creating a permanent forum for solidarity, debate, and strategic planning (Castells 2015).

Castells' theory suggests that social movements are successful in rallying diverse activists and participants, resulting in multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-gender, multi-class, and multi- partisan movements. Furthermore, the theory suggests that these movements are spontaneous, lack clearly defined and formal leadership and seek to be democratic (Castells 2015).

Altbach's (1991) conceptualisation of student activism and student movements and Castell's (2015) notion of internet-age networked social movements offer both challenges and opportunities in understanding the 2015 hashtag movements in South Africa (Luescher, Loader, & Mugume 2016). These movements mobilized students to join protest actions that were known as #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. They demonstrated a number of the typical features of internet-age social movements postulated by Castells and patterns that mimicked those of worldwide student protests following the 2009 global financial crisis (Brooks, Byford & Sela 2016).

#RhodesMustFall emerged at the University of Cape Town (henceforth, UCT) in March 2015 and culminated in the nationwide #FeesMustFall

movement, which started in October of that same year at the University of the Witwatersrand (henceforth, Wits). This provides the rationale for the argument that student activism in South Africa has taken a similar shape to networked social movements such as the Arab Spring uprisings, the Spanish *Indignadas and* the Occupy movements such as Occupy Wall Street (Luescher *et al.* 2016; Castell 2015) and Occupy Gezi Park in Turkey (Tufecki 2014).

It is argued that the student protests in South African HE did not begin in 2015 with #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall that occurred in the historically English white universities. Students at historically disadvantaged universities that enrol almost exclusively black students such as the Universities of Fort Hare and Zululand, the Tshwane and Cape Peninsula Universities of Technology and others have been protesting against academic exclusion, fees hike and the cost of HE since the dawn of democracy. However, this did not attract much media attention other than among regional newspapers (Davids & Waghid 2016).

It is also argued that these two very different responses are a clear reminder of the embedded inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa (Davids and Waghid 2016). However, the most recent #FeesMustFall protest movement which involved students from historically advantaged and disadvantaged universities attracted widespread media coverage and sparked solidarity protests in countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (henceforth, USA). The year 2015 will go down in history as one second only to 1976 in terms of students flexing their muscles in seeking to alter the direction of South Africa's future (Msila 2016).

From #RhodesMustFall to #FeesMustFall

South African universities reflect colonial history and, regrettably, symbols of this past have not been properly debated (Jansen 2017; Klemencic, Luescher & Mugune 2016; Langa 2017). In response to #RhodesMustFall, students across South Africa, as well as in countries like the USA, posed the question: "if at UCT it was the Rhodes statue that had to fall, what "must fall" in their respective contexts" (Luescher & Klemenčič 2016: 1).

The announcement of annual increases in tuition fees provided the answer to this question. Students at Wits in Johannesburg demanded a stop to fee increases and wanted free education under the banner of #FeesMustFall. The protest action spread like wildfire across the South African university landscape, propelled by student associations such as the South African Students Congress (SASCO), the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), the Young Communist League (YCLSA), the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC), and the Pan Africanist Student Movement of Azania (PASMA) (Luescher & Klemenčič 2017).

Workshops for student representative councils (SRCs) organized by the Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD) and the Second National Higher Education Transformation Summit organized by South Africa's Department of Higher Education and Training (henceforth, DHET) together with a broad range of stakeholders in Durban in October 2015, ironically provided rare platforms for student activists from across the country to meet outside cyberspace to share information and coordinate local engagements around fees (DHET 2015). After listing significant transformation gains in the sector, the Durban Statement on Transformation in Higher Education resolved that the top three issues to be addressed in the immediate and medium term were HE funding, student fees and financial aid for students (DHET 2015).

Students responded vigorously to this statement and other announcements of university fee increases. United under the banner of #FeesMustFall, they brought most universities to a standstill (Sesant 2015).

The South African hashtag movements can be conceptualized as internet-age networked student movements due to the utilisation of communication, mobilization and coordination that was digitally-fuelled (Castells 2015). This indicates the emergence of a new way for student activists to mobilize and organize student political power (Luescher *et al.* 2016).

The #FeesMustFall movement was successful in focusing engagements on a no fee increase in 2016. However, given that internet-age social movements are horizontal, broad-based and leaderless, negotiations between the DHET and SRCs were somewhat ineffective as the movements did not recognize formal leadership as their representatives (Castell 2015). This led to the emergence of informal student activism in South African HEIs, which operates parallel to formalized activism in the form of SRCs (Luescher & Klemenčič 2017).

It is important to distinguish #FeesMustFall from formally constituted representative student associations. While both may serve as platforms to collectively organize student activism, formal student associations are "membership organizations" while activist student movements are "broader entities, typically consisting of individual persons and several organizations with no formal individual membership" (Badat 1999: 22).

Student movements in South Africa used the internet to disseminate information throughout the country and across the world. The power of social media enabled the #RhodesMustFall movement at UCT to echo across the South African public HE landscape which entailed *inter alia* the statue of King George V at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) being similarly vandalized (Oxlund 2016). This also echoed across universities in the USA. It inspired national protests that spread to the USA, with student activists advocating for inclusive cultures, demanding the removal of statues and changing the names of buildings and academic units named after known

slavers, racists and segregationists such as Jefferson Davies and John C. Calhoun (University of Texas), Thomas Jefferson (University of Missouri), Woodrow Wilson (Princeton and Yale), Isaac Royall Jr. (Harvard) and others (Moja, Luescher & Schreiber 2015).

In South Africa, the demands were accompanied by the vandalisation of statues and plaques, e.g., spray-painting #Racist on them. Hashtags used in the USA included #BlackOnCampus and #BlacksLivesMatter. On some campuses, students adopted #...MustFall; for example, #JeffersonMustFall was sprayed onto his statue at the University of Texas (Moja *et al.* 2015).

Makoni (2015) notes that the South African Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande supported the relocation of Rhodes' statue, but added that it was important for institutions to note that transformation goes far beyond such measures.

Discussion

The scholarly literature notes student movements' use of social media as tools for communication and mobilization. It also shows that student movements in South Africa have shifted from the traditional way of organizing to what Castells (2015) termed internet-age networked movements. Given the transient nature of the student population, the internet offers an efficacious and cost-effective way of galvanizing support for a campaign in a short span of time.

The literature differentiates between student movements and student organizations. While formal student associations are organizations bound by group membership, activist student movements are informal gatherings of individuals and organizations that form a broader entity to advance a particular cause. The horizontal, loosely organized and leaderless nature of student movements challenges authorities as they seek to negotiate with them.

One of the challenges of the new informal formations has been the lack of requisite negotiation skills among *ad hoc* committee members as they are selected without due consideration to their leadership acumen. These committees also lack the authority to articulate the next line of action. It has also been observed that because of the nature of mobilization, (i.e., scaling up quickly and mobilizing a large number of participants), members hardly know each other.

The charge of "slacktivism" has been levelled against the use of social media as it was apparent that some participants engaged in virtual activism to "click and like" without participating in the field. These participants become involved in activism in a virtual space but not physically engaged in real-life. As a result, some scholars question whether activism through social media can supplant physical participation as it does not always help to achieve the intended goal(s). However, most scholars endorse it as an effective way of promoting physical activism.

The literature also shows that online activities are sometimes elusive and ephemeral, meaning that they do not contribute to formal decision-making. Finally, the different activities tend to have a destructive and nihilistic quality, which can make it difficult for them to be taken seriously, in effect disempowering the social movement.

Despite its critics, the use of social media has been highlighted by many scholars as an effective tool to galvanise social movements in pursuit of different social, political, cultural and economic causes. Scholars that argue that only those who are part of social media are mobilized have been outweighed by others who show that social media has been able to mobilize beyond this narrow grouping. This has been evident in the South African hashtag movements, pursued through social media platforms to unite students across the country regardless of race, gender, social class, and/or political affiliation.

In this study, the learning community theory provided a lens through which engagement in social media could be extended to all members of the HEI as a learning community. In this context, it depicts a culture of an HE learning community that represents the interests of various stakeholder groups and has the following characteristics: 1) membership, 2) influence, 3) fulfilment of needs and 4) shared events and emotional needs.

Whereas the first element of the theory (membership) focuses on the notion that participants in a learning community must feel a sense of loyalty and belonging to the group, the second element (influence) provides an opportunity for role players to meet particular needs by using their influence. Furthermore, the notion of student activism raises the idea of student political involvement with an intention to shape public debates on topical issues through engaging in various campaigns, the use of mass media and demonstrations, and other forms of student agitations to put pressure on government or university management to respond to issues (Altbach 1991). Activism plays a role in ensuring that students influence the university community to enable them to pursue and achieve their demands.

The third element of the theory refers to the fulfilment of individual needs which are achieved through individuals' influence in the community. Through different forms of student activism such as dialogue, debates or mass demonstrations and protests, students put pressure on those in authority to achieve their demands and thereby fulfil their individual needs (Della Porta & Diani 2006; Diaz Romero 2013).

The fourth and final element refers to the interconnectedness of individuals and stakeholders in the community. A university community consists of different stakeholder groups with different, interconnected interests (Freeman & Reed 1984) but with the common goal of pursuing and sustaining individual

interests. This nexus calls for shared values which translate into shared events and emotional connection to the community.

It is imperative that student activists fully grasp the university's mission, vision and strategy. University management and activists should use social media for sound engagement and information sharing. The manner in which the authorities respond to demands determines the next line of action by student movements. Other stakeholders, such as the government could also employ social media as a platform for dialogue and active engagement with student activists and others. However, this requires that all stakeholders be conversant with social media. Physical spaces could then be used to rehash issues raised during virtual engagements and cover those that were not exhausted or covered in cyber space. This nexus is crucial for a progressive and successful university.

Virtual conversations could trigger or initiate engagement in a physical space in the form of meetings, debates, and other forms of constructive engagement. This could avert student protests as most issues would have already been debated using social media. According to the learning community theory, this would enable different stakeholders to assume a culture of shared values. Decisions taken at meetings between student activists and management could then be communicated to all members of the community, especially students, to provide updates, comments and ways forward in terms of implementation of decisions. This would promote effective student activism and student engagement through social media.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The implications of social media for student activism are immense as many student movements use digital tools for communication and mobilization. The disadvantages of these movements' use of digital technology that are cited in the literature include leadership vacuum, and a lack of collective capacity in organizing and decision-making that can only be overcome through sustained periods of working together.

Despite these weaknesses, it is apparent that the internet is an effective tool to mobilize and galvanise support for student movements. Creating a learning community culture at HEIs on the use of social media can be a step forward in the effective utilisation and deployment of this powerful tool.

This article posits that, a learning community advances collective knowledge and, in this way, supports the growth of knowledge among individuals. This calls for a radical shift among HEIs and government to become more conversant with the implications of digital infrastructure and internet-age student activism. Investing in ICT infrastructure and providing the requisite support and training to all members of the university community could promote effective student activism and productive engagement in social networks.

University management, together with student activists could organize social media awareness programmes to raise consciousness among students who are (barely and) not yet on social media platforms. HEIs in South Africa should acknowledge that social media is indeed a force to be reckoned with in promoting student activism. The government and universities should be conversant with the implications of digital infrastructure for political, economic and social transformation at individual and institutional level as well as in society at large.

Future Research

Future research in this area may benefit from interrogating on how student activists use social media in social, political and economic movements in HEIs in South Africa and beyond. Furthermore, future research may investigate how the anticipated leadership vacuum in this new form of social movement is manifested and navigated. Furthermore, the future research on the topic can be based on the empirical data.

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Analysing South Africa's Soft Power in Africa through the Knowledge Diplomacy of Higher Education

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Abstract

In just 20 years of democracy, South Africa has benefitted immensely from the products of its high culture as reflected by its internationally recognized universities that have the potential to promote the country's national interests, particularly at the continental level. The role that South Africa's higher education plays as a sophisticated tool of influence in Africa's development is becoming increasingly critical to the transformation of the continent, thus strengthening its status as an important regional and global actor. Using the notion of soft power, this article provides an analysis of the significance of Pretoria's higher education for the country's international reputation and how its Higher Education Institutions could position themselves internationally for economic and geopolitical benefits. While the article shows that the increasing preference for higher education in South Africa – especially by African academics and students – is a valuable soft power platform for Pretoria to assert itself as an acceptable regional power in Africa, it argues that this has shortcomings at the continental level.

Keywords: higher education, internationalisation, knowledge diplomacy, knowledge economy, soft power, Higher Education Institutions

Résumé

En seulement 20 ans de démocratie, l'Afrique du Sud a beaucoup bénéficié de sa haute culture, comme en témoignent ses universités internationalement reconnues qui ont le potentiel de promouvoir les intérêts nationaux du pays, en particulier au niveau continental. Le rôle que joue l'enseignement supérieur sud-africain en tant qu'instrument sophistiqué d'influence

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sur le développement de l'Afrique devient de plus en plus crucial sur la transformation du continent, renforçant ainsi son statut d'acteur important aux niveaux régional et mondial. En utilisant la notion de puissance douce, cet article analyse l'importance de l'enseignement supérieur pour la réputation internationale du pays, et la manière dont ses établissements d'enseignement supérieur pourraient se positionner au niveau international pour des avantages économiques et géopolitiques. Lorsque l'article démontre que la préférence croissante pour l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique du Sud – en particulier les universitaires et les étudiants africains – est une précieuse plateforme de puissance douce pour l'affirmation de l'Afrique du Sud en tant que puissance régionale acceptable en Afrique, il soutient également que cela présente des lacunes au niveau continental.

Mots-clés : enseignement supérieur, internationalisation, diplomatie du savoir, économie du savoir, puissance douce, institutions d'enseignement supérieur

Introduction

In the past twenty years, the fabric of South African society along with its institutions and agencies has undergone remarkable transformation, attracting many immigrants. Changes within the higher education system were predicated on the need to redress the apartheid legacy as well as the imperative to incorporate higher education in the broader context of a competitive global economy (Botha 2010). As a result, higher education in South Africa has not only experienced transformation in terms of its racial composition but it has witnessed a significant increase in students and faculty from across the world (Lee and Sehoole 2015). Given these trends, using Nye's (2011) notion of soft power (the ability to influence others and achieve national self-interest(s) through attraction and persuasion rather than through coercion, military force or economic sanctions – commonly referred to as hard power), we analyse the significance of Pretoria's higher education for the country's international reputation and how its Higher Education Institutions (henceforth, HEIs) can be positioned internationally for economic and geopolitical benefits.

In his book, Nye (2011) identified five critical components of soft power: Business Innovation, Culture, Government, Diplomacy and *Education* (authors' emphasis). Tomalin (2013: 1) citing Anholt (2012) also noted the value of education as a "means of enabling a country to punch above its military and political weight". According to him, education represents one of the factors that encourage interest, immigration and investment. Countries are beginning to harness these advantages as a (soft) power instrument, specifically through higher education. For instance,

countries such as Britain and the United States (US) have been very vocal in highlighting their soft power status through "English language and the quality of their higher education systems and scholarship" (See Tomalin 2013: 2). As Jones (2012: 42) stated, modern-day states conceive higher education "as a method of influencing future relations via co-option and internalized agent cooperation is being utilized as a foreign policy tool and proactive medium, in an attempt to establish long term security concerns by utilizing soft power methodologies". In essence, there is no gainsaying that great power and major powers leverage the soft power products of higher education to expand the traditional base of their power.

Emphasizing the importance of soft power and higher education, South Africa's National Development Plan (henceforth, NDP) (NPC 2012: 241) argued that, "In areas such as science, culture, *higher education*, sport and environmental protection, there is a need to showcase South Africa and promote its presence and leadership on strategic issues as part of its *soft power* in international relations…" (authors' emphasis). This statement highlights four major points. First, the NDP recognizes the role of higher education (among other soft power sources) as a tool to promote South Africa's leadership presence in the global arena. Secondly, and as a corollary of the first point, this means that, there is a seeming conviction and sense of awareness among state officials of the potency of higher education as a subtle instrument to transform South Africa's international image and reputation. Hence, the NDP takes cognizance of the strategic value and utility of South Africa's higher education as a soft power component to help achieve its foreign policy ambition of reinforcing its leadership within Africa and beyond. A third and perhaps more conspicuous point is that, the NDP recognizes South Africa's willingness to use higher education as a platform to showcase its soft power status in the international arena as part of what is often regarded as 'Knowledge Diplomacy'. While this may not necessarily or immediately translate into practical policy payoffs or outcomes, the evidence from the NDP shows that South Africa, indeed, intends to boldly and concretely mobilise its higher education as a reputational instrument based on the acknowledged value and utility that it offers for international influence.

A fourth point that could be extrapolated from the NDP statement is that the drafters of the Plan acknowledge that the traditional instruments of state diplomacy, specifically through the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) as well as professional diplomats and special envoys, are insufficient to meet the demands of contemporary international relations. Understanding that the arena of power interaction

has changed significantly in the twenty-first century, states are beginning to realize that "not all foreign policy goals can be achieved by merely wielding hard power assets" (Isike and Ogunnubi 2017: 288). More importantly, South Africa cannot afford to suffer from this illusion. Smith (2012), also emphasizes that South Africa needs to work harder at increasing its soft power influence if it seeks to compete with other emerging powers.

The NDP statement, thus, prompts a number of pertinent questions: Does South Africa's higher education produce any significant soft power resource capable of advancing the country's foreign policy interests? In what ways can HEIs in South Africa help to transform Pretoria's international image and produce moral authority and attraction as products of its soft power? How has South Africa used its higher education as a means to project its soft power and gain strategic geo-political advantage? Does South Africa's investment in higher education represent a systematically planned policy to project Pretoria's soft power regionally and perhaps globally? Since there have been few attempts to interrogate the pattern and dynamics of relations between South Africa and Africa in the context of higher education and soft power; we seek to fill this gap in the literature.

While there is little analysis of soft power, particularly in its application to African countries, there is a fledging literature on South Africa's soft power (Ogunnubi & Uzodike 2015; Smith 2012). This reflects increasing interest in the utility of soft power for South Africa's foreign relations. Nevertheless, it should be noted that until now, there has been no serious attempt to critically examine the nexus between soft power and higher education in the South Africa context. In this article, we aim at filling the gap by examining the connection between soft power and South Africa's higher education in order to determine its prospect and challenges for the future of Pretoria's international interactions.

We present the paper in five sections. We provide a brief conceptual overview of the idea of soft power in the first section while in the second section, an assessment of the nexus between soft power and higher education from the context of knowledge economy and international relations is presented. In the third section, we examine the phenomenon internationalisation of higher education in South Africa while in the fourth we provide an analysis of the connection between South Africa's higher education and soft power. In the fifth section, we draw conclusions.

Conceptualising Soft Power

In the last decade of the twentieth century when South Africa emerged from international isolation, the concept of soft power was being developed and

advanced by American Political Scientist, Joseph Nye. Since 1990 when Nye's first explanation on the concept emerged, the idea has remained on the lips of scholars, policy-makers and education leaders alike (Knight 2014). Nye (1990) espoused that there were generally three ways through which a state could influence the behavior of other states: through coercion (military force), payment by inducement and by means of persuading the people and government of a country to share the same values as oneself. It is this third component of power interaction that Nye refers to as soft power.

Since Thucydides, the notion of power has remained a common denominator of international politics and has featured constantly in discussions on international interaction (Baldwin 2012). However, Morgenthau (1948) noted the lack of agreement on the defining form, role and nature of power within the broader discourse of international relations and security studies. Traditional realist approaches to the study of power have often revolved around the orientation of the elements of a state's national power conceived purely in material and tangible terms. Power, in this sense, is conceived essentially in terms of a state's capabilities measured by military strength, economic capacity, technological capability; and natural resource endowment as well as human resource competences. However, international interactions have suggested that there are several other ways through which states are able to influence the behaviour of others (Nye 2004). While these traditional hard power components have remained relevant in the designation and hierarchy of power within the international system, there is overwhelming evidence to show that new forms of power are beginning to emerge in contemporary international politics.

Applying his analysis to the US, Nye attempts to draw a distinction between soft power and the resources mobilised to achieve it. He defined soft power as "the ability to get others to want what you want" (Nye 2002: 9). Although Nye's original definition of soft power has changed remarkably, the fundamental logic of his argument has remained fairly intact. In his book, *Bound to Lead*, Nye (1990: 95) explains that the concept of soft power "rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others" and fundamentally implies getting others to willingly choose your own preference through co-option rather than coercion. In his view, it is "the ability to entice and attract" others without having to deploy hard power threats because "if I can get you to want to do what I want, then I do not have to force you to do what you do not want to do" (Nye 2002: 549). This requires the ability to determine and shape the agenda and preferences of other actors with the ultimate objective of making them see the sense in cooperation rather than confrontation – thus reducing the need for the mobilization of hard power.

Nye further identifies three rafts of sources upon which a state's soft power rests: culture (in places where it is attractive to others), political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and foreign policies (when they are considered legitimate and as having moral authority) (Nye 2004). Culture, on the one hand, represents the values, norms and practices that give meaning to a society in the form of literature, art, education, music, entertainment, tourism and hospitality, popular media, and indigenous products. These represent the social accomplishments, positive values and standards of a people, as they "symbolize a greater society built on personal freedom" (Hackbarth 2009: 3). On the other hand, political values are ideals such as respect for fundamental human rights, freedom of the press and popular participation in government. These values have the capacity to inspire confidence and build attraction from others (Nye 2008). Thirdly, the projection of well-designed foreign policies also serves as an important aspect of a country's soft power as a state can use its foreign policy mandates to set international moral standards for all to emulate.

Despite his useful assessment, Nye fails to make a clear distinction between the sources of soft power. For instance, his analysis of foreign policy, as different from culture and political values, appears to be logically flawed. Beyond Nye's three sources of soft power, economic and military capacity can also yield soft power results of attraction as well as reputation. We argue that sources of power are neither soft nor hard in form and nature but depend on the way and manner in which they are mobilised as well as the context in question. As Li (2010: 216) observed, "the key to whether a certain power source becomes soft power or hard power is how a state (or any other actor) uses its power". In this regard, Li's (2010: 216) assertion that soft power originates from a "state's prudent, and cautious use of power that can provide various public good for the international society, benefit other actors, and at least create win-win situations in international relations" is perhaps appropriate.

Soft Power and Higher Education: Any Nexus?

The nature and context of contemporary international relations has undergone a dramatic transformation, especially since the end of the Cold War in which "a state-centric process which focuses primarily on ministries of foreign affairs and professional diplomats is no longer adequate" (Knight 2014: 2). Several new actors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), transnational corporations, professional associations and diplomatic experts are increasingly transiting the corridors of contemporary diplomacy. South Africa's higher education is increasingly becoming one

of these critical tools for diplomatic engagement within the ambits of knowledge and cultural diplomacy where the foreign public includes not only the government but also prospective international staff, faculty and students. Among the very popular examples of soft power in higher education include the Fulbright Programme, the British Council, the German Academic Exchange Service, the Confucius Institutes (henceforth, CIs), and Erasmus Mundus among others (Knight 2014).

Scholars have offered varied perspectives on the link between soft power and higher education from a non-western position (Yang 2015, 2007; Botonero 2013). Yang, for instance, explored this connection from China's perspective by examining its CIs. Arguing that China's economic and political prominence has occurred concurrently with the rise in its soft power, he contended that the instrument of higher education was the fulcrum of China's systematically planned soft power policy (Yang 2007). According to him, although under researched, higher education, as a soft power diplomatic tool, has played an important role on how Beijing China portrays itself as a world leader and how it attempts to position itself in a multipolar, post–Cold War. Through the CIs, China has been very forceful in promoting international exchange and collaboration in education and culture, thereby using soft power diplomacy to enhance its regional and global influence.

Equally, from a European Union (henceforth, EU) context, Botonero (2013) usefully provides a nuanced assessment of the important role that European higher education played in projecting soft power within the context of globalisation, political upheavals, and economic recession. The author argued that three main instruments have foregrounded the EU's response to the phenomenon of globalisation in the field of higher education: the Tempus Programme; the influence of the Bologna Process on global higher education reform and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Botonero 2013). As a result, through these policy measures, the European higher education system is considered a model for educational reforms in other countries and regions. Thus, as its NDP affirms, the need for South Africa to continuously explore the dynamics between international relations and higher education cannot be overemphasized.

International Relations, Higher Education and Knowledge Diplomacy

Several scholars have made extensive contributions to the notion of knowledge diplomacy as an aspect of contemporary international relations that is distinct from cultural and public diplomacy (Knight 2014; Johnston

2012). Originally attributed to the works of Ryan (1998) and more recently Knight (2014; 2015), the idea of knowledge diplomacy has been used to examine the contributions of higher education as a diplomatic tool and its prospects for achieving foreign policy priorities. Knight (2014) argued that soft power must be conceived outside the constructivist and interpretive notions of soft power. In other words, knowledge diplomacy cannot be considered a form of soft power because the power paradigm must be perceived differently from a diplomatic framework. Although, the argument of whether the ideals that knowledge diplomacy represents are indeed a reflection of soft power or vice versa will continue to rage as the heated conversation between Teferra (2014), Knight (2014) and Johnston (2012) show, we argue that knowledge diplomacy is an instrument and resource through which the soft power profile of a state can be actualized.

For instance, Botonero (2012: 1) remarked that, in the current global era, "the importance of knowledge, research and innovation, the so called 'knowledge triangle', have changed forever the mission and function of the higher education sector and the social responsibility of universities, which are considered to be essential engines for knowledge development and human capacity building". Knight (2014) also argued that a major noticeable impact of the forces of globalization has been its implications for the dynamics of international relations and more importantly, higher education. She affirmed that, while there have been extensive studies within the purview of diplomacy and internationalisation of higher education, there are very few in-depth studies on the nexus between international relations and higher education. The notion of knowledge diplomacy, perhaps, provides a useful link.

Similarly, Johnston's (2012) case for knowledge diplomacy raised five critical points. The first is that in today's globalized era, the tentacles of a state's progress are inherently concatenated within the confines of knowledge diplomacy through the "ability to develop and advance knowledge". According to him, "knowledge – as opposed to military might or GDP – is gaining momentum as the new currency and passport to success" (p. 1). Secondly, the preponderance of information has prevailed to the extent that information has become easily accessible. Through knowledge diplomacy, states can open up new frontiers of relationships with people and their countries in ways that foster global harmony. Thirdly, the speed and ease of communication invoke unprecedented global experiences and change how international relations are conducted. Consequently, states are increasingly turning towards hard core evidence that informs choice and behavior. Fourth, highlighting the importance of collaboration, Johnston (p. 1)

explained that "ideas are improved when shared and tested through action". Through sharing knowledge, states can navigate their foreign relations in non-traditional ways. Finally, he argued for the need to promote further practices in science and mathematics which have historically "propelled global leaps in communications since the time of the printing press" (p, 1).

Botonero, Knight and Johnston's analyses suggest that South Africa has demonstrated sustained aplomb and eagerness to utilize its knowledge diplomacy – underscored by its higher education – to promote a soft power influence that produces strategic geo-political dividends. The visibility of South Africa in most international soft power rankings such as the Country Brand Index 2012/2013, the Institute for Government Soft Power Index and the Rapid-growth Markets (RGM) Soft Power Index 2012, serves as an example. In fact, based on these statistical surveys, South Africa unequivocally harbors the largest reservoir of soft power assets in Africa.

The Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa

While very little research has been conducted on the role of higher education in projecting South Africa's soft power per se, the trends in the internationalisation of higher education in the country do show attempts by various actors that could be implicitly associated with soft power. The notion of internationalisation has been defined differently by different people. Broadly, "internationalisation is the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into purposes, functions, or delivery of higher education whether this be at national, sectoral or institutional level" (CHE 2004: 212). Altbach (2010: 6) held that "internationalisation includes specific policies and programmes undertaken by governments, academic systems and institutions, and even individual departments or institutions to cope with or exploit globalization. Internationalisation describes the voluntary and perhaps creative ways of coping". The Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2004) makes a distinction between *internationalisation at home* and *cross-border or transnational higher education*. The former refers to the intercultural and international dimensions of teaching and learning on a home campus and the latter is transnational activities such as cross-border teaching.

In South Africa, the internationalisation of higher education, especially by individual universities and the activities of the International Education Association of South Africa (henceforth, IEASA) show great awareness of the need for these universities to position themselves as a conduit of Pretoria's soft power. South Africa's meaningful engagement with the internationalisation of higher education started after the 1994 democratic

dispensation as prior to this period, the country was internationally isolated due to apartheid (Botha 2010). With the advent of democracy, South Africa re-entered the international arena and became a member of several bodies such as the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) and the Southern Africa Development Community (henceforth, SADC). This offered space for South Africa to exploit its soft power resources to attract students and staff from outside the country, especially from other African countries, and, more so, the SADC.

Since 1994, the South African higher education sector has been successful in attracting international students and staff mainly as a result of individual universities' efforts to develop internationalisation polices. For example, in exploiting South Africa's soft power, the University of Cape Town (UCT) has developed a policy on internationalisation that, apart from reflecting its own mission, draws on treaties such as the SADC Protocol on Education and the IEASA. The university outlines the following six key principles of internationalisation:

- *Excellence and mutual benefit*: that excellence is the benchmark of all internationalisation; that international students should be selected on merit and academic suitability for a particular programme; and that bilateral and multilateral agreements with institutions should be demonstrably to the benefit of all partners to the agreement.
- *Equity and institutional culture*: that internationalisation should promote equity and transformation.
- *Position in Africa*: that one aspect of internationalisation is increased linkages within the SADC region and enrolling SADC students on the same terms as locals.
- *Research and academic autonomy*: that academics have the right to develop their own individual academic links and collaborations, both formal and informal.
- *Curriculum*: benchmarking the university against international standards without losing sight of the need for course offerings to be relevant to both regional and international conditions.
- *International student numbers*: that a maximum number of international students should be set each year.

Similarly, in its policy on internationalisation, Rhodes University (RU) commits itself to internationalisation as a key element of quality in university teaching and research.

In its 2007-2016 Strategic Plan (2008), the University of KwaZulu-Natal (henceforth, UKZN) stressed that the university will encourage

the international mobility of staff and students and selected exchange programmes and promote the concept of internationalisation at home. As noted earlier, internationalisation at home hinges on the intercultural and international dimensions of teaching and learning on the home campus where, for example, learning outcomes reflect international or intercultural dimensions. The Strategic Plan (2012: 12) further states that,

> the university will promote the concept of 'internalization at home' by implementing teaching strategies that draw on the experience of incoming staff and students and incorporate African knowledge; by cultivating respect of diverse cultural experiences and perspectives through the initiation and facilitation of intercultural events and discussion fora that include our own students and staff and by integrating international students and staff into the local environment.

Apart from universities, the IEASA contributes greatly to the internationalisation of higher education in South Africa by holding conferences and calling for a national policy on internationalisation. Kishun (2007) argued that the IEASA, a non-governmental, non-profit professional association of individuals and institutions, has been pivotal in advancing the internationalisation of higher education in South Africa. In calling for a national policy on internationalisation, the IEASA envisages the harmonization of the different policies on internationalisation between the higher education sector and government departments. Its impact is evident in the fact that most universities align their internationalisation policy to its policies.

Since 1994, there has been a significant increase in the number of students from other African countries studying in South Africa. A 2014 IEASA survey found that South Africa had 39 101 full-time students from other countries in 23 contact HEIs in 2012 and 30 960 in distance modes. As the NDP statement on higher education suggests, this is perhaps a demonstration of a perceived intention to position South Africa's higher education as an instrument of global attraction. Currently, the percentage of international students in South Africa stands at 9 per cent non-Africans, 16 per cent other African and 75 per cent SADC citizens respectively (Lee and Sehoole 2015).

Lee and Sehoole conducted a survey on mobility within the Southern Africa region in 2015 to determine the factors that drive and shape educational migration to South Africa as a regional, continental and global destination. They listed three main reasons for international students' decision to study in South Africa. The first are employment and economic factors; international students foresee that the quality of education received in South Africa could enable them to secure better future employment.

Secondly, South African higher education is considered high standard. Thirdly, South African higher education seems to be more stable than in most African countries. These findings showed that South Africa could be perceived as using the attractiveness of its higher education to lure international students as a demonstration of its soft power. South African universities as well as research supporting institutions such the National Research Foundation (NRF), and Agricultural Research Council (ARC) and the South African Medical Research Council among others have been able to achieve this by offering incentives such as grants, scholarships and bursaries to deserving international students and faculty while also adopting equal employment opportunities where skilled, non-South African workers are able to apply for post-doctoral and faculty positions. In line with Lee and Sehoole's (2015) assertion that South Africa is a regional, continental and global educational destination, we argue that this attraction, especially at regional level to South Africa HEIs, can be perceived as a typical illustration of the extension of the country's soft power.

We argue further that South Africa's internationalisation policy has been a major source for the cultivation of the country's soft power in the arena of higher education. In this regard, South Africa's higher education policy prescription may be regarded as a strategic action to attract the foreign public and consequently gain credibility and recognition in the eyes of the international community. Armed with its relatively strong economy, South Africa's highly developed higher education sector – regarded as the most advanced in Africa – "has become a destination of choice for most African students and scholars wanting to further their studies and career opportunities" (Botha 2010: 208). This preference is aided, in part, by the ambience and reputation of most South African universities which are ranked highly and in many cases at par with its counterparts further afield.

Another important dimension of the internationalisation agenda of South African higher education is that, this phenomenon has nonetheless engendered the Africanisation of South Africa's higher education in a manner that makes both compatible (Botha 2010). Makgoba (1997: 203) defined Africanisation as "the process or vehicle for defining, interpreting, promoting and transmitting African thoughts, philosophy, identity, and culture. It encompasses an African mind-set shift from the European to an African paradigm". Africanisation is, thus, conceived of as all aspects of the internationalisation process which enables higher education to retain its African character in order to achieve certain academic, economic, political, and cultural objectives (Botha 2010). The appeal of South African higher education to the idea of Africanisation is that not only are Africans able

to uphold African aspirations, but non-Africans are able to respect and accommodate Africa's efforts to achieve these aspirations. The rising trend of African students and staff at South African universities, thus, highlights the need to Africanize its higher education in order to align national/regional development goals with existing global agendas (Kotecha 2004: 11).

By placing emphasis on scholarship that reflects the nuances of the African people, South African higher education has played major role as a soft power instrument to facilitate the deepening of African identity and culture (Le Roux 2001). This is a unique service that higher education in South Africa renders to Africa and the international community in general by training professionals, extending the frontiers of knowledge and contributing to research that addresses the specific needs of Africa's development (Botha 2010). For example, UKZN's mission is to be "The premier university of African scholarship", acknowledging its institutional commitment to the growth of African scholarship by developing a curriculum, institutional policies and collaborations that address these issues (Zeleza 2005). In the view of its former Vice-Chancellor, Professor Malegapuru Makgoba "The African University draws its inspiration from its environment, as an indigenous tree growing from a seed that is planted and nurtured in African soil" (UKZN Research Office 2005: 18). Accordingly, research conducted at UKZN prioritizes and "draws inspiration from its African identity and takes seriously its responsibilities towards the development of the African continent" (UKZN Research Office 2005: 1). This epistemic claim of African identity suggests a policy resolve by the university to present an alternative narrative about Africa and lead efforts through knowledge production towards finding solution to development problems facing the continent.

However, as Kishun (2007) observed, a national policy on internationalisation is important for South Africa to better organize itself to use its soft power to attract more international students and faculty. For instance, national immigration policies and the South African Qualifications Authority's (henceforth, SAQA) evaluation criteria sometimes have the propensity to discourage international students, faculty and staff from opting to come to South Africa. Instances where the results of SAQA evaluations and Police Clearance Certificates (PCCs) take several months to be released and situations where the spouses of highly skilled immigrants are not allowed to work must be carefully considered, particularly given that they sometimes deter prospective international students and staff (Personal Communication 12/03/2015). Reinforced by pervasive xenophobic tendencies, these ambivalences have the potential to erode the dividends and good intentions of South Africa's knowledge diplomacy (Ogunnubi & Tella 2013).

South Africa's Higher Education as an Instrument of Soft Power

South Africa provides an interesting case study of understanding how higher education serves the role as a soft power tool. In other words, how has South Africa's investment in higher education helped to advance its international image and build its reputation regionally and globally? Its unique historical and cultural context also provides an interesting backdrop to examine its specific soft power approaches. Despite the lack of a national policy on internationalisation in South Africa, we go on to examine four major themes under which South Africa has extended its soft power through higher education.

International Ranking of South African Universities

While international university rankings have their challenges, they are now a permanent feature of global higher education systems. Describing the ranking of universities, Marginson (2007: 132) wrote that "ranking exposes universities in every nation to a structured global competition that operates on terms that favour some universities and countries, and disadvantage others…" Despite the disadvantages, university rankings have, thus, become important tools to attract students and staff to study and work at particular reputable institutions. It can, thus, be argued that these rankings have become a typical representation of a country's soft power (Nye 2004).

The two major ranking systems are the Shanghai Jiao Tong University (henceforth, SJTU) rankings and the Times Higher Education Supplement (henceforth, THE-QS) rankings (Marginson & van der Wende 2007). The two systems stress different aspects. For example, the SJTU rankings emphasize research, while the THE-QS focuses on reputation. Table 1 and 2 show the indicators and weights for the SJTU.

Table 1: The SJTU ranking: Indicators and weight

Indicator	**Weight %**
Highly cited researchers in broad categories	20
Articles published in Nature and Science	20
Articles in Science/Social Science Citation Index	20
Faculty with Nobel Prizes/Field Medals	20
Alumni with Nobel Prizes/Field Medals	10
Research performance on 1-6 per staff member	10
Total	**100**

Source: Badat, 2010

The THE-QS ranking indicators and weight are shown below:

Table 2: The THE-QS ranking: Indicators and weight

Indicator	**Weight %**
Academic peer review (email questionnaire)	40
Citations per academic	20
Academic staff: student ratio	20
Proportion of international academic staff	5
Proportion of international students	5
Employer review (global online survey)	10
Total	**100**

Source: Badat 2010

The problems associated with the SJTU, on the one hand, are that it is associated with big research universities, favors Science disciplines, favors English-speaking universities as most research is written in English and prioritizes US universities where most International Scientific of Indexing (ISI) researchers reside (Marginson 2007). On the other hand, problems have been identified with the THE-QS' surveys, which are seen to "indicate the market positions of different institutions but not their merits, a distinction that the Times Higher does not make" (Marginson 2007: 134). Further, the overemphasis on reputation and internationalisation favors universities such as those in the UK and Australia that are active in cross-border degrees (Marginson 2007; Badat 2010).

Notwithstanding these problems, the international ranking of universities plays a major role in influencing students' choice of universities. Both the SJTU and the THE-QS have consistently ranked South African universities higher than most other African universities. From 2010 to 2011, only three South African universities (UCT, University of the Witwatersrand (henceforth, Wits) and Stellenbosch University (henceforth, SU)) are listed in the top 500 universities in the world of the THE-QS ranking (QS 2011). The SJTU rankings for 2014 list the following South African universities: UCT, Wits, SU and UKZN as among top 500 world universities. Other university ranking indexes such as Webometrics also rate South African universities highly compared with their African and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South African (BRICS) counterparts. This has helped to attract international students to study in the country and has consequently elevated South Africa's international reputation. The higher ranking of several South African universities by ranking agencies placed South Africa in good standing and boosts its chances of using this subtle and nuanced form of power to

position itself as a key player in Africa. By influencing the perception of the foreign public and harnessing its power of positioning through its HEIs, South Africa is able to establish strategic partnerships and alliances that facilitate the actualization of its own foreign policy priorities.

Research Output and Funding

The ability to fund and showcase research capacity contributes significantly to soft power. Teferra (2013) argued that, while many African countries have increased their education budgets (including higher education) the increases are not commensurate with the rate of expansion. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the highest growth rate in higher education occurred in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, sub-Saharan countries are amongst the poorest countries of the world (UNESCO 2009).

The visibility of African research generally remains very poor. In fact, research output from Africa seems to have declined (Harle 2013). While public funding of education seems to have been declining in South Africa (Wangenge-Ouma and Cloete 2008), research remains better funded than in most other African countries. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2014, 7) explains the research subsidy to South African universities as follows:

> In South Africa, universities receive subsidy for weighted research outputs. Weighted research output is calculated on the basis of a set of norms (targets) per permanently-employed academic/researcher at each institution and includes subsidy units for research Masters and Doctoral graduate outputs.

This funding mechanism enables South African universities to concentrate on research, which eventually improves their reputation and rankings and contributes considerably to the country's soft power. In other words, its commitment to research demonstrates South Africa's deliberate intention to influence its African neighbors by exercising soft power through funding higher education while retaining the fundamental objectives of state policy in terms of domestic obligations. Through funding interventions such as the Knowledge Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) grant, South Africa strives towards achieving an internationally competitive science, technology and innovation system. This is similar to a conference funding instrument of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in collaboration with the NRF aimed at supporting the hosting of international conferences in South Africa or on its behalf elsewhere focusing on cutting edge scientific research and with great socio-economic potential (NRF 2015b). Remarkably, the

funding instrument has as its objective [to] promote South Africa as a science destination; increasing the competitiveness of the South African National System of Innovation (NSI); showcase South Africa's scientific endeavours and infrastructure, and to build capacity within the NSI; enhance networking within the science system; foster international collaboration in order to improve the quality of research outputs by researchers.

Knowledge Economy

Castells (1993) noted that knowledge and information have become the new electricity of the economy and that universities continue to perform important roles as the main knowledge institution in society. According to Florida (2005), three main characteristics of knowledge economies correlate with Nye's prescription of soft power: the emphasis on innovation; the enterprise culture, and the significance of education and human resources. He noted that these are vital components of the cultural infrastructure of knowledge economies. This has become a major goal of most countries in the world and a main platform for strengthening national soft power.

What are South Africa's knowledge exports and how has higher education contributed to this? The CHE (2011: 3) report indicates "Knowledge production, accumulation, transfer and application have become major factors in socio-economic development and are increasingly at the core of national development strategies for gaining competitive advantages in the global knowledge economy". Pointing out the potential of South Africa's knowledge-based economy for its economic diplomacy, the NRF 2015 Call for Infrastructure Funding emphasized that "The development and retention of high-end scientific and technological competencies is essential for South Africa to transform into a knowledge-based economy wherein the generation of new knowledge and scientific and technological innovations can bring about economic development, job creation and an improvement in the quality of life of its citizens" (NRF 2015a). A critical aspect of South Africa's soft power in higher education has been its capacity to champion knowledge production, transfer and dissemination in Africa within the broader context of a knowledge economy. Arguably, South Africa is far ahead of its African counterparts and its higher education has played a considerable role in this regard. In this sense, South Africa has been able to use this platform to dominate the discourse on critical African issues. The country's HEIs are, thus, strategically positioned to address national, regional and continental development demands within a knowledge-based economy. South Africa has been able to use its intellectual base as a soft power advantage. In an era of the knowledge-based economy, the principal

driving force of a nation's economic development and global competitiveness rests on the society's knowledge stock and innovative capacities (WIF 2014). In more recent years, South Africa has essentially been able to fuel its economic diplomacy – witnessed, for instance, in the country's multinational companies' expansion into Africa – through its knowledge economy. There can be no doubt that much of these efforts have been sustained by the higher education's contribution in the areas of research, training, innovation and international/regional collaborations.

South Africa has been able to propagate an African development agenda by means of its contribution to the discourse on the various issues on the African Agenda and build a science and framework for Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) for African development. South Africa's contribution to the nuclear industry through peaceful use of nuclear technology in Africa is also another example of its soft power. The South African Nuclear Energy Corporation Limited (Necsa), for instance, undertakes research and development in the field of nuclear energy and radiation sciences and technology. Being the only country to develop and voluntarily dismantle its nuclear weapons, South Africa has continued to demonstrate its resolve towards the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology, particularly in Africa, through its commitment to the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty). Higher education has, therefore, been a delicate yet powerful instrument of hegemonic control, particularly in the regional (read: continental) context with South Africa as an active participant. For instance, in 2009, reports emerged that several medical students from Zimbabwe were absorbed into the South African university system to complete their medical training following the total collapse of teaching facilities in that country. In 2013, as part of the Nigerian government's Presidential Amnesty Program (PAP), aimed at rehabilitating former Niger-Delta militants, the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) in South Africa absorbed a significant number of the more than 14 000 ex-agitators sent across the world for both academic and vocational certified training (Abazie-Humphrey 2014).

Educational Migration

Lee and Sehoole's (2015) recent study on the global and regional mobility of students to an emerging country such as South Africa revealed that the country is absorbing a sizeable chunk of international students. South Africa's contribution in the field of higher education is perceived to address the problem of brain drain in Africa by providing reasonable and often cheaper alternatives for international students. This is critical given

that Africa is the second largest continent in the word. South Africa's contribution to the development of international human capital, especially within Africa, has been one subtle way of reinforcing its position as an active global player (Lee and Sehoole 2015). In its twenty years of post-apartheid political history, South Africa has literally thrown its doors wide open to international scholars and students from across the world and particularly from the African continent. According to Lee and Sehoole (2015: 2), South Africa attracts a fair share of African students from outside its immediate region. With 55 countries comprising the African Union, South Africa is also a major destination for many African students further north, despite them being of much closer proximity to Europe and the Middle East. The country is also a popular destination for students from outside the continent. This preference for South Africa's higher education is a clear demonstration of the country's soft power influence with the possibility of payoffs in both the medium- and long-term.

As alluded to previously, the factors that drive and shape educational migration to South Africa as a regional, continental, and global destination are not unconnected to its deliberate internationalisation and can, in fact, be regarded as sufficient proof of Pretoria's power of attraction. As more and more students opt to study within their own region as against traveling to more distant destinations, the push-pull factors that motivate a preference for South Africa overwhelmingly indicate a positive (re)orientation towards the country. Lee and Sehoole (2015: 3, 4) also noted that, "The popularity of South Africa as a leading destination of choice for SADC and other African students makes South Africa a regional and continental hub in higher education and a worthwhile case study for the phenomenon of mobility". The authors argued that international educational mobility to South Africa is mainly based on geo-political considerations that make the country appealing, especially to the rest of Africa.

Another important factor that has underscored South Africa's soft power credentials in the area of knowledge diplomacy is the export of Doctoral graduates to the continent. Today, South Africa represents a critical PhD hub for Africa (Cloete, Sheppard, Bailey & MacGregor 2015). As universities have continued to remain a critical fountain for knowledge production, the PhD has become their apex training product and South Africa's contribution in this regard remains unchallenged (Gorman 2013). As Table 3 shows, there are seventeen African countries among the top twenty countries of origin of South Africa's 2012 international PhD graduates.

Table 3: Top 20 countries of origin of 2012 international PhD graduates

No.	Country	2012	Cumulative %
1	Zimbabwe	142	22.5
2	Nigeria	76	34.6
3	Kenya	43	41.4
4	Uganda	29	46.0
5	Ethiopia	23	49.7
6	United States	23	53.3
7	Cameroon	19	56.3
8	Ghana	19	59.4
9	Tanzania	18	62.2
10	Zambia	17	64.9
11	Democratic Republic of Congo	15	67.3
12	Lesotho	15	69.75
13	Malawi	15	72.1
14	Sudan	15	74.4
15	India	13	76.5
16	Mozambique	13	78.6
17	Namibia	13	80.6
18	Germany	11	82.4
19	Botswana	10	84.0
20	Rwanda	10	85.6

Source: DHET (2013b)

Similarly, between 2000 and 2012, a total of 4 546 international PhD graduates emerged from South Africa's 22 public universities as shown on Table 4.

Making Sense of South Africa's Knowledge Diplomacy of Higher Education

In the early hours of 14 March 2015, the world awoke to the news of the first successful penile transplant surgery in the world performed at SU on 11 December 2014 (*CNN News* 2015). This academic and medical breakthrough (among several others) was a remarkable signal of South Africa's soft power in higher education. As a result, South Africa's higher education has become a significant facilitator of the African development agenda and to a reasonable degree, served to yield the important geo-strategic benefits of international acceptance and global legitimacy. Curiously, very little attention has been paid to the role of higher education in projecting South Africa's influence.

Table 4: International PhD graduates per university (2000-2012)

Institution	2000	2004	2008	2012	Total for all years from 2000-2012	Accumulative percentage
UCT	25	33	51	80	676	14.9
SU	12	17	34	75	559	27.2
UKZN	13	25	39	70	554	39.4
UP	8	38	45	68	497	50.3
UNISA	31	27	28	62	467	60.7
Wits	17	29	40	48	414	69.7
UWC	4	9	16	33	224	74.6
NMU	1	4	10	30	215	79.3
NWU	2	7	10	30	207	83.9
UFH	-	2	7	25	166	87.5
RU	7	14	10	24	142	90.7
UJ	3	4	11	23	121	93.3
TUT	-	-	4	22	97	95.4
UFS	10	12	12	14	70	97.0
CPUT	-	-	3	11	40	97.9
UniZulu	-	1	3	5	36	98.7
Central	1	2	-	3	28	99.3
UL	-	3	1	3	10	99.5
Vaal	-	-	-	2	7	99.6
DUT	-	-	-	1	6	99.8
Univ of Venda	-	1	-	1	6	99.9
WSU	-	1	-	-	4	100.0

Source: DHET (2013b)

Paradoxically, despite the apparent potential of its higher education, there is yet a holistic state policy framework that seeks to extend South Africa's global influence through its higher education. As Nye (2014: 12) argued, "Government policies can reinforce or squander a country' soft power". What this means is that South Africa's policy posture in respect to internationalisation has the tendency to enhance or undermine its soft power influence. However, South Africa has, so far, failed to move towards a national policy on internationalisation or make any serious investment in a flagship educational agency or program. As statistics show, South African higher education continues to account for an increasing

number of international students and faculty. A national framework on South Africa's higher education engagement with the rest of Africa and, of course, the world would enable a holistic assessment of areas where the country could extend the tentacles of its knowledge diplomacy. Through such plan, South Africa would be able to comprehensively address the contradictions and limitations that hinder the successful cultivation of its soft power in higher education. The country, therefore, needs to strategically develop specific higher education policies for the two most critical concentric circles of its foreign policy: Southern Africa and Africa.

Expectedly, there are several impediments to the usefulness of higher education as a soft power diplomatic tool for South Africa. The idea of knowledge diplomacy has come to challenge existing notions of higher education which is traditionally regarded as agents on nation-building and national prosperity. Scholars such as Knight (2014) and Teferra (2015) critique the relevance of higher education as an instrument of soft power. Knight's argument is that because of the mutuality of interests and benefits involved in higher education evident in the promotion of exchange among students, faculty, culture, science, knowledge and expertise, higher education must be conceived only from the context of diplomacy and not power.

Although there is little evidence to show that soft power outcome in higher education is the result of deliberate intention on the part of the South African government, our analysis shows that, the attention paid to its higher education has inadvertently increased the country's international profile and the moral authority it enjoys as African intellectual citadel. South Africa can indeed make more effective use of the potency of its higher education through increased investment in tertiary education, elevating higher education to a role of prominence as a foreign policy tool and, more importantly, by developing a clearly framed policy that outlines its international behavior in this realm.

There is also the possible tension that the dividend of soft power is likely to create. As Alden and Schoeman (2015) observe, South Africa's symbolic representivity as Africa's regional hegemon, based largely on the global preference and international reputation it enjoys has been the source of much disdain from other contending African states. As Tikly (2004: 181) stated, "whereas development had in the past been a 'natural' phenomenon, in the new hegemonic worldview, development took on a transitive meaning, that is, it became something that could be performed by one actor or region over another actor or region". In this sense, through the subtle reinforcement of its soft power in higher education, South Africa's higher education may have the tendency to contribute to national and geopolitical dividends within the region, while also having the potency to fuel hegemonic contention among rival states.

For South Africa, successful engagement in soft power diplomacy of higher education would entail the following: first, and as stated earlier, would be a national policy that specifically addresses how South Africa intends to deliberately use higher education as a diplomatic tool to further its interests. Secondly, South Africa would need to find ways to address the policy inconsistencies that negatively affects its higher education prospects. This is critical for maintaining the increasing flow of educational migrants into the country. In this regard, how the country deals with increasing spates of xenophobic and Afrophobic attitudes towards African migrants would impact greatly on the projected results of its soft power diplomacy (Tella & Ogunnubi 2014; le Pere 2014). Also, in the long-term, much of the credence of South Africa's soft power will depend on whether South African students and staff are able to compete favorably with their regional and international contemporaries. Similarly, stakeholders in the higher education sector such as IEASA and CHE, perhaps, need to do more to interact with government officials to ensure that undue restraints to visa processing are removed. This is in addition to the need to critically review debilitating internal policies of universities regarding international students' intake.

While we show that the increasing preference for higher education in South Africa – especially by African academics and students – is a valuable soft power platform for Pretoria to assert itself as an acceptable regional power in Africa, we argue that the situation equally creates brain drain in the continent. This means that South Africa could become hegemonic and increasingly become a 'big brother' of the continent. We recommend that more regional cooperations work towards developing the whole region as propounded by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (henceforth, NEPAD).

Conclusion

In this article, we have examined the possibilities that soft power offers to South Africa through its higher education for Pretoria's international engagement. We have highlighted the ways in which South African HEIs have been structured as a soft power resource in a manner that demonstrates the utilities of international acceptance, attraction, and geopolitical and economic benefits. Our major argument is that the increasing preference for HEIs in South Africa – especially among African students and staff – presents valuable soft power opportunities for the country to assert itself as a regional hegemon/power in Africa. However, we have noted that this creates brain drain in the continent, hence, we have recommended more regional cooperation towards developing the whole region as advanced in the NEPAD.

Notes

1. According to the Country Brand Index of 2012/2013, South Africa is ranked 43rd; 14th globally and 7th among the list of emerging markets by RGM. Similarly, South Africa is ranked 20th in the Institute for Government Soft Power Index. In all of the rankings, South Africa is the only African country listed.
2. Xenophobia is derived from two Greek words: 'xeno' translated to mean 'foreigner' or 'stranger' and 'phobia' meaning fear; it can be interpreted to mean hatred or dislike of foreigners (Tella and Ogunnubi 2014). Writing on the effects of xenophobia on social integration in South Africa, Dlamini (2018) observes its prevalence through visible hostility and discrimination towards strangers or foreigners.
3. The KIC instrument was set up to contribute to the following objectives: internationalising South Africa's research platform; enhancing networking within the global science system; fostering collaboration in order to improve the quality of research outputs by researchers.
4. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a knowledge economy is "an economy in which the production, distribution, and use of knowledge is the main driver of growth, wealth creation and employment across all industries".
5. This term is used to refer to the exodus of highly skilled professionals from a country in search of better opportunities elsewhere, with the consequence of negative impact on the efficient functionality of the critical sectors of the economy of that country (see Mlambo and Adetiba 2017).

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Effet des caractéristiques pré-admissions et de l'expérience du système universitaire sur la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur : perspective de recherche en Afrique

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L'enseignement supérieur est considéré comme un moyen privilégié pour former une main-d'œuvre hautement qualifiée visant à assurer le progrès économique et social d'un pays.

Romainville et Michaut 2012

...mais les universités publiques africaines peinent généralement à maintenir les étudiants qui y accèdent .

Zagré 2007

Résumé

Le but de cet article est d'analyser l'effet des caractéristiques pré-admissions (contexte familial, caractéristiques personnelles, expérience scolaire antérieure) et de l'expérience du système universitaire (expériences de classe, ressources universitaires dont les bourses, prêts ou subventions) sur la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur au moyen d'une revue systématique des écrits scientifiques selon les neuf étapes proposées par Gough (2007). Malgré différentes opérationnalisations selon les études, les caractéristiques pré-admissions, l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études sont interreliées. Une étude a proposé le rôle médiateur de l'expérience du système universitaire dans la relation entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions et la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur. Ce rôle se traduit par le fait que celle-ci permet de réduire des inégalités liées aux caractéristiques pré-admissions. L'utilisation de données sur plusieurs années est appropriée pour estimer l'impact longitudinal du rôle médiateur avec un modèle robuste comme celui de Tinto (1997).

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyze the effect of pre-admission characteristics (family background, personal characteristics, previous school experience) and experience of the university system (class experiences, university resources including bursaries, loans or grants) on perseverance in higher education through a systematic review of the scientific literature, according to the nine stages proposed by Gough (2007). Despite operationalization based on various studies, pre-admission characteristics, experience of the university system and student perseverance are interrelated. One study proposes the mediating role of university system experience in the relationship between pre-admission characteristics and perseverance in higher education studies. This role is enhanced by the fact that it reduces pre-admission inequalities. The use of multi-year data is appropriate in estimating the longitudinal impact of the mediating role with a robust model such as Tinto's (1997).

Introduction

Au cours des années 1960, l'Afrique subsaharienne ne comptait que six universités dont la mission essentielle était de répondre aux besoins de l'administration coloniale. À partir de 1970, les États africains ont exprimé leur volonté d'avoir des universités nationales pour contribuer au développement de leur pays (Zagré 2007). L'université était considérée comme le lieu de développement des connaissances, de la recherche, de l'évaluation et du transfert de l'information visant le progrès social et la croissance économique.

Au Burkina Faso, l'Université Ouaga 1 Professeur Joseph Ki-Zerbo (UO1 JKZ) fut la première ouverte en 1974. L'accessibilité financière et géographique y était difficile pour les couches sociales modestes. Aussi, cet accès était-il conditionné entre autre par l'admission au test d'entrée à l'université qui y était organisé après l'obtention du diplôme d'études de fin du secondaire[1] (Zagré 2007). Sous la révolution démocratique et populaire en 1983, l'UO1 JKZ devient accessible à tous les diplômés du secondaire qui souhaitaient poursuivre leurs études. Cette politique de « démocratisation » a facilité l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur, et à l'UO1 JKZ en particulier, à tel enseigne qu'en 2013, cette université comptait à elle seule 30 502 étudiants, soit 41,1 pour cent de l'effectif total des étudiants au Burkina Faso. Si l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur s'est relativement amélioré en Afrique et au Burkina Faso en particulier, y persévérer reste un défi (Zagré 2007).

Au Burkina Faso, Kobiané et Pilon (2013) montrent, à partir de données longitudinales sur la période 1995-2009, que l'issue de la première année à l'UO1 JKZ est caractérisée par des promotions faibles (40% à 50%), des

abandons élevés (26,8%) et des redoublements de l'ordre de 13,2 pour cent. Les étudiants dont le père est salarié ont 39 pour cent de chances moins grandes d'être promus à la fin de la première année comparativement aux étudiants dont le père est paysan. Cependant, ces derniers courent un risque plus grand de redoubler (3% de chances en plus) et surtout d'abandonner (88% de chances en plus). Il ressort également de ces analyses que la promotion au niveau supérieur est en défaveur des filles depuis l998. En 1998, 40,7 pour cent des garçons sont promus en deuxième année contre seulement 35,9 pour cent chez les filles. Ces auteurs indiquent que les boursiers présentent des chances plus importantes d'être promus comparativement aux non boursiers (2,85 fois), et inversement, moins de chances de redoubler (70% de chances en moins) et d'abandonner (19% de chances en moins) que les non boursiers. Quant aux travailleurs, ils performent moins bien que les non boursiers : ils ont près de deux fois plus de risque d'abandonner en première année comparés aux non boursiers. De tels résultats laissent entrevoir les difficultés liées à la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur dans le contexte burkinabè et seraient liées aux caractéristiques pré-admissions et à l'expérience du système universitaire.

Diverses théories (psychologiques, sociologiques, économiques, organisationnelles, interactionnistes) sont présentes dans la littérature sur la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur et sur les facteurs influençant cette dernière. Parmi celles-ci, les théories interactionnistes offrent un champ de recherche plus vaste, car elles intègrent les variables des autres théories. Des modèles conceptuels développés, celui de Tinto (1997), basé sur la théorie interactionniste, comprend huit séquences (caractéristiques pré-admissions, objectifs et engagements initiaux, expérience du système universitaire, intégration, effort de l'étudiant, résultat académique, objectifs et engagements émergents et enfin, résultat). Ce modèle est considéré comme le plus robuste (Chenard et Doray 2005) et ayant influencé d'autres modèles théoriques sur la persévérance aux études (Lakhal 2012).

Appuyant les résultats obtenus par Kobiané et Pilon (2013), la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur selon Tinto (1997) serait tributaire entre autres, des caractéristiques pré-admissions (contexte familial/origines sociales, caractéristiques personnelles de l'étudiant, expériences scolaires antérieures) et de l'expérience du système universitaire (expériences de classe, ressources universitaires comme les bourses, les prêts et les subventions). Cependant, peu est connu sur les liens empiriques entre ces dernières et la persévérance aux études, et ce, non seulement dans le contexte burkinabè, mais aussi dans le contexte africain et mondial.

Une meilleure compréhension de l'effet des caractéristiques pré-

admissions et de l'expérience du système universitaire sur la persévérance aux études aidera à une meilleure réflexion sur les stratégies à mettre en œuvre pour améliorer la persévérance aux études en l'occurrence la formation dans les collèges ou lycées, les interventions nécessaires en milieu familial et la mise en place de dispositifs d'aide à la persévérance aux études à l'université.

Caractéristiques pré-admissions et persévérance aux études

Selon Tinto (1997), les caractéristiques pré-admissions font référence au contexte familial, aux caractéristiques personnelles et à l'expérience scolaire antérieure. Ces caractéristiques pré-admissions sont des constituantes des divers modèles portant sur la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur. Par exemple, les théories sociologiques considèrent la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur comme une résultante des attributs sociaux des individus, des institutions et de la société : le contexte familial appréhendé par le statut socioéconomique (Bourdieu et Passeron 1977 ; Clark 1960 ; Duncan *et al.* 1972 ; Featherman et Hauser 1978) ainsi que l'éducation des parents et le revenu (Chen & Desjardins 2008 ; Kamanzi, Doray, Bonin, Groleau & Murdoch 2010). Quant à la théorie de la réussite sociale de Clark (1960), elle postule que le contexte familial ou situation socioéconomique de la famille influence l'éducation des enfants et leur réussite professionnelle. Aux États-Unis, Chen (2008) révèle que pour la rentrée académique 1995-1996, 56 pour cent des étudiants issus de familles aisées ont atteint le niveau baccalauréat contre seulement 26 pour cent d'étudiants de familles modestes. Kamanzi *et al.* (2010) soulignent que la persévérance aux études au Canada est influencée par la classe sociale et l'appartenance ethnoculturelle. De plus, les étudiants dont les pères occupent un poste de cadre supérieur ou de professionnel ont plus de chance d'accéder aux études universitaires (respectivement de 66% et de 74% comparativement aux postes techniques et para-professionnels) et persévèrent mieux que ceux dont les pères n'occupent pas un tel emploi. Par ailleurs, résider en milieu rural réduirait l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur de 46 pour cent (Kamanzi *et al.* 2010). Dans le contexte Sud-Africain, Van Zyl (2016) mentionne qu'à l'Université de Johannesburg, les étudiants issus de milieux défavorisés ou de familles modestes ont moins de chance de persévérer comparativement à ceux issus de familles riches.

Des résultats de recherche montrent que le fait d'être issu d'une famille faiblement scolarisée constitue un obstacle à la persévérance aux études (Choy 2001 ; Ishitani 2006 ; Ishitani et DesJardins 2002 ; Martin Lohfink et Paulsen 2005 ; Nunez *et al.* 1998). Murdoch *et al.* (2012) mentionnent que la participation aux études supérieures est liée aux acquis et héritages

culturels, appréhendés à travers le capital culturel de la famille et le capital scolaire. Les travaux de Martin Lohfink et Paulsen (2005) ainsi que ceux de Pascarella *et al.* (2004) montrent qu'un niveau d'études collégiales ou postsecondaires acquis par les parents d'étudiants leur permet de transmettre des informations ou des connaissances aux enfants pour assurer une transition du secondaire à l'enseignement supérieur. À l'opposée, les étudiants dont les parents n'ont jamais fréquenté un établissement postsecondaire collégial ou universitaire font face à des difficultés qui impactent négativement sur leur persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur.

Toutefois, les résultats de recherche ne convergent pas toujours. Ainsi, Chen et Caroll (2005) ont montré qu'aux États-Unis, les différences entre les étudiants dont les parents ont un niveau d'études postsecondaires et ceux dont les parents n'ont pas atteint ce niveau, ne sont pas significatives selon la persévérance aux études dans les programmes de formation de quatre ans. St. John *et al.* (1991) ont montré à travers une analyse séquentielle de données longitudinales qu'aux États-Unis, l'effet de variables liées au contexte familial (revenu familial, éducation de la mère, race) sur la persévérance aux études de la première à la deuxième année, est médiatisé par le type de programme, les caractéristiques de l'université fréquentée et l'aide financière. De la deuxième à la troisième année, seul le revenu familial et l'éducation de la mère sont significatifs. Ces variables prédisent la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur de la deuxième année à la troisième année et non de la première année à la deuxième année.

Des chercheurs ont aussi interrogé l'effet des caractéristiques personnelles (p. ex : l'âge, le sexe, la motivation, etc.) et de l'expérience scolaire antérieure sur la persévérance aux études. Les théories psychologiques interrogent l'effet des attributs intellectuels et de la maturité comme la motivation, les buts, les aptitudes, et les traits de personnalité sur la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur. Du point de vue de ces théories, les étudiants qui abandonnent les études sont moins sérieux, moins matures, et plus portés à se rebeller contre l'autorité et présentent des difficultés d'adaptation. Heilbrun (1965) a montré que les étudiants ayant un niveau élevé de socialisation (maturité personnelle, liberté de manifester son mécontentement et problèmes d'autorité, capacité de vivre avec les autres dans la contradiction) et de responsabilité (sincérité de la pensée, bonnes valeurs) ont tendance à mieux réussir à l'université que les autres. St. John *et al.* (1991) ont montré, malgré un contrôle sur les variables relatives à l'aide financière et à l'expérience scolaire antérieure, que le genre est significativement associé à la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur. Kamanzi *et al.* (2010) ont montré que le taux de diplomation est plus élevé chez les femmes (60%)

que chez les hommes (52%) au Canada. Le taux de diplomation est plus élevé chez les étudiants âgés de 26 ans que chez les plus jeunes ; 60 pour cent des femmes obtiennent leur diplôme contre 52 pour cent des hommes (Kamanzi *et al.* 2010).

Concernant l'expérience scolaire antérieure, la littérature scientifique mentionne qu'elle prédit la persévérance aux études. Engstrom et Tinto (2008a), utilisant le terme « *underprepared students* » pour désigner les étudiants ayant de faibles performances scolaires antérieures, montrent que ces derniers persévèrent moins aux études que ceux ayant des performances scolaires élevées ou ayant reçu une préparation pour aborder la formation universitaire. Ils révèlent que les seconds persévéraient avec un écart de 10 à 15 pour cent comparativement aux premiers. Kamanzi *et al.* (2010) ont trouvé que l'obtention du diplôme de baccalauréat chez les Canadiens âgés de 18 à 20 ans en 1999, est liée à l'expérience scolaire antérieure (résultats au secondaire, le temps consacré aux études et les interruptions). Ainsi, les étudiants qui avaient des scores élevés au secondaire consacraient plus de temps aux devoirs et obtiennent leur diplôme au bout de quatre ans. Le taux de diplomation pour ce groupe est de 70 pour cent lorsque leur moyenne générale au secondaire se situe entre 90 pour cent et 100 pour cent, alors qu'il est de 20 pour cent chez ceux dont la moyenne générale au secondaire est inférieure à 70 pour cent. Il est de 11 pour cent à 15 pour cent pour les étudiants qui ont fait des interruptions au secondaire. En lien avec le temps consacré aux études, Kamanzi *et al.* (2010) montrent que chez les étudiants qui consacraient huit heures ou plus aux devoirs par semaine au secondaire, le taux de diplomation est de 63 pour cent tandis qu'il est de 28 pour cent chez ceux qui y consacraient moins de huit heures par semaine. Kamanzi *et al.* (2010) montrent que l'année d'entrée aux études est la plus importante des variables qui prédisent la persévérance aux études au Canada. Murtaugh *et al.* (1999) indiquent que la performance scolaire antérieure a le plus d'effet sur la persévérance aux études à Oregon State University aux États-Unis.

Expérience du système universitaire et persévérance aux études

Le modèle de Tinto (1997), issu des théories interactionnistes, interroge le lien entre l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études. L'expérience universitaire réfère à l'environnement académique (classe, laboratoire, etc.), l'environnement social (pairs, professeurs) et aux ressources universitaires (bourse, prêt, subvention, etc.). L'expérience de classe se traduit entre autres par échec, promotion, abandon, travail en classe. Pour ces théories, les étudiants entrent dans le système avec l'intention d'y sortir avec un diplôme, des connaissances et des compétences, mais les

institutions ne sont pas souvent en mesure de mettre à la disposition des étudiants les ressources et soutiens nécessaires pour atteindre leurs objectifs (Bean 1983 ; Tinto 1997).

Des travaux de recherche se sont intéressés aux effets de l'expérience de classe (Engstrom et Tinto 2008a ; Heilbrun 1965 ; Tinto 1997) sur la persévérance aux études. L'échec, la reprise, l'abandon d'un cours ou d'un programme d'études sont liés en partie à la pertinence des activités d'apprentissage pour l'étudiant (Heilbrun 1965 ; Tinto 1997), mais également aux stratégies d'études (Murdoch *et al.* 2012), d'enseignement (Engstrom et Tinto 2008b) et influencent la persévérance aux études. Dans l'élaboration de son modèle de persévérance, Tinto (1997) montre que l'intégration sociale et académique et les travaux collaboratifs sont des éléments importants de l'expérience de classe qui permettraient aux étudiants de persévérer dans leur programme d'études. Le travail collaboratif améliore la réussite aux cours et la promotion au niveau d'étude supérieur et partant, la persévérance aux études (Engstrom et Tinto 2008a).

Des travaux ont interrogé les ressources universitaires en l'occurrence les bourses, prêts et subventions. Les études n'ont pas toutes établi que l'appui financier avait un impact positif sur la persévérance aux études (St. John *et al.* 1991). Pour Hansen (1983), l'aide financière aux étudiants est considérée comme un programme de transfert d'argent et n'a pas amélioré l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur. Astin (1976) trouve une relation négative entre la persévérance aux études et le prêt chez les hommes, mais positive pour les femmes de la première à la deuxième année. De plus, l'octroi de l'aide financière basée sur le mérite plutôt que sur le besoin a exacerbé les inégalités entre les étudiants (Dowd 2004). Terkla (1985) montre que le fait de recevoir l'aide financière a un effet positif sur la persévérance aux études. St. John *et al.* (1991) trouvent qu'un prêt permet d'augmenter de 4,7 pour cent les chances de persévérer de la première à la deuxième année ; la probabilité de persévérer à l'université est augmentée de 5,4 pour cent pour les étudiants recevant les combinaisons de subvention (prêt et travail-étude). Seules les subventions prédisent la persévérance sur les trois années d'études. Par ailleurs, Breier (2010), dans sa recherche sur la reconceptualisation du rôle de l'aide financière dans l'enseignement supérieur, a montré que dans les pays en développement, nombre d'étudiants abandonnent leurs études pour des raisons financières (63%). À la question de savoir la raison principale de l'abandon, le manque de ressource financière est cité en premier (53%).

Plusieurs études ont porté sur la relation entre l'aide financière et les comportements des étudiants en termes d'abandon ou de persévérance aux études (Chen 2008). Ces études ont analysé les effets de l'aide financière

en général sans une attention particulière portée aux différences de comportement selon la situation socioéconomique des parents, la nationalité, la race, et l'ethnie. Il importe donc, d'analyser l'effet de l'aide financière dans différents sous-groupes (parents salariés, paysans) plutôt que de faire une analyse globale sur la population étudiante. De meilleures connaissances de l'influence de l'aide financière sur la persévérance aux études peuvent aider les décideurs politiques et administrateurs institutionnels sur les stratégies à suivre pour la promotion des opportunités d'études pour les étudiants des classes modestes.

Peu est connu sur les liens empiriques entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions, l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur dans le contexte Africain et Burkinabè en particulier et ce, malgré l'importance de la persévérance aux études comme indicateur de qualité de l'enseignement supérieur ainsi que l'existence de plusieurs théories (psychologiques, sociales, économiques, organisationnelles, interactionnistes). Le but de la présente recherche consiste à analyser les liens entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions (contexte familial, caractéristiques personnelles, expériences scolaires antérieures), l'expérience du système universitaire (expériences de classe, ressources universitaires) et la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur par le biais d'une revue systématique des écrits scientifiques. Trois objectifs sont sous-jacents à ce but : d'abord, comment sont opérationnalisées ces trois variables dans les recherches scientifiques ? Ensuite, quels liens empiriques existent-ils entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions, l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études ? Et enfin quel est le rôle de l'expérience du système universitaire dans la relation entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions et la persévérance aux études ?

Méthodologie

Plus fiable, rigoureuse, transparente, structurée et compréhensive pour documenter les connaissances sur un sujet donné, la revue systématique des écrits scientifiques est retenue dans la présente recherche (Bearman *et al.* 2012 Landry 2009). Gough (2007) propose neuf étapes pour effectuer une revue systématique des écrits :

1) formulation des questions de recherche ;
2) définition des critères d'inclusion et d'exclusion ;
3) articulation de la stratégie de recherche, y compris des sources d'information ;
4) vérification des critères d'inclusion et d'exclusion au niveau des écrits ;

5) report des résultats de la stratégie de recherche ;
6) extraction de données pertinentes ou appropriées pour la recherche ;
7) évaluation de la qualité méthodologique ou la rigueur des écrits retenus ;
8) synthèse quantitative ou qualitative des résultats communs des écrits retenus ;
9) présentation synthétique des résultats et conclusions de la recherche.

À l'étape 1, les deux questions de recherche énoncées précédemment sont retenues.

À l'étape 2, des critères sont définis pour la recherche des écrits scientifiques et le résumé. Concernant la recherche des écrits, les critères suivants sont considérés :

a) présence du terme « persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur » dans le titre de l'écrit ;
b) étude du lien entre deux des trois concepts: caractéristiques pré-admissions (contexte familial, caractéristiques personnelles, expériences scolaires antérieures), expérience du système universitaire ou d'enseignement supérieur (expérience de classe, ressources universitaires), persévérance aux études ;
c) disponibilité du texte intégral ;
d) langue de publication (français ou l'anglais) ;
e) publication dans une revue avec comité de lecture ;
f) période de publication (entre 2007 et 2017) ;
g) échantillon constitué d'étudiants en enseignement supérieur.

Pour ce qui est du résumé, les critères sont: mention d'un lien entre deux des trois variables, du but de la recherche, du type de recherche empirique (qualitative, quantitative), de l'échantillon et des méthodes d'analyse (David et Han 2004).

L'étape 3 porte sur deux éléments : mots-clés et bases de données. Dans un premier temps, les mots-clés sont en anglais (*academic persistence, higher education, family characteristics, individual characteristics, student background, student financial aid, learning experience*) et en français (persévérance, enseignement supérieur, contexte/origine familial, caractéristiques individuelles, expérience scolaire antérieure, aide financière, expérience de classe). Des synonymes des mots clés proposés par Thesaurus (dictionnaire) sont aussi acceptés. Étant donné le peu de publications francophones sur le sujet, le terme persévérance a été utilisé afin d'obtenir un spectre plus large d'articles.

Dans un second temps, les bases de données suivantes ont été consultées : ERIC, PsychInfo, Medline, et Ariane en anglais ; Érudit et Cairn en français.

Aux étapes 4 et 5, l'application des critères d'inclusion et d'exclusion pour la recherche des écrits scientifiques a permis d'obtenir un échantillon d'articles en anglais et en français. En date de janvier 2018, un total de 90 articles en anglais, dont 54 sont dupliqués dans les bases de données. De plus, 24 articles ne sont pas retenus car, ils ne proviennent pas d'une revue scientifique avec comité de lecture, ne ciblent pas dans le résumé les étudiants en enseignement supérieur ou ne sont pas disponibles en texte intégral. Un total de 12 articles anglophones est retenu. En français, 13 articles dans Érudit et quatre dans Cairn sont identifiés. L'application des critères d'inclusion et d'exclusion pour la recherche et le résumé a permis de retenir trois articles en français. Les 14 articles non retenus, le sont soit sur la base d'absence de résumé, d'information sur l'échantillon et les méthodes d'analyse, soit ne portent pas sur des étudiants universitaires ou en enseignement supérieur, ne s'intéressent pas à la persévérance aux études, ne traitent pas du lien entre les variables. Au total 15, articles dont trois en français et 12 en anglais ont été retenus.

De ces 15 articles, deux articles traitant de structure factorielle des concepts, deux autres sur la santé mentale, un sur les perceptions concernant la persévérance et un autre sur le tutorat ont été exclus. Il en résulte neuf articles, dont huit en anglais et un en français. Suite à l'extraction des données pertinentes (étape 6), les neuf articles ont été consultés à l'étape 7 concernant les aspects méthodologiques suivants :

a) cohérence entre l'hypothèse (ou question de recherche) et la méthodologie ;
b) analyse des liens entre les variables ;
c) analyses appropriées au type de recherche.

Les neuf articles respectent ces aspects méthodologiques.

Synthèse et résultats : Étapes 8 et 9

Caractéristiques des articles retenus

À l'étape 8, la synthèse fait ressortir que les articles retenus portent sur des étudiants dans huit universités aux États-Unis et une au Canada. Deux approches ont été utilisées pour analyser les liens entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions, l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études. Deux des neuf articles utilisent une approche qualitative dont l'analyse de contenu et l'approche phénoménologique, et sept utilisent une

approche quantitative : tests t et khi-carré, modèles d'analyse de variance à plusieurs facteurs (MANOVA), analyses factorielles exploratoires et équations structurelles, analyses longitudinales et régressions logistiques, régressions hiérarchiques, analyses par classe latente et analyse multi-niveaux. La plupart de ces études sont fondées sur des données transversales ou deux à trois périodes de collecte, excepté celles de Wood (2014) et Ishitani (2016) qui portent sur six périodes de collecte. Divers modèles théoriques sont utilisés dans ces articles : Tinto (1993) dans deux articles, Tinto (1993) et Bean (1980) dans un article, Keller (1987) dans un article, Garcia-Coll, Lamberty, Jenskins, McAdoo, Crnic, Wasik *et al.* (1996) et Fergus et Zimmerman's (2005) dans un article. Un seul article (quantitatif) ne spécifie pas le modèle théorique utilisé.

Portant sur des étudiants hispaniques (n=10) aux États-Unis, l'étude qualitative de Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci (2016) a mis en relation le contexte familial (soutien, rôle des parents, finance, légalité), les aspirations personnelles (éducation/formation, accomplissement, modèle, conscience), l'environnement du campus (diversité culturelle, réseau hispanique, tuteurs), les défis de la vie (divorce, santé, immigration, perte d'emploi) et la persévérance aux études. L'étude qualitative de Veal *et al.* (2012) a concerné des étudiants diplômés en tant qu'aides-soignants d'origine ethnique diverse (n=16) aux États-Unis et a consisté à interroger les liens entre leurs expériences en emploi, la persévérance aux études, les facilitateurs et les barrières au succès universitaire.

Pour les articles quantitatifs, les tailles d'échantillon varient entre (n=25) et (n=16 100). Deux articles utilisent le modèle de Tinto (1993), l'une recourt à l'analyse de variance à plusieurs facteurs (Nicpon *et al.* 2006) auprès de 40 étudiants, l'autre porte sur la régression hiérarchique (Walsh et Robinson Kurpius 2016) auprès de 378 étudiants. Le premier met en lien le genre, le soutien familial, le milieu de résidence, la solitude et la persévérance aux études. Le second interroge les liens entre l'éducation des parents, la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents, le score au secondaire, la valeur attendue de l'éducation pour l'étudiant, le sentiment d'efficacité personnelle et la persévérance aux études.

L'étude de Allen et Bir (2012) qui est de type expérimental (n_1=408 pour le groupe expérimental et n_2=2025 pour le groupe témoin) considère les modèles de Tinto (1993) et de Bean (1980). Celle-ci s'intéresse aux liens entre le genre, l'éducation des parents, le soutien familial, la profession de l'étudiant, la sociabilité, la confiance et la persévérance aux études. À cet effet, les auteurs ont eu recourt à l'analyse factorielle exploratoire et aux équations structurelles. Aussi, faut-il noter que le modèle de Tinto (1975) a été utilisé par Ishitani

(2016) pour comprendre les liens entre le genre, la race, l'éducation des parents, le revenu des parents, l'aptitude académique, le score au secondaire et la persévérance aux études à l'aide d'analyse multi-niveaux (n=7 571).

Les travaux de Butler-Barnes *et al.* (2013) ont concerné des étudiants (n=220) aux États-Unis en utilisant les modèles théoriques de Garcia-Coll, Lamberty, Jenkins, McAdoo, Crnic, Wasik, *et al.* (1996) et de Fergus et Zimmerman's (2005). L'analyse par classe latente a été appliquée sur les variables relatives au genre, l'éducation des parents, l'acceptation de soi, le sentiment d'efficacité personnelle, la fierté raciale et la persévérance aux études. L'étude de Racette (2010) au Canada (n_1=30 pour le groupe expérimental et n_2=25 pour le groupe témoin) s'est appuyée sur le modèle (APCS pour Attention, Pertinence, Confiance et Satisfaction) de Keller (1987) en mettant en lien l'attention, la pertinence des activités, la confiance, la satisfaction et la persévérance aux études ; des *test t* de Student et le khi-carré ont été utilisés. L'étude de Wood (2014) porte sur 16 100 étudiants et recourt à l'analyse longitudinale par l'utilisation des régressions logistiques. Cette étude ne spécifie pas de cadre théorique; les variables utilisées sont le score à l'université, le résultat académique et la persévérance aux études.

Opérationnalisation des concepts

Les concepts tels qu'opérationnalisés sont pris en compte dans le modèle de Tinto (1997) considéré le plus robuste (Braxton et Hirschy 2005) et le plus utilisé ayant contribué au développement d'autres modèles d'analyse de la persévérance (Lakhal 2012). L'opérationnalisation des concepts (caractéristiques pré-admissions, expérience du système universitaire, persévérance aux études) dans ces articles est présentée au Tableau 1. Il en résulte différentes définitions de la persévérance aux études : inscription en deuxième année (Allen et Bir 2012 ; Ishitani 2016), décision de persévérer (Butler-Barnes *et al.* 2013 ; Nicpon *et al.* 2006 ; Walsh et Robinson Kurpius 2016), intention de poursuivre les études (Racette 2010 ; Veal *et al.* 2012), inscription à la sixième année d'études (Wood 2014), cheminement avec succès dans le programme d'études (Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci 2016). Pour les caractéristiques pré-admissions, les auteurs se sont intéressés au contexte familial, aux caractéristiques personnelles et à l'expérience scolaire antérieure. Le contexte familial est mesuré à partir du soutien familial, de l'éducation des parents, du rôle et de la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents et le revenu. Les caractéristiques personnelles considérées sont : genre, expérience de diplômé, ethnie/race, sentiment d'efficacité personnelle, confiance, acceptation de soi, sociabilité, aspirations. Quant à l'expérience scolaire antérieure, elle porte sur le niveau d'étude et le score au secondaire.

Tableau 1 : Synthèse des variables des études retenues

Auteurs	Variables					
	Caractéristiques pré-admissions			Expérience du système universitaire		Résultat
	Contexte familial	Caractéristiques personnelles	Expérience scolaire antérieure	Expérience de classe	Ressources universitaires	Persévérance aux études
Allen et Bir (2012)	Soutien familial Éducation des parents (8 ans ou moins)	Genre, sociabilité, profession de l'étudiant, confiance en lecture, confiance en mathématiques et sciences	Score au secondaire	Score à l'université		Inscription à la deuxième année d'études
Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci (2016)	Soutien et rôle des parents, finance, légalité	Aspirations personnelles (éducation / emploi, accomplissement, modèle, conscience), les défis de la vie (divorce, santé, immigration, perte d'emploi)			Environnement du campus (culture, réseau hispanique, tutorat, professeurs hispaniques)	Cheminement avec succès dans le programme d'études
Ishitani (2016)	Éducation des parents, revenu	Genre, race, aptitude académique	Score au secondaire		Aide financière, résidence (sur campus ou hors campus), dépenses éducatives	Inscription de l'étudiant à la fin de la première année et en deuxième année
Nicpon et al. (2006)	Soutien familial	Sexe, solitude		Score à l'université	Résidence (sur or hors campus)	Décision de persévérer en première année (Pascarella et Terenzini 1980)
Walsh et Robinson Kurpius (2016)	Éducation des parents, la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents,	Valeur attendue de l'éducation pour l'étudiant, sentiment d'efficacité personnelle	Score au secondaire			Décision de persévérer en première année (Pascarella et Terenzini 1980)
Veal et al. (2012)	Facilitateurs et barrières au succès universitaire	Sexe, Ethnie, expériences d'aides-soignantes diplômées,	Niveau d'étude (baccalauréat)		Utilisation des technologies (plate-forme pour de cours, accès aux documents électro-niques), aide financière	Intention de poursuivre le programme d'études
Butler-Barnes, Chavous, Hurd, et Varner (2013)	Éducation des parents	Genre, acceptation de soi, sentiment d'efficacité personnelle, fierté raciale			Discrimination raciale sur le campus	Décision de persévérer sur une échelle de 1 à 4
Wood (2014)				Score, résultat académique (reprise de cours, abandon, interruptions)		Inscription en sixième année d'études
Racette (2010)		Attention, pertinence, confiance, satisfaction (APCS)				Intention de poursuite des cours

Concernant l'expérience du système universitaire, elle est mesurée à partir de l'expérience de classe et des ressources universitaires. L'expérience de classe est appréhendée par le résultat académique (score à l'université, reprise de cours). Les ressources universitaires ont concerné l'aide financière, l'environnement du campus, la résidence, la discrimination raciale sur le campus, l'utilisation des technologies.

Caractéristiques pré-admissions et expériences universitaires

Au Tableau 2, trois études indiquent des liens entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions et l'expérience du système universitaire: le score au secondaire a un effet significatif (d=0,463) sur le score à l'université (Allen et Bir 2012); le soutien social (famille et amis) n'a aucun effet sur les résultats académiques (score) des étudiants (Nicpon *et al.* 2006); la race, l'identité culturelle influencent l'engagement des étudiants dans leur programme (Veal *et al.* 2012).

Tableau 2 : Caractéristiques pré-admissions et expériences du système universitaire

Auteurs	Modèle	Variables	Participants/Pays	Méthodes	Résultats des écrits
Allen et Bir (2012)	Tinto (1993) et Bean (1980)	Score à l'université, désir de terminer son programme, l'intention de changer de programme ou de persévérer	n_1=408 (groupe expérimental) n_2=2025 (groupe témoin) États-Unis	Analyse factorielle exploratoire et équations structurelles.	Le score au secondaire (HS GPA) a un effet significatif sur les résultats universitaires (GPA). L'éducation des parents a un effet négatif sur les résultats académiques (scores) des étudiants.
Nicpon *et al.* (2006)	Tinto (1993)	Sexe, soutien familial, milieu de résidence, solitude, score à l'université	n=40 États-Unis	Analyse discriminante, MANOVA	Le soutien social (famille et amis) n'a aucun effet significatif sur le résultat académique (score) des étudiants.
Veal *et al.* (2012)	Inductif	Expériences d'aides-soignantes diplômées d'origine ethnique, persévérance, facilitateurs et barrières au succès universitaire	n=16 États-Unis	Analyse de contenu	La race est un facteur qui affecte les résultats des étudiants. La non prise en compte de leur identité culturelle influence l'engagement des étudiants dans leur programme d'études.

Caractéristiques pré-admissions et persévérance aux études

Les sept études présentées au Tableau 3 indiquent que les caractéristiques pré-admissions ont un effet sur la persévérance aux études, et ce, malgré la diversité des approches (quantitatives et qualitatives) utilisées. Le contexte familial appréhendé à travers le soutien familial, l'éducation des parents par a un effet significatif sur l'intention de persévérer (δ=0,14); les femmes hispaniques persévèrent mieux que les hommes; le score au collège a un effet (δ=0,22) sur la persévérance aux études (Allen et Bir 2012). Pour Nicpon *et al.* (2006), le soutien familial est plus important chez les femmes que chez les hommes (FSD^2=0,30) pour la persévérance aux études. Pour Walsh et Robinson Kurpius (2016), la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents, a un effet significatif sur la persévérance aux études (b=0,11). Les travaux d'Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci (2016) montrent que le contexte familial est le principal facteur qui influence la persévérance aux études. Pour Veal *et al.* (2012), la culture familiale a une incidence sur la persévérance aux études. Quant aux travaux de Ishitani (2016), ils révèlent qu'en deuxième année, les étudiants de première génération ont 54,9 pour cent de risque d'abandonner que les autres étudiants ; les femmes ont 29 pour cent moins de risque d'abandonner que les hommes durant la première année. Pour Butler-Barnes *et al.* (2013), les hommes afro-américains persévèrent peu depuis une décennie : 6,1 pour cent en 2002 à 6,2 pour cent en 2012 réussissent leur baccalauréat.

Tableau 3: Liens entre caractéristiques pré-admissions et persévérance aux études

Auteurs	Modèle	Variables	Participants/Pays	Méthodes	Résultats des écrits
Allen et Bir (2012)	Tinto (1993) et Bean (1980)	Genre, éducation des parents, soutien familial, profession de l'étudiant, sociabilité, confiance en lecture, confiance en mathématiques et sciences, score au secondaire, l'intention de changer de programme ou de persévérer.	n_1=408 (groupe expérimental) n_2=2025 (groupe témoin) États-Unis	Analyse factorielle exploratoire et équations structurelles	Le soutien familial a un effet significatif sur l'intention de persévérer/terminer les études. Les femmes hispaniques persévèrent mieux que les hommes. Le score au secondaire a un effet significatif indirect sur la persévérance.
Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci (2016)	Inductif	Contexte familial (soutien, rôle, finance, légalité), aspirations personnelles (éducation/emploi, accomplissement, modèle, conscience), les défis de la vie (divorce, santé, immigration, perte d'emploi), persévérance	n =10 États-Unis	Approche phénoménologique	Le contexte familial est le principal facteur qui influence la persévérance aux études des participants.

Butler-Barnes *et al.* (2013)	Garcia-Coll *et al.* (1996); Fergus et Zimmer-man's (2005)	Genre, éducation des parents acceptation de soi, sentiment d'efficacité personnelle, fierté raciale, persévérance	n=220 États-Unis	Analyse par classe latente	Le genre, l'éducation des parents sont non significatifs.
Ishitani (2016)	Tinto (1975)	Genre, race, éducation des parents, revenu, aptitude académique, score au secondaire, persévérance	n=7 571 États-Unis	Analyse multi-niveaux	Les femmes ont moins de risque d'abandonner que les hommes durant la première année. Une relation positive entre le score au secondaire et la persévérance aux études.
Nicpon *et al.* (2006) [Publication pour la période 2006-2007]	Tinto (1993)	Sexe, soutien familial, milieu de résidence, solitude, score à l'université	n=40 États-Unis	Analyse de variance à plusieurs facteurs (MANOVA)	Le soutien de la famille est très important et positivement associé à la persévérance aux études. Ce soutien est important aussi bien pour les hommes que pour les femmes.
Veal *et al.* (2012)	Inductif	Expériences d'aides-soignantes diplômées d'origine ethnique, persévérance, facilitateurs et barrières au succès universitaire.	n=16 États-Unis	Analyse de contenu	Une controverse entre le travail académique et culture familiale.
Walsh et Robinson Kurpius (2016)	Tinto (1993)	Éducation des parents, la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents, score au secondaire, valeur attendue de l'éducation pour l'étudiant, résidence, sentiment d'efficacité personnelle	n=378 États-Unis	Méthode de régression hiérarchique	L'éducation des parents et la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents ne prédisent pas la persévérance aux études, même avec introduction du score. Avec l'introduction de la résidence, la persévérance est prédite par la résidence, la valeur de l'éducation pour les parents

Expériences du système universitaire et persévérance aux études

Les sept études au Tableau 4 révèlent que l'expérience du système universitaire a un effet sur la persévérance aux études. Considérant l'expérience de classe à partir du score à l'université, Allen et Bir (2012) montrent que ce score a un effet significatif (δ=0,476) sur la persévérance aux études. Ce résultat est corroboré par celui de Ishitani (2016) qui révèle que l'amélioration du score en première année d'un point diminue le risque d'abandon de 44,6 pour cent en deuxième année. Wood (2014) montre que les étudiants ayant repris un cours pour améliorer leur score ont plus de quatre fois (odd ratio=4,24) de chance de persévérer que ceux qui n'ont pas repris le cours pour améliorer leur score. Ceux qui ont repris un cours ont sept fois (odd ratio=7,05) plus de chance de persévérer que ceux qui n'ont pas repris. Pour Racette (2010), la rétroaction faite aux étudiants améliore la persévérance aux études puisque ce fut le cas pour 73 pour cent des étudiants. L'environnement du campus est parmi les plus importants facteurs de la persévérance aux études après les aspirations personnelles en termes d'éducation, d'emploi, de modèle et de conscience (Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci 2016). Butler-Barnes *et al.* (2013) montrent que la discrimination raciale sur le campus est négativement associée à la persévérance aux études (r=-0,30) tandis que la fierté raciale l'y est positivement associée (r=0,21). Concernant les ressources universitaires appréhendées par l'aide financière, Ishitani (2016) montre que l'accès à l'aide financière diminue le risque d'abandon de 23,6 pour cent. Ces résultats sont corroborés par ceux de Veal *et al.* (2012) qui révèlent que l'aide financière a un effet sur la persévérance aux études.

De ces études, une seule (Allen et Bir 2012) a interrogé le rôle de l'expérience du système universitaire dans la relation entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions et la persévérance aux études. Pour ces auteurs, l'expérience du système universitaire joue un rôle médiateur dans cette relation, particulièrement l'effet du score au collège (δ=0,22) sur la persévérance aux études est médiatisé par le score à l'université.

Tableau 4: Liens entre expériences du système universitaire et persévérance aux études

Auteurs	Modèle	Variables	Participant/Pays	Méthodes	Résultats des écrits
Allen et Bir (2012)	Tinto (1993) et Bean (1980)	Score à l'université, désir de terminer son programme, l'intention de changer de programme ou de persévérer.	n_1=408 (groupe expérimental) n_2=2 025 (groupe témoin) États-Unis	Analyse factorielle exploratoire et équations structurelles	Le score (GPA) à l'université a un effet significatif direct sur la persévérance.

Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci (2016)	Inductif	Aspirations personnelles (éducation/ emploi, accomplissement, modèle, conscience), environnement du campus (diversité culturelle, réseau hispanique, tuteurs) les défis de la vie (divorce, santé, immigration, perte d'emploi), persévérance aux études.	n=10 États-Unis	Approche phénoménologique	L'environnement du campus est le troisième facteur le plus important après les aspirations personnelles, ayant un effet sur la persévérance aux études.
Butler-Barnes *et al.* (2013)	Garcia-Coll *et al.* (1996); Fergus et Zimmerman's (2005)	Discrimination sur le campus, persévérance aux études	n=220 États-Unis	Analyse par classe latente	La discrimination raciale sur le campus est négativement associée à la persévérance.
Ishitani (2016)		Aptitude académique, aide financière, résidence, type d'institution (privé, public), dépenses éducatives, persévérance	n=7 571 États-Unis	Analyse multi-niveau	Plusieurs aides financières diminuent le risque d'abandonner. Une amélioration du score de 1 point en première année diminue le risque d'abandon en deuxième année.
Racette (2010)	Keller (1987)	Attention, pertinence, confiance, satisfaction (APCS), persévérance aux études.	n_1=30 (groupe expérimental) n_2=25 (groupe témoin) Canada	*T*est *t* de Student et khi-carré	Les messages ont encouragé des étudiants à persévérer.
Veal *et al.* (2012)	Inductif	Expériences d'aides-soignantes diplômées d'origine ethnique, persévérance, facilitateurs et barrières au succès universitaire.	n=16 États-Unis	Analyse de contenu	L'aide financière a un effet sur la persévérance aux études.
Wood (2014)	Non spécifié	Persévérance aux études, score, résultat académique.	n= 16 100 États-Unis	Analyse longitudinale Régression logistique	La persévérance aux études est meilleure pour les étudiants ayant repris un cours pour améliorer leur score. Les étudiants qui n'ont pas réussi à un cours ont plus de chance de persévérer.

Discussion

Les neuf études retenues se sont intéressées aux liens entre au moins deux des trois variables étudiées : caractéristiques pré-admissions, expérience du système universitaire et persévérance aux études. S'inspirant de divers modèles théoriques, ces études postulaient que ces variables sont deux à deux reliées. Une seule étude a questionné le rôle médiateur de l'expérience du système universitaire. Ce rôle médiateur permet de réduire les inégalités liées aux caractéristiques pré-admissions et d'assurer une meilleure persévérance aux études. Les articles quantitatifs utilisent majoritairement les modèles de Tinto : trois pour Tinto (1993) et un pour Tinto (1975).

Les neuf études consultées portent sur la persévérance aux études dans des contextes plutôt homogènes : huit aux États-Unis en anglais et une au Canada en français. Trois articles mettent en lien les caractéristiques pré-admissions et l'expérience du système universitaire, sept en mettent entre l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études et sept entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions et la persévérance aux études. Il en résulte l'absence de recherche en Afrique sur l'utilisation du modèle de Tinto (1997) pour comprendre la persévérance aux études en enseignement supérieur. Ces constats font ressortir un besoin de recherche dans d'autres contextes, tel que celui de l'Afrique et particulièrement au Burkina Faso où les politiques de démocratisation de l'enseignement supérieur ont contribué à une massification des universités créant des besoins supplémentaires en infrastructures pédagogiques, personnel enseignants, encadrement des étudiants et financement de la formation universitaire.

Les résultats des articles quantitatifs sont conformes à ceux proposés par les différents modèles utilisés. Cependant, certaines limites des articles retenus dans cette revue systématique peuvent être discernées. Des articles utilisent différentes analyses : régression logistique, analyse multiniveaux, analyse par classe latente, équations structurelles. Ces analyses qui sont appliquées sur des données transversales ne prennent pas en compte la nature longitudinale de la persévérance aux études. Cabrera *et al.* (1990), ainsi que Leppel (2002) ont utilisé la régression logistique qui permet d'éviter le problème d'hétérogénéité lié à la nature dichotomique de la variable dépendante, mais malheureusement elle ne mesurerait pas les effets dans le temps des variables qui changent (exemple le montant de l'aide financière). En effet au lieu d'examiner la persévérance aux études comme un processus longitudinal, nombre d'études considèrent les données transversales (Chen & Desjardins 2008), limitant ainsi les possibilités d'examiner les changements dans le temps sur une période plus longue. Seule l'étude de Wood (2014) porte sur diverses cohortes sur une durée de six ans. Cependant, aucune mention n'est faite au

modèle théorique utilisé. Desjardins, Alhburg, McCall (1999, 2002) ainsi que Ishitani et Desjardins (2002) proposent d'utiliser les analyses de cohorte qui permettent de comprendre les effets dans le temps des variables à l'étude.

Concernant les articles utilisant des méthodes qualitatives, leurs résultats corroborent ceux des articles quantitatifs et aboutissent souvent à un cadre théorique d'analyse de la persévérance aux études (Arbelo-Marrero et Milacci 2016). Cependant, la taille d'échantillon utilisé est petite (10 à 16) et questionne la validité externe dudit cadre.

Par ailleurs, les articles retenus utilisent généralement des variables relatives aux caractéristiques personnelles de l'étudiant et au contexte familial pour comprendre la persévérance aux études, mais très peu intègrent les ressources financières universitaires, les résultats académiques de l'étudiant (Tableau 1); pourtant de telles variables ont un effet sur la persévérance aux études (Butler-Barnes *et al.* 2013).

Limites de la recherche

Cette recherche présente diverses limites qu'il convient de mentionner et qui pourront être outrepassées pour des études futures. Il s'agit en l'occurrence de la sélection des bases de données utilisées pour la revue systématique (ERIC, PsychInfo, Medline, Ariane, Cairn, Erudit). Malgré le fait que ces bases soient les plus importantes en éducation, des recherches dans d'autres environnements pourraient aider à mieux documenter les liens entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions, l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études. Par ailleurs, le fait de restreindre les articles à ceux avec comité de lecture réduit la taille d'échantillon d'articles pour la recherche, mais permet d'obtenir des articles de qualité pour comprendre les liens entre les variables à l'étude. L'opérationnalisation des variables conceptuelles caractéristiques pré-admissions, l'expérience du système universitaire et la persévérance aux études, n'a pu prendre en compte la multitude des définitions existantes. Les deux langues utilisées (Français et anglais) limitent-elles les chances d'avoir des articles dans d'autres revues. Il n'est donc pas possible de généraliser les résultats de la présente recherche.

Conclusion

L'objectif du présent article consistait à réaliser une revue systématique des écrits scientifiques sur les liens entre les caractéristiques pré-admissions (contexte familial, caractéristiques personnelles, expérience scolaire antérieure), l'expérience du système universitaire (expérience de classe et ressources universitaires) et la persévérance aux études en enseignement

supérieur. La démarche empruntée a permis de retenir neuf articles dont huit en anglais et un en français (sept quantitatifs et deux qualitatifs). L'analyse rigoureuse de ces articles révèle des liens entre les trois variables, mais peu d'articles intègrent les variables relatives aux ressources universitaires et à l'expérience de classe. Aussi, l'utilisation de données collectées sur une ou deux périodes limite-t-elle l'explication de la persévérance aux études qui s'inscrit dans un processus longitudinal (Tinto 1975, 1993, 1998).

Il importe donc de réaliser des recherches qui intègrent les variables des caractéristiques pré-admissions, de l'expérience du système universitaire pour mieux comprendre la persévérance aux études et questionner l'effet médiateur dans le contexte Burkinabè. Au regard de l'insuffisance des écrits et dans le contexte africain sur le sujet, des travaux utilisant ces variables avec des données longitudinales d'au moins trois temps de mesure, enrichiraient les connaissances sur la persévérance aux études.

La prise en compte de la nature longitudinale de la persévérance aux études doit être de mise (Tinto 1997). L'analyse longitudinale par l'utilisation du modèle de régression de Cox peut être une alternative aux méthodes transversales et permettrait de prendre en compte les changements dans le temps des variables changeantes. Ce modèle résout le problème de censure à droite qui est un problème de données manquantes qui ne peut pas être résolu par des méthodes transversales (Kamanzi *et al.* 2016). L'analyse pour différents sous-groupes doit être faite pour un meilleur ciblage des groupes pour des besoins d'intervention afin que l'enseignement supérieur puisse avoir un meilleur impact économique et social (Chen 2008).

Notes

1. Ce diplôme est appelé baccalauréat au Burkina Faso.
2. Fonction standardisée de discrimination.

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Legal Educational Platforms and Disciplines of the Future

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Abstract

Provision of quality education has become a leading challenge in the world today. In 2005, world university population was 138 million. In Cameroon's state universities, the student population of the universities of Yaoundé University II and Ngaoundéré for example, was respectively some 27,000 and 23,000 in 2017/18. These numbers pose problems of cost, geography, infrastructure and educational delivery platforms that the confines of traditional university and its departments cannot accommodate. This article attempts a definition of the legal educational platforms and the disciplines of the future in Cameroon. The article was prepared through a combination of archival and internet search, and expert consultation. Archival and Internet research was carried out through an analysis of the existing literature in the domains of web technologies, online learning courseware, robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) as well as of legal disciplines and delivery platforms. Expert consultation was attained through qualitative interviews and exchanges with university administrators. The results show that web technologies, the Internet, MOOC, edX and Coursera hold solutions to some of the problems of platforms. Robotics and AI now enhance courseware delivery while dictating where policy, legal disciplines and the law should go. Robotics and AI have also disrupted the concept of 'labour' and 'rights'. Similarly, machines and AI rely on personal and corporate data to function but attacks on network confidentiality, availability and integrity have given birth to new legal disciplines such as the laws of cyberwarfare, data-governance, digital intellectual property, e-commerce and electronic contracts.

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Résumé

L'éducation est l'un des dix principaux problèmes du monde d'aujourd'hui. En 2005, la population universitaire mondiale s'élevait à 138 millions d'individus. Par exemple, la population étudiante des universités de Yaoundé II et de Ngaoundéré (universités publiques camerounaises) était respectivement d'environ 27 000 et 23 000 en 2017-18. Ces chiffres posent des problèmes de coûts, de géographie, d'infrastructures et de plateformes de diffusion d'enseignement que l'université et ses départements ne peuvent supporter. Cet article tente une définition des plateformes de formation juridique et des disciplines du futur au Cameroun. L'article a été préparé en combinant des recherches documentaires et Internet, ainsi que des avis d'experts. Les recherches documentaires et sur Internet ont été menées à travers une analyse de la littérature existante dans les domaines des technologies du Web, des supports d'apprentissage en ligne, de la robotique et de l'intelligence artificielle ainsi que des disciplines juridiques et des plateformes de diffusion. Les consultations d'experts ont été réalisées au moyen d'entretiens qualitatifs et d'échanges avec les autorités universitaires. Les résultats montrent que les technologies Web, Internet, MOOC, edX et Coursera apportent des solutions à certains problèmes de plates-formes. La robotique et l'intelligence artificielle améliorent désormais la fourniture de didacticiels, tout en montrant la voie aux politiques, aux disciplines juridiques et à la législation. La robotique et l'IA ont également perturbé le concept de « travail » et de « droits ». De même, les machines et l'IA reposent sur des données personnelles et professionnelles, mais les atteintes à la confidentialité, à la disponibilité et à l'intégrité du réseau ont donné naissance à de nouvelles disciplines juridiques, notamment celles relatives à la cyber-guerre, à la gouvernance des données, à la propriété intellectuelle numérique, au commerce et aux contrats électroniques.

Introduction

Today's advances in technology are immense and far-reaching. They are affecting legal educational platforms and conventional disciplines. The knowledge economy[1] in Cameroon is now marked by the exponential skills needs of the digital era. Added to this phenomenon, the availability of information in all disciplines on the Internet is combining with the ever-increasing rate of computer literacy, Internet of Things[2] and Internet penetration,[3] to powerfully question the future relevance of some current disciplines and conventional delivery platforms of legal education. This is because:

> 'The education system of the future will undergo a transition from a heavy emphasis on teaching to a heavy emphasis on learning. Experts will create the courseware and the students will learn anytime or anywhere at a pace that is comfortable for them, learning about topics that they are interested in'[4] and now is the time for adaptation.

The Cameroon government has responded to this trend by opening new state universities authorising the creation of higher institutions of learning by the private sector and encouraging Internet literacy by offering laptops for free to some university students. It is however doubted that this is neither adapted to the problems, changing times and available technical options nor appropriate. Based on the foregoing and the attendant problems, this paper attempts to define the legal educational platforms, which could be availed of, as well as the disciplines of the future.

Problems in Context and what the Future Holds

Education, its cost and its utility, constitutes one of the top problems of today's world.[5] The share number of people seeking to acquire a degree today is a problem of no small magnitude. In 2005, world university population was 138 million. According to the IDP Australian Testing projection, in 2025, 7.2 million people will be seeking university education abroad.[6] Of the state universities, in Yaoundé University II and the University of Ngaoundéré for example, the student population was respectively some 27,000[7] and 23,000 in the 2017/2018[8] academic year. Of this number in the University of Yaoundé II, 16,000 of them were taking law and political sciences degree courses while in Ngaoundéré, 5,000 were pursuing law and political science careers. These numbers pose problems of educational delivery platforms and their suitability.

The ability of educators (including individuals, private and public institutions of higher learning) to reach potential students has generally been limited by geography. In most instances, a potential student and persons seeking knowledge must physically move to within commuting distance or into a campus in order to have access to course instructors, classes and materials. Furthermore, potential students etc. are generally limited to proximate sources of courses of instruction, tutoring or training. Consequently, a prospective student must either seek to learn a given subject from whatever local means of instruction is available or move her household in order to access preferred sources of instruction. Many prospective students are deprived of receiving instruction from other, possibly better- qualified instructors or institutions located outside their locale.[9] Similarly, educational institutions have been limited to serving only those students located within commutable distance of their campus. Added to these problems is the uncertainty that is posed by dwindling energy sources and rising poverty.

It follows from the foregoing *inter alia* that, demographic growth and economic realities of the digital age create new demands that the confines of especially the traditional university and its departments cannot

accommodate. In other words, the changing demands of today's world and the search for solutions is a major problem that drives educational planning; especially in terms of infrastructure development, human resource capacity building and financial mobilization/positioning for quality education for tomorrow. In digital age Cameroon, training for a degree in law best reflects these problems.

Obtaining a law degree (which is an eligibility condition for most legal professions) has conventionally entailed geographical relocation to an accredited educational institution (often a university) resulting in infrastructure and other constraints and at no small cost. Web technologies, robotics, artificial intelligence and the Internet, MOOC, edX and Coursera hold the promise of solutions to some of these problems for the future.

Web Technologies and the Internet[10]

With the advent of networked computers and communications, future law students can avail themselves of educational material without having to leave their respective homes. Currently available options include: the use of the virtual learning environment (VLE), blogs, wikis, and podcasting and e-learning 2.0 and AI assisted robots.

The VLE has been the traditional approach to e-learning structured around courses, timetables and testing. This approach is however too often driven by needs of the institution rather than the individual learner (Sullivan 2013).[11]

The wiki is a simple online and collaborative database designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content using simplified mark-up language.[12]

Podcasting is the use of a series of audio/video digital media files for the sharing or distribution of information or knowledge via the Internet (Ashley 2007).[13]

A blog is an on-line diary (journal) made available on the Internet by an individual. The big advantage of the blog over say VLE, WIKI and Podcasting is that it lets readers add comments (which could be from teachers, peers or a wider audience) and encourages students to keep a record of their thinking over time.[14]

E-learning 2.0 as coined by Stephen Downes[15] takes a "small pieces, loosely joined" approach that combines the use of discrete but complimentary tools and web services such as blogs, wikis and other social networks to support the creation of ad-hoc learning communities. The foregoing are alternative enablers of access to courseware or educational material of the Web technology and Internet platform. The said material must however be available to be accessed.

Online Learning Packages

Online learning packages that provide content as educational material for use in Web technologies include MOOCs, edX and Causera. MOOC stands for Massive Open Online Course. They are distance-learning courses run online by many universities worldwide thanks to the Internet. Creators of MOOCs were motivated by the need to provide study opportunities for learning to individuals who could not otherwise access the learning – for free. Countries outside the US such as Saudi Arabia are using MOOCs to combat skills gaps in labour markets. Its potential for large-scale change is massive.

MOOCs give students the option of studying a subject in depth without the constraints of a traditional university course. EdX and Coursera are MOOCs consortia that currently partner with top universities to develop MOOCs, so students learn from distinguished professors from world's best universities and educational institutions. This adds to MOOCs legitimacy.

Instead of face-to-face lectures or seminars, MOOCs classes are recorded on video and materials (like auto graded lectures and peer reviewed assignments and community discussion forums), are uploaded to the platform. The student can then access them whenever, and wherever, they want to, thanks to the Internet. It is possible to review the material as often as required, so that rather than having to rely on sketchy lecture notes, the entire lecture can be reviewed again. When a course is completed, a sharable electronic course completion certificate is received.

Unlike traditional university courses, most MOOCs can be available free of charge – with no worry of having to pay huge tuition fees! In law, law lectures, legal forms etc. are available on the internet for free, on virtually every subject. Coursera and edX offer paid 'verified certificates' for successful completion. Students must pass assessments and prove their identities. Employers can confirm certificates online. Students who pay for MOOCs often gain access to extra features like reception of additional feedback from instructors as well as access to supplemental readings and assessments. Some MOOCs, like edX's Global Freshman Academy with Arizona State University, offer college credit. Indeed edX has partnered with 14 universities to launch MicroMasters – students complete a portion of a Masters through several MOOCs and a capstone and then apply to finish it on campus. MOOCs completion rates are improved when students pay something as payment adds a level of commitment that dissuades dropping out at any point. So new paid MOOCs have had the effect of diminishing some negative perceptions (like low completion rates in the free MOOCs option).

Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, Legal Disciplines and Policy

Robotics is a word that derives its etymological roots from two Czech words 'robota' (obligatory work) and 'robotnic' (Serf) to describe a new class of 'artificial people' created to serve humans (Ross 2016:35).[16] Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. Robotics and AI have combined through application programs (Apps) to drive what has become known as the 'Internet of Things' (IoT), where any object has the potential to transmit and receive data (Ross 2016:132),[17] from cars, homes, watches, to clothing and appliances like refrigerators, gates etc.

Applications of Robotics, AI, IoT: implications

Industry is benefiting from robotics and AI such that many routine tasks in work places are taken away from pesky workers and put into the cheaper, more efficient, and less vocal hands of robots! In factories, robot carmakers are happy to work 24 hours a day in the dark, with no breaks; no absences for social reasons etc. Robots in call centres and ATMs have replaced man and provide services and answers to requests by clients. In the classroom today in over 70 countries, French humanoids like NAO assist in teaching science and computer science classes.[18]

GPS trackers are used to monitor where drivers are going and to track cars etc.[19] Cameras keep watch on staff in the workplace.[20] Complex algorithms are now embedded in coffee machines to enable one brew the coffee one drinks to the strength one wants.[21] Machines can now analyse, carry out lab tests on human samples, interpret results, prescribe corresponding drugs and alert on impending ailments.[22] Designer babies can now be born through editing the genome of the human embryo.[23] Mines in Australia have been using driverless mega-trucks to shunt ore around.[24] The US military uses unmanned smart drones to launch attacks in the Middle East and Niger (Africa). Google and other car manufacturers are lobbying hard to get driverless cars on to public roads, arguing that they are safer than human-driven vehicles.[25] Surgical systems like Da Vinci Surgical Systems[26] now carry out cardiac valve repair etc.

Reliance on 'Artificiality' by the use of machines or complex algorithms, for the provision of service/ labour and the satisfaction of needs is a common denominator that underlies robotics and AI. The implications of the foregoing applications are seismic and to say the least, disruptive of conventional legal concepts.

Robotics, AI, IoT and Legal Disciplines

The digital revolution exemplified by robotics, AI and IoT is disruptive of the concept of 'labour'. This has a chain of consequences that range from 'data' as a factor of production and as driver of robotics, AI and the IoT, to unimaginable vulnerabilities of the 'confidentiality' of data, resulting in the birth of legal disciplines[27] of the future.

As a result of the advent of robotics and AI, policy and economic theory is now confronted with the relevance of 'labour' as a factor of production. Increasing reliance on robotics and AI seriously questions the future validity of 'income tax' as a revenue stream for the State. Will an increased and unbridled use of robots not significantly reduce the critical mass of citizens who pay tax on income? This is a first disruption.

Secondly the growing and irreversible reliance on robotics and AI questions the relevance of the conventional meaning of the word 'labour' as well as of 'the right to work' as a human right in the Digital Age. This is because, 'labour' conventionally meant bodily work or human physical effort.[28] It is no longer so with artificial intelligence empowered robots and driverless cars. Will the 'right to work'[29] be restricted to 'humans' or robots too will have and enjoy rights?

Where will the line be drawn between the rights of humans and rights of machines considering that man creates the latter? Since morality and rights are based on consciousness, should robots albeit smart but inanimate and bereft of morality, have rights? Will humans simply "afford" robots and machines rights, even if they won't ask for them (like animals)? What rights will robots made by other robots then have? What are the intellectual property rights of robots that for example make other robots or create things? Can robots, like gay and lesbian persons, adopt children, vote, have a right to protection, privacy, freedom etc.?

There is a strong current of opinion led by Raymond Kurzweil[30] to the effect that robots must be conferred rights[31] especially as consciousness is not a scientifically testable proposition. If the 'right to work' is redefined as a result, will that right be limited to humans or extended to robots that man created? The foregoing questions and opinions are fuelling the development of the law relating to robots and justification that 'robot law' be taught in law faculties on the same footing as say company, corporate law or human rights law.

Thirdly, Apps enable the use of digital technologies as tools and as weapons. As weapons, killer robots (like those used by the US Navy and smart drones that are used in warfare today) are capable of identifying the enemy and deciding to attack or not etc. Were this allowed to continue will it not be indicative of a decadent society that is bereft of morals?[32]

Fourthly, parting with the kind of personal and corporate data on which machines must rely, may be a trade-off for services rendered by robots in return. The cost of this to man and corporate bodies is the loss of confidentiality! Confidentiality and the protection of 'data' is a subject that is at the centre of legal issues relating to data and their protection as well as a factor of production, just like land was, during the agrarian revolution. In other words, whoever owns data owns a gold mine today. The 2018 Cambridge Analytica[33] data harvesting scandal of Facebook and its affiliate 'Cambridge Analytica',[34] highlights questions of the need for a better understanding of rights to digital age data, the extent and use of the said right to data posted by a subscriber on his social media account! This is because, the CEO of Facebook, questioned by the US Congress, admitted that Facebook is 'responsible' for what it publishes.[35] The implication here is that holders of Facebook accounts part with their intellectual property rights over data they post on their Facebook page. Through this medium then, Facebook owns and becomes 'responsible' for this data as its publications.

Conclusions or Where Policy and Legal Disciplines Should Go

The developments just reviewed seem to dictate where policy, legal disciplines and the law should go. It is therefore logical to ground some policy and ethical conclusions on the foregoing. Some legal disciplines like datagovernance, digital intellectual property law, cybersecurity law, law of cyber warfare, cybercrimes law, robotics law, digital age labour, insurance and tax law and more, are evident from the foregoing.

Policy and Ethics

Cameroon, has opted for massification of university education in law and the social sciences. Web technologies reviewed earlier now provide and constitute an educational platform for policy to adopt. Government policy and their implementation permitting, prospective law students can avoid the cost and trouble of geographical relocation to university towns in Cameroon, embrace Web technologies backed by the MOOCs model and obtain a recognized law degree issued by a local or foreign university.

As a corollary of the above policy, universities offering law degrees will have to elaborate law courseware in modules that are then posted online and managed based on the Coursera and edX models or better, and engage and undertake law faculty curriculum redesign inspired by legal disciplines of the future.

Secondly, the advent of the AI or the use of robots with smartminds raises ethical issues that have to be addressed at policy level if man is not to be rendered irrelevant by the machines he created. There is need for policy to regulate the development of Apps themselves, define what level of independence can be abandoned to developers of Apps who, for example, give birth to conscious robots or smart machines. Here, policy on robotics Apps can draw lessons from world reaction to the discovery of nuclear energy that led to the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency[36] (IAEA) in 1957.

The IAEA was created in response to the deep fears and expectations that resulted from the discovery of nuclear energy as demonstrated by the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan during WWII. The international community has since then policed the development, ownership and use of nuclear power through the IAEA. Judging from the trends in the Digital Age, there is every indication that the development of APPS and their uses has at least, the same negative potential as the nuclear technology.

The case of APPS that enhance the use of digital technologies might however be much more complex to resolve by the simple regulation of 'use', such as is the case with nuclear technology. Were policy to be restricted to rules governing 'use', as is the case for example with Cameroon's Digital Age laws,[37] after APPs are available, the consequence might be the same or worse than was the case with the atomic bomb.

Legal Disciplines of the Future

Attacks on network confidentiality,[38] availability[39] and integrity[40] as legal problems of the past two decades have given birth to especially the law of cyberwarfare, cybersecurity law and cybercrimes law as new legal disciplines. The Cambridge Analytica scandal is indicative of the place of data-governance as a major legal discipline of tomorrow. On this will depend digital intellectual property law, e-commerce law, electronic contracts law and more.

In addition to the foregoing disciplines, the level of disruption caused by robotics and AI to the concept of 'labour' and 'rights' alluded to earlier, pushes for 'the law of robotics' as well as for a substantive revisit of current labour, insurance and tax laws to the extent that they will never be the same again. The bounds of insurance liability for prejudice arising from the use of 'things' that are manned by robots or loaded with AI like driverless cars and trucks are yet to be defined. "Occupation" which is respected and rewarded by society may need to replace the concept of the 'right to work'. 'Labour', tax and insurance laws as disciplines in law faculties and as a subject of legislation for the legislator now have to be revisited.

Notes

1. Defined by Powell, W W and Snellman, Kaisa: '*The knowledge Economy*' Annu. Rev. Sociol. 2004. 30:199–220 as 'production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance, as well as rapid obsolescence'.
2. Mobile network penetration in Cameroon stands at 90% in 2018 per 'Mobile White paper Cameroon' study carried out by Jumia Commercial platform and Sac International quoted by Cameroon-info.Net March 17, 2018.
3. Internet penetration in Cameroon is 25% of its estimated population of 24.5 million inhabitants per 'Mobile White paper Cameroon", a study carried out by Jumia Commercial platform and Sac International published in Douala on March 14, 2018 and quoted by Cameroon-info.Net on March 17, 2018. Above 68% of youth between 15-24 are Internet users according to a survey conducted by Mediametrie in 2017: https://fr.linkedin.com/.../cameroun-les-chiffres-de-létude-médiamé...
4. Developer Madwire, https://www.futuristspeaker.com/business-trends/the-future-of-education/ published March 3rd, 2007 accessed May 27, 2018
5. The others being (2) energy, (3) water,(4) food, (5) environment, (6) poverty, (7) terrorism, (8) disease, (9) democracy (10) population per Warren H Buffet quotes at http://www.ruleson investing.com. '…the people who are most successful' .
6. International Student Mobility - Observatory on Borderless Higher ... www.obhe.ac.uk/documents/.../International_Student_Mobility_Patterns_and_Trends
7. Statistics obtained on 21/03/2018 from the registration services of the two faculties that make up most of the population of the University of Yaoundé II at Soa.
8. The Cameroonian University population in 2018 is estimated at of upwards of 100.000.
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15. who used the perception e-Learning 2.0 for the first time mentioned in his article when he stated: "For all this technology, what is important to recognize is that the emergence of the Web 2.0 is not a technological revolution, it is a social revolution". This statement means that nowadays, the usability of the technology gets simpler and simpler so that we are not forced to learn to use them in a technological way, but in a social one: https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/54bb/52d5787492c5f04a93356bb53bb3e527b6b8.pdf

16. Alec Ross, The Industries of the Future, Simon & Schuster paperbacks, New York, 2016, p.35
17. Alec Ross, Ibid, p.132
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32. For which see '*Le Développement Scientifique qui fragilise la société*' in relation to the Hiroshima bomb etc. in *Le kiosque du Monde* : édition du 6 aout 2015 - Le Monde.fr www.lemonde.fr/...monde/edition-du-7-8-2.
33. where the firms are alledged to have obtained Facebook users' private data to develop' political propaganda campaigns' in the UK and the US.
34. A British political consulting firm which combines data mining, data brokerage, and data analysis with strategic communication for the electoral process. https://cambridgeanalytica.org/
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38. According to Alec Ross (in 'The Industries of the Future, Simon & Schuster paperbacks, New York, 2016 p 125), this type of attack aims to steal or release secure information like credit card or social security numbers from a given system in an illicit or unauthorized manner. The US retailer Target was victim of this kind of attack.
39. These are attacks that hit a networks' availability or attacks that are typically known as denial-of-service (Dos) or distributed denial of service (DDos) attacks. They simply cripple the network by flooding it with a massive number of requests that render the site inoperable.
40. Network integrity attacks are more physical in nature, altering or destroying a computer code with a view to damaging its hardware, infrastructure or real-world systems, e.g. the Shamoon attack.

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'Makererization': Politics, Leadership and Management at the University of Botswana from 2011-2017

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I recently visited a friend in Soweto to pay my condolences after his wife died. While I was still in the process of greeting my bereaved friend, he said to me, "Thabo, I understand that you are the new Vice Chancellor for the University of Botswana, my condolences to you"!

Professor Thabo Fako

Abstract

This article examines an aspect of higher education leadership and university management through a critical appraisal of the leadership style and tenure of Professor Thabo Fako as Vice Chancellor (VC) of the University of Botswana (UB) from 2011 to 2017 and his attempts to dismantle the reforms of his predecessor. It addresses the important role played by the intersection between character, political strategy and administrative leadership in higher education reform. The article thus examines the manner in which these concurrently affect democratic and good corporate governance at university institutions, and as well the risks they pose in engendering widespread fear and institutional paralysis. It is written against the backdrop of a paper in 2004 by this VC castigating organizational restructuring undertaken by UB during that period. The article argues that state intervention in the selection and appointment of university management stalled reform and introduced a leader rendered paranoid by the selection process. 'Makererization' is used here to refer to the marginalization of UB by government through reduced funding and the VC's persecution of university staff and students.

Keywords: Makererization, political patronage; paranoia; victmization; elite interests; corruption; higher education leadership; university management.

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Résumé

Cet article examine un aspect du leadership de l'enseignement supérieur et de la gestion des universités à travers une évaluation critique du style de leadership et du mandat de recteur de l'Université du Botswana du Professeur Thabo Fako, de 2011 à 2017, et ses tentatives de réforme de l'institution. L'article aborde le rôle important joué par un mélange de caractère, de stratégie politique et de leadership administratif dans la réforme de l'enseignement supérieur. L'article examine donc leur impact combiné sur la gouvernance démocratique et la bonne gouvernance managériale dans les établissements universitaires, ainsi que les risques qu'ils posent en engendrant une peur généralisée et une paralysie institutionnelle. Il est écrit contre une publication, en 2004, par ce recteur condamnant la restructuration organisationnelle entreprise par l'Université du Botswana pendant cette période. L'article soutient que l'intervention de l'État dans le choix et la nomination de la direction de l'université freine les réformes et introduit des dirigeants devenus paranoïaques du fait du processus de sélection. Le terme « makererisation » est utilisé en référence à la marginalisation de l'Université du Botswana par le gouvernement à travers la réduction du financement, et la persécution par le recteur du personnel universitaire et des étudiants.

Mots-clés : « makererisation », favoritisme politique, paranoïa, victimisation, intérêts d'élite, corruption, leadership de l'enseignement supérieur, gestion universitaire.

Introduction

According to the highly experienced former leader of several universities in the United States, Kenneth Shaw:

> Leading is a process of persuasion and example by which one person induces others to take action in accordance with the leader's purpose and the institution's mission, vision and values…. I don't believe any leader can be successful without aligning his or her purposes with those of the institution and the people it serves and is served by. In fact, I'll go so far as to say that any leader who ignores values, vision and, people is doomed to a tenure of frustration and failure (Shaw 1999: 10).

Shaw aptly captures the aggressively opinionated and tantrum-prone Fako's fate as UB's ruthless leader from 2011 to 2017. Although six of UB's Vice Chancellors since its inception in 1982 faced protests and petitions by staff and students, Fako's Vice Chancellorship and leadership style were the most contentious and confrontational. Like most public universities the governance of UB while adhering to principles of good corporate governance

has a democratic touch to it. For instance, the process of recruiting vice chancellors and deputy Vice Chancellors for a maximum of two terms of five years each stipulates that after University Council has made the decision to advertise a position, management advertises it. Thereafter, candidates submit applications with a statement detailing their achievements and their vision for the institution. This is followed by candidates undergoing requisite tests with joint committee of council and senate shortlisting, interviewing and making recommendations to Council as the institution's highest decision making body (University of Botswana 2004). The nomination process constitutes something of an electoral college providing a popular mandate to a successful nominee.

A list containing the name of the candidate who gets the nod alongside the runners-up is then submitted to the Minister of Education and Skills Development who can either endorse the candidate or recommend an alternative.[1] Traditionally, this had been a mere formality as ministers often endorsed the name of the candidate leading the pack. In 2011, the name of historian, Professor Brian Mokopakgosi, former deputy Vice Chancellor for academic affairs at UB (1998-2008), appeared in the private media as Council's nominee. However, for the first time the minister decided against Council's choice and went for someone who was said to have been distant seventh in the shortlist. The 'fortunate' and history-making candidate was Thabo Fako.

The media noted that after the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) experienced its first split in 2010 the Minister for Education and Skills Development had convened a team of influential citizens sympathetic to the party to help it recover from the setback. Among the names mentioned in this group was that of Fako. Therefore, it was clear to the media that political maneuvering parachuted him into the vice chancellorship position in appreciation of his activism for the ruling party. Ominously, Mokopakgosi had previously co-authored a journal article concluding that unlike the impoverished opposition parties, BDP relies on "its incumbency to reward party activists and supporters by appointing them to positions in the diplomatic and civil services, and the councils, land boards, and tribal administration" (Molomo and Mokopakgosi 2000: 7). It seems Fako became the beneficiary of this patronage system which was largely not about meritocracy, and was susceptible to corruption and mismanagement.

Whereas in recent times BDP politicians have openly advocated that leadership positions in government and parastatal organizations be given to active and card-carrying party members, in the past there was room for merit instead of political expediency. Botswana's second president, Sir Ketumile Masire (1980-1998) writes that "People like Klaas Motshidisi,

commissioner of labour, and Mike Molefhane, who headed the Botswana Development Corporation, to name but two, were well known to have links to opposition parties. But as long as they were professional in their jobs, there was no reason for us to deprive the country of their skills just because of their politics" (Masire 2006: 99). In 2016 former UB sociology lecturer, Dr Patrick Molutsi despite being a capable administrator, could not continue being the chief executive officer (CEO) of Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) owing to his historical links with the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF). He was replaced by a well-known BDP activist and a former UB lecturer. A consistently star performing and prize-winning CEO at Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (MVA) could not have his contract renewed because his political affiliation was not clear (Malema 2016: 53).

The sociologist Fako's attitude was at variance with Botswana's national principle of *botho* which is "one of the tenets of African culture – the concept of a person who has a well-rounded character, who is well-mannered, courteous and disciplined" (Republic of Botswana 1997: 2). It is further said that "'*Botho*' defines a process for earning respect by first giving it, and to gain empowerment by empowering others…. It disapproves of antisocial, disgraceful, inhuman and criminal behaviour, and encourages social justice for all". Experts on leadership studies do consider behavioural aspect or interpersonal relations. While many UB staff members dismissed Fako as a psychopath and a mean-spirited megalomaniac whose misguided word was law, this paper examines aspects of his character that undermined good corporate governance at UB under his watch. He tried to ensure that any real or make-believe challenge to his misrule was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short", to borrow Thomas Hobbes famous dictum.

There are parallels between Fako's character and that of Joshua Galeforolwe, another chief executive of a government owned enterprise – Air Botswana. According to David Magang, former cabinet minister for transport and communications under which Air Botswana fell, Galeforolwe was a skillful manager who transformed Air Botswana from a loss-making into a profit-making entity. "His Achilles heel… was his inability to get along with the people in his charge. He was not, in behavioural science terms, the country club variety of manager. Some of the people he frustrated, owing apparently, to his lack of empathy and his uncompromising personality, quit the company" writes Magang (2008: 613). Magang further observes that "others took to extreme measures only associated with make-believe, Hollywood-type stunts, like a Motswana pilot who plunged the aircraft he was piloting into two others parked on the runway and died in the process". Whereas the Air Botswana board took into account Galeforolwe's star performance at the enterprise "they were of the view that the effectiveness

of a leader was not solely about how impressive the figures in the balance sheet were; *botho* did count as well and was, in fact, of equal importance. They recommended that he be dismissed". However, for Fako compromised *botho* and despotic impulse may not have been major factors in his fall from grace but his open criticism of the ruling elite's treatment of UB in relation to its supposedly politically connected private competitors.

Fako's attitude and leadership style dovetails with Francis Nyamnjoh and Nantang Jua's observation below in terms of leadership of African universities.

Among other people much of the information in this paper was provided by current and former employees of the UB through email and verbal communication. I avoid disclosing most of their names because some were worried about possible victimization.[2]

The 'Makererization' of the University in Post-colonial Africa

The economic and political deterioration in post-colonial Africa has in many respects been mirrored by the state of higher education or the university. Africa's mostly state-owned universities served the agenda of unaccountable ruling elites which severely curtailed academic freedom and productivity. To this effect, Nyamnjoh and Jua observe that:

> Education in Africa, from colonial times to the postcolony, has been the victim of various forms of violence, the most devastating of which is the violence of cultural and political conversion: externally and internally driven initiatives and processes intended to domesticate, harness, transform, alter, remodel, adapt, or reconstruct Africa and Africans through schools and universities to suit new ways of being, seeing, doing, and thinking. As a result of such violence, educational systems have privileged mimicry and transformed epistemologies informed by partial theories to metanarratives of arrogance, superiority, and intolerance of creative differences. Even when clear alternatives are imagined to the current irrelevance in education, economic difficulties render their realization extremely difficult. Repressive states have perpetuated and capitalized upon this predicament by manipulating desperate academics into compliance and complicity with mediocrity (Nyamnjoh and Jua 2002: 1).

In addition to the politicization of the university in Africa noted by Nyamnjoh and Jua, it has been severely affected by underfunding, brain drain, undue government interference, disturbances and closures (Onyejekwe 1993). Persecution by governments led to many emerging and vocal African scholars fleeing their countries for Western universities where they became household names in their different fields. This includes Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Ali Mazrui in Kenya, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka in Nigeria, and Mahmood Mamdani in Uganda.

Whereas universities across sub-Saharan Africa have experienced this development, one example that stands out and is used as a reference point in this paper is the once celebrated Makerere University in Uganda. Established in 1922 as a college by British colonialists Makerere's reputation became so impressive that it later became a regional university for East Africa and *alma mater* for some of the region's statesmen such as Julius Nyerere, Mwai Kibaki and Milton Obote among others. Renowned scholars such as the literary critic Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and political scientist Mahmood Mamdani are Makerere's alumni. Makerere even earned itself the nickname 'the Harvard of Africa'.

Some observers trace the decline of Makerere to the political turmoil and civil war that afflicted Uganda in the 1970s and 1980s. In 2009, Chancellor of Makerere, Professor Mondo Kagonyera, blamed Makerere's decline "into intellectual dwarfism on President Idi Amin's dictatorial government between 1971 and 1979, when intellectuals were intimidated and afraid to identify themselves in society" (*Sunday Vision* 18 July 2009).

Whereas, the government of Yoweri Museveni, starting in 1986 following the civil war, brought some recovery to Makerere this was later followed by reduced funding and stagnation. Mahmood Mamdani in his book *Scholars in the marketplace* examines the neo-liberal reforms at Makerere from 1989 to 2005. He concludes that while the study focuses on Makerere "it also illuminates larger issues raised by neo-liberal reform of higher education. Because neo-liberal reform at Makerere has been held up by the World Bank as the model for transformation of higher education on the African continent, these issues have a particular resonance for the African context" (Mamdani 2007: vii). This development led to the commercialization and even "massification" of higher education which Ane Turner Johnson and Joan B Hirt, and Bob Jessop describe as "academic capitalism" (Johnson and Hirt 2011; and Jessop 2017). Like most universities in Africa mismanagement of funds by Makerere authorities and massification of education also contributed to failure to regain its past glory. Makerere's fate was not helped by emergence of new universities which ended its traditional monopoly.

It should be noted that reduced state funding of universities and commercialization or commoditization of education or knowledge became a global phenomenon which affected universities even in Western countries, South Africa and Botswana owing to globalization (Tabulawa 2007). Whereas UB has had its fair share of disturbances and closures over the decades, the country's phenomenal diamond-led economic growth saw UB being well-funded. The institution was able to attract some leading scholars from both Africa and the West. However, in recent years Botswana's economy has faced serious challenges with unemployment of graduates and others reaching a disturbing level.

Until about a decade ago UB was the only university in Botswana and to some extent this contributed to its prestige. Just like Makerere the emergence of other public and private universities have given UB severe competition for students and government funding. So intense has been this development that UB had to respond by branding itself in a bid to become attractive to potential students particularly during the tenure of Fako's predecessor, Professor Bojosi Otlhogile.

It should be noted that unlike governments in other African countries, the Botswana government largely avoided direct persecution of academics which became Fako's one-man crusade. The deportation of political science lecturer Professor Kenneth Good in 2005 (Pegg 2005 and Taylor 2006) was a rarity. President Festus Mogae (1998-2008), who deported Good, only accused UB citizen academics of being preoccupied with narrow issues of personal welfare as opposed to national development, and also said they promoted tribalism in Botswana (Makgala and Gumbo 2017).

Thabo Fako's Condemnation of Organizational Restructuring at UB

By the last decade of the twentieth century UB was engaged in organizational reforms during which Fako was an active participant by virtue of being the institution's Deputy Vice Chancellor. His one term as Deputy Vice Chancellor ended in 1998 and around 2004 he penned a paper entitled "Reflections on organizational restructuring and change in a southern African university: The case of the University of Botswana". Here he says that the contemplation of organizational restructuring at UB in the mid-1980s was not a response to any major management crisis but proactive planning meant to usher in a more effective management as the institution anticipated significant growth.

He writes that the organizational restructuring UB was embarking upon was influenced by larger global managerial revolution traceable to the 1950s in the United States, and escalated in Britain during Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's administration. The objective of restructuring was to deal with issues "of overworked senior management; a weak middle management; a weak administrative and technical support staff; inefficient, costly, overstaffed and under-utilised operating levels; a reward system that had little relation to performance; and poor staff morale" (Fako c.2004). Fako's verdict is that:

> After most aspects of organisational restructuring were implemented at UB, unprecedented administrative paralysis, logistical failure and inexplicable delays crept into the system…. There was uncertainty, helplessness, cynicism, low morale and a sense of despair as predictable, understandable

> and, therefore, acceptable outcomes became a thing of the past. Demands for explanations of inaction, delays and unacceptable decisions punctuated Minutes of Departmental and Faculty level committees.
>
> Positions of administrative responsibility held by academic and non-academic staff assumed unprecedented importance. *Authoritarian arbitrariness and top-down communication increasingly replaced open and transparent consultation, democratic participation, consistency, predictability and relative efficiency within the institutional decision-making system* [emphasis added].

He further observes that "the new managerial ethic, which places administrators before academics, and systematically excludes them form meaningful participation in building the character and traditions of the university, has denied the institution creativity and vitality". Instead of UB being run efficiently the restructuring process only led to "tangible failure, decline and deterioration" (Fako c.2004).

Professor Bojosi Otlhogile's Organizational Restructuring

In 2003, Professor Bojosi Otlhogile, law lecturer and a cultured man, succeeded American Professor Sharon Siverts (1998-2003) as the new Vice Chancellor. Otlhogile's tenure coincided with the emergence of new tertiary institutions and private universities. Competition for students and government funding became fierce with UB being at the receiving end. Later government subvention to UB was also significantly reduced owing to slow economic growth and competing national priorities.

Otlhogile responded by introducing radical and far reaching reforms to UB's organizational structure with emphasis on decentralization. The reforms were spearheaded by Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Professor Frank Youngman. The restructuring was also inspired by UB's 25th anniversary in existence with a perception study undertaken for people to say what they thought of UB and its future. Among others, the result of the study was a recommendation for repositioning of UB to compete effectively with the new players. This development also led to the rebranding initiative which entailed visual and non-visual aspects. The visual aspects involved changing the design of UB's logo to an abstract entity believed to be in sync with modernity (Makgala 2018). Another visual aspect was the replacement of UB's gowns with new ones depicting colours of Botswana flag and national brand. According to Professor Otlhogile, the national colours were adopted in this way before they could be "usurped by newcomers" in the higher education industry (Makgala 2018).

The non-visual aspects of the rebranding exercise were in the form of a new document called "Strategy for Excellence". This was about repositioning UB as a truly African university with its research output intensified. However, despite the refrain of intensifying research what actually happened was intensification of bureaucracy with countless committees and endless meetings. Performance management system (PMS) was also introduced and its stringent demands made it unpopular with members of staff. Academics complained that PMS was more stringent for academics than management and support staff.

Another reform in the conditions of service was that one could be promoted to the rank of associate professor only if they had a PhD. The new conditions also borrowed heavily from the natural sciences in terms of publication requirements. For instance, heavy emphasis was placed on publication of articles in peer reviewed international journals as opposed to books. This one-fits-all condition was strongly opposed by people in humanities but to no avail.

Another non-visual reform was an initiative called revised organization of the academic structure (ROAS). It sought to radically change the arrangement of faculties into schools and make enrolment for programmes and course offerings flexible to students. Over the years UB had been accused of being too rigid in its course offerings which made it hard or impossible for students to enroll for courses they liked across different faculties. Nevertheless, the reforms recommended by ROAS were seen as too radical and cumbersome by some section of the academic staff.

During Otlhogile's tenure major and ultra-modern facilities such as construction of the school of medicine, stadium and olympic-size swimming pool among others, which had been initiated by his predecessor Sharon Siverts, were completed. Nevertheless, like all UB Vice Chancellors before him, Otlhogile also received petitions from staff and students protesting against his administration and even calling for his immediate resignation. In some instances court cases were instituted against his commissions or omissions sometimes by the student representative council (SRC) and staff trade unions. In his farewell speech in March 2011 he said that "I know I presided over some very controversial projects over the years. The policy on political activities on university campuses, parking and Performance Management System. Policy on political activity and PMS were deemed to undermine academic freedom" (Baputaki 18 March 2011).

Nevertheless, as Vice Chancellor, the modest Otlhogile commented extensively on draft articles given to him by emerging scholars which boasted their morale. He also made time to review articles sent to him from journals such as *Botswana Notes and Records*.

Thabo Fako as New Vice Chancellor

When Fako became the new Vice Chancellor in April 2011 the UB community, which had yearned for change, gladly welcomed him. Like with previous appointments of new Vice Chancellors the mood and hopes were high. This was articulated by Never Tshabang, president of University of Botswana Academic and Senior Support Staff Union (UBASSSU):

> Fako has served the university with dedication, honour and distinction…. He [Tshabang] stated that deteriorating working conditions and low staff morale resulting in demotivation and the loss of staff, flawed Performance Management System, thorny supplementary examinations, impending reorganisation of academic structures [ROAS], bad parking policy, acerbic employer-employee relations and the lack of organisational democracy among other challenges, are clear indicators of crisis.
>
> Tshabang said that UBASSSU trusts that under Professor Fako they will collectively meet the real, many and serious challenges they face, including staff welfare. "The union is looking forward to a healthy working relationship with Professor Fako, that UB be able to deliver on its core business and be a leading academic centre of excellence. We also want to appreciate the government's choice of Professor Fako as the next Vice Chancellor of the UB", he said (18 March 2011).

Once in office it did not take long for Fako, the "messiah", to pursue with zealotry the reversal of his predecessor's reforms. Unclear instruction was issued setting aside some aspects of PMS. The requirement of PhD in promotion to the professorial level was lifted among other conditions. ROAS was also set aside to great acclaim. This development gave rise to excitement by staff with a colleague in the department of sociology, sending an email giving highly positive feedback before the customary first 100 days elapsed for Fako.

Fako also strongly campaigned against the marginalization of UB by government which was giving more resources and hefty remuneration to staff at the recently established Botswana international university of science and technology (BIUST). This development adversely affected UB as it lost key staff to BUIST for greener pastures. In his campaign Fako enlisted support of the country's political parties by inviting their representatives to his office to plead with them. He told the politicians that the competition between UB and BIUST was unnecessary and could prove counterproductive instead of the two complementing one another as public universities. "Dr Kesitigile Gobotswang, the Secretary General for Botswana Congress Party (BCP), who is also a former UB academic says the crisis facing the University of Botswana is the politicisation of the institution by the government and

lack of tolerance for ideas from the opposition parties. Gobotswang says they are worried by the composition of the University of Botswana council which he alleged is predominantly made up of members of the ruling party" (Masokola 2015).

The matter was also raised in parliament as a concern that the once mighty UB was being brought to its knees by government. This seems to have done the trick because not long after housing and car allowances of about 40 per cent of staffs' salaries were introduced at UB.

At the national level there was a groundswell of dissatisfaction by the public and political leaders against the new logo. People complained that unlike the old logo the new one did not clearly depict UB history and national heritage (Makgala 2018). Fako's administration reinstated the old logo much to the delight of many at UB and nationally.

With the economy not doing well and government subvention to UB decreasing Fako became more spirited in his approach to government which he accused of giving preferential treatment to private universities. For its part, government through minister for newly established ministry of tertiary education, science and research claimed that UB was no longer attractive to potential students because it offered courses the market no longer needed. While the private media appreciated this reasoning it also supported Fako and argued that government should not let a public university like UB decline while supporting private universities some of which had inadequate and poor facilities such as libraries among others. The media classified these as "fly-by-night" institutions and ruling party politicians were suspected of receiving kickbacks from them. Occasionally, damaging reports appeared in the media whereby foreign lecturers at some of these institutions were exposed as having spurious qualifications.

In October 2016 President Ian Khama officially opened a magnificent ultra-modern sports complex at UB and Fako capitalized on the event to plead with him to protect and jealously guard against the trivial use of the designation "university". "He said that university along with other major national institutions, such as the national army and the police force, were regarded everywhere as an integral part of the core institutions of a sovereign state therefore the permission to use the title 'university' must not come willy-nilly" (*Sunday Standard* 20 October 2016).

Fako's One-man Reign of Terror and Makererization of UB

Fako set the tone for despotism early once ensconced in his imperial throne seemingly consumed by insecurity, paranoia and incorrigible snobbery. He unleashed a reign of terror on staff and students, and generally made the

atmosphere at the institution one of fear. Reports emerged that meetings he chaired often had toxic mood as discussions were not collegial with colleagues dressed down and harangued like hooligans sometimes in the presence of their juniors. He was also reported to have been in a habit of spending a lot of time in meetings bragging and raving about his alleged direct contact with the presidency of Botswana. The shenanigan was ostensibly calculated at intimidating and intensifying fear among those bombarded with it. Fear had become the order of the day at UB and this was not helped by whispers that the notorious and dreaded Directorate on Intelligence Services (DIS) operated on UB campus. At one point during the faculty of humanities board meeting the head of the department (HoD) of English expressed his frustration owing to some UB procedure, and true to form instead of Fako politely correcting him, he went berserk and lashed out at him claiming that one of the words he had used was totally unacceptable. The poor HoD was forced to apologize profusely like a hapless pupil to a schoolyard bully. As if the HoD's sincere apology and trepidation were not enough, not long after Fako summoned the dean of humanities and the "offending" HoD to his office to further pursue the matter.

It is also said that it was not uncommon for deputy Vice Chancellors, directors, deans, and heads of departments to be threatened with dismissal. Some of them were indeed removed from their positions rather unceremoniously. Some of these officials could not bear the abuse anymore and resigned or threatened to resign.

In 2011, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the affable Youngman resigned presumably owing to Fako's onslaught on the reforms Youngman and Otlhogile had initiated as the rebranding exercise. The suspension or abandonment of ROAS was believed to have been the final straw that broke the camel's back. Possibily, Fako was also settling old scores in certain instances. Commenting on the development Never Tshabang cautioned that while staff members were pleased with Fako setting aside ROAS, he ought to tread careful and avoid targeting and hurting people but rather concentrate on doing what was of greater good for UB (Keoreng 28 July 2011). However, Tshabang's wise counsel went unheeded.

Toxic relations also emerged between Fako and the staff of the newly established school of medicine. Since it was hard for UB to recruit medical experts, "competitive" remuneration packages were put in place to recruit and retain them although this was not necessarily successful (kebaetse *et al*. 2016). (This was before the introduction of housing and car allowances mentioned above). It looks like Fako would have none of this and decided to significantly reduce their wages as he believed that nobody should earn more than him

(Weeks 27 June 2015). A good number of staff in the school of medicine, some of whom were recruited from North America and Europe, resigned. Fako's onslaught and resultant paralysis on the multi-billion pula medical school makes for grim reading as told by staff members of the school:

> The high ranking committee (HRC) was established by cabinet to oversee the planning and costing of the establishment of the medical school. Importantly, the HRC was a decision making platform for all the important stakeholders….
>
> Shortage of doctors and frequent outages of essential drugs and equipment not only make medical training difficult but also demoralises instructors and learners…. These problems and difficulties were exacerbated by the collapse of the HRC in 2013 as UB no longer saw its usefulness. The new Vice Chancellor, Professor Thabo Fako, was of the opinion that the school no longer needed the special project status but should function as all other schools and faculties of the university. This decision, however, aborted many of the early gains and significantly delayed others including the creation of training positions for the MMed programmes, the implementation of the joint staff agreement and commissioning of the [university] teaching hospital….
>
> The collapse of the HRC destroyed the vehicle that was driving the commissioning of the hospital, which is still not yet open….
>
> The failure to establish training positions for the MMed trainees, as recommended by the HRC, is significantly impairing the school's ability to train specialist doctors for Botswana (Nkomazana *et al.* 2016: 237, 239-240).

At Okavango research institute (ORI) in Maun, Fako denigrated staff and whimsically demanded that they justify why the institute should not close down and staff relocated to UB's main campus in Gaborone. The humiliation was so unbearable that some staff members including the director of ORI resigned. In another curious development the dean of faculty of social sciences, Professor Happy Siphambe and his deputy were dragged before a disciplinary committee and stripped of their positions following allegations of misconduct. When the chairman of UBASSSU, Professor Thapelo Otlogetswe, was informed and sought clarity on the matter he was also frogmatched to a disciplinary hearing (Mooka 17 January 2016).

The dismissed dean took UB to court for reinstatement and later won the case. A lecturer in the law department, who had appeared alongside the former dean at the disciplinary hearing, later applied for promotion to the associate professor rank but was denied it after all due processes had endorsed his dossier. Naturally, he strongly suspected victimization for his close association with the former dean.[3] Charges of misconduct were laid against an unprecedented number of staff members accused of alleged misconduct of one form or the other. Most of them sued UB and won. It

was said that the five years of Fako's tenure witnessed UB being sued more than the previous decades put together, and it lost most of the cases with costs. This disturbing trend was even discussed in parliament.

In what seemed to be a case of pull him down syndrome, this author was obdurately and callously subjected to psychiatric and psychological examination for simply pleading that he continue passionately and productively leading research and mentoring instead of being conscripted into a bureaucratic position. His dean, Professor Andy Chebanne, was severely reprimanded and harassed at every turn ostensibly to force him to resign from the deanship for trying to reason with the hierarchy on the matter. It was only when legal action was resorted to by the author that the hierarchy beat a hasty retreat and sanity prevailed. Appointments to departmental headship were generally characterized by double standards as the Vice Chancellor sometimes rode roughshod over departmental nominees and imposed his choices, sometimes seemingly as "reward" or punishment for the appointee. The bullying, mobbing and victimization of staff with the Vice Chancellor's alleged connivance seemed widespread with some cases having severe psychological consequences on the victims (e.g. see Pheko 2018).

Media reports appeared indicating that Fako was on the offensive against some professors whom he believed were plotting to dislodge him. Deans of the faculties of humanities and education were mentioned alongside that of social sciences as being on the firing line for their alleged ambition. "Of these three, Prof Siphambe is seen as the greatest threat to Fako since he is the potential next Vice Chancellor, while Prof Tabulawa [education] is seen as the most cantankerous, and an instigator. Fako fears that when his contract ends it may not be renewed and he may be replaced by Prof Siphambe. To try and thwart this, Fako has charged Prof Siphambe with gross misconduct and dragged him before a disciplinary committee" (*Mmegi* 30 January 2015). This scenario is not being recounted here for its validity or otherwise but to demonstrate that Fako's leadership style created a conducive environment for conspiracy theories and claims of witch-hunt.

Fairly early on Fako clashed with director for legal affairs and his deputy leading to their immediate resignation from UB at the same time. Another major resignation was that of deputy Vice Chancellor for academic affairs, Professor Otlogetswe Totolo.

Another serious concern was Fako's penchant for appointments on prolonged acting basis which seemed to have been a delusional strategy of his consolidating power but had negative impact and paralysis on UB. It is said that by the time he bit the dust almost a quarter to about half of UB management positions were not substantial but acting.[4] The resignation

of director of legal affairs saw the position remaining vacant for about five years with Fako himself being the acting director. This development brought to a halt matters of projects money. UB lost millions of pulas and US dollars in relation to research funds because things would pile at the Vice Chancellor's desk for months on end. For example, UB including ORI had a German funded project called Southern African Science Service Center for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL), ORI's share in this project was P10 million (about US$1 million), at some point ORI had to wait for almost seven months for Fako to append his signature and have the money allowed into UB. In 2016, ORI had a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded project to prepare the Chobe Integrated Landuse plan, they waited for months for permission from the Vice Chancellor to sign the document until UNDP gave up on ORI and gave the project to somebody else (Email from Mbaiwa, 18 March 2017). At one point two professors in the faculty of humanities secured the desperately needed funding of P500,000 from National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) but Fako refused point-blank to sign the contract. Many other projects were lost to UB in similar fashion.

The previously simple and straightforward application for sabbatical leave became a protracted, inconsistent and frustrating process. Some applications were returned for revision on the grounds that they had too many planned activities. Ironically, in some cases where applicants had tried to have fewer planned activities in line with new developments their applications were rejected as too lean.

Unlike his immediate predecessor Fako was too aloof and did not respond to emails for assistance on academic exercises. David Magang, a former long serving cabinet minister, influential entrepreneur, member of the BDP, and a prolific writer informed the author that in 2015 Fako agreed to be a keynote speaker at the launch of Magang's book entitled *Delusions of grandeur*. Nonetheless, towards the day of the launch Fako reneged on his promise arguing that the book was too critical of government's economic policies. It seems he did not want to be seen as consorting with people who express critical but constructive views on his political patrons. It also explains his attitude towards academic freedom.

Dashed Hopes: News of Fako not Extending his Contract

Very early in 2016 news broke that Fako would not seek contract renewal for a second term. Ominously, contracts for deputy Vice Chancellor finance and administration and his colleague deputy Vice Chancellor student affairs had ended a year prior.

In this section we also turn the focus on the students and Fako's leadership. Media reports indicated that just like staff rejoiced when Fako became Vice Chancellor "Students were also looking up to Fako as their concerns were not addressed during Otlhogile's era" (Ranthatsa 11 February 2016). However, the relations between Fako and the student community also became acerbic. This is better explained by the journalist Janson Ranthatsa:

> Kago Mokotedi who served as the president of the Student Representative Council said Fako never deserved to be the Vice Chancellor hence his decision to step down comes as a relief on the part of the students…. 'Fako lacked accountability and viewed the SRC not as equal stakeholders but his adversary…. It was during his reign that; politics were banned within campus, popular student bar, 411 closed, intervarsity games were suspended, SRC was ripped off its benefits like free on campus accommodation and malicious charges were laid against the SRC', he explained. Mokotedi called on the relevant authorities to review the procedure on the appointment of the Vice Chancellor and the chairman of the university council adding that the current one was flawed.
>
> Another former SRC president, Jacob Kelebeng said Fako was too philosophical and autocratic hence reluctant to solve problems emanating at the university. 'As someone who served under his leadership twice, I realised that Fako's working relationship with students and academic staff was shaky because of his favouritism and pettiness'…. Kelebeng said the only thing he appreciates about Fako is his decision to change the university logo though the university spent millions of pula on the exercise (Ranthatsa 11 February 2016).

Another former SRC president, Richard Khumoekae, said Fako was "bossy and too rigid for the contemporary world" (Mooka 29 January 2016). It should be noted that the SRC has over the years been the bastion of opposition activists, and this may explain the friction between student leaders and Fako as they belonged to rival parties.

Interestingly, it was also alleged that Fako was stepping aside because he had fallen out of favour with his principals at the ministry. It was claimed that the reason for this was government's interference in the running of UB. In particular, the state of the art university hospital at UB was said to be a facility government wanted to control directly which frustrated Fako.

Advertisement for the Vice Chancellor position was made. Many staff members and students looked forward to change of regime at UB. However, hopes were soon dashed when Fako's contract was renewed by the minister. The reasoning was that all critical three positions of deputy Vice Chancellors had been filled up with new and inexperienced office holders. The departure

of Fako would have meant that even the Vice Chancellor would be a new official, a situation deemed as working against continuity. Nevertheless, Fako's autocratic leadership did not change, and in November 2016 a newly elected UBASSSU executive committee submitted a hard hatting petition with a long list of 36 grievances against Fako's leadership since 2011.

UBASSSU's Hard-hitting Petition Against Fako's Leadership

It should be stated that the presentation of the petition to UB council chairman, Parks Tafa, was characterized by very low attendance by staff and union members. This summed up the extent of fear of victimization that gripped the institution. Tafa's chairmanship had always been controversial as it was seen as politicization of council by virtue of him being an office holder in the ruling BDP. The petition declared a motion of no confidence on Fako and demanded Tafa to send him packing within seven days of the petition.

The litany of grievances outlined in the petition included lack of consultation with staff by Fako since his appointment in 2011. It was said that he had disregarded the practice of collegial annual address of staff to update them on the implementation of the university's strategies in fulfilling its mandate (UBASSSU 8 November 2016). The petition indicated that Fako had only addressed staff on 20 October 2016 after almost six years. Even then his address was dismissed as having lacked substance.

He was also accused of having suspended ROAS yet even as late as November 2016 "we don't know nor understand what the status of ROAS is since its unceremonious and questionable suspension without a word from Council" (UBASSSU 8 November 2016). To be fair to Fako, for all his sins when he stopped ROAS this was hailed as a step in the right direction by the then leadership of UBASSSU as noted above. Nevertheless, the petition worried that Fako did not replace ROAS with an alternative coherent organizational restructuring arrangement. He was also accused of unilaterally trying to institute unsanctioned restructuring of UB among others through the centre for continuing education (CCE) which was stopped through litigation by affected staff members.

The Vice Chancellor's administrative and decision-making style and operations were said to be arbitrary, authoritarian, clouded with secrecy, and prejudicial to the affected individual staff members whose welfare and career paths were disrupted while the effective functioning of their departments and units was also curtailed.

UBASSSU raised serious concern regarding lack of or delayed admission of students which had unpleasant implication on the security of employment for the academic staff owing to declining student numbers enrolling at UB. It was felt that the Vice Chancellor had failed to convince government to fully support UB in terms of having sufficient students in programmes it offered.

Concern was also expressed on "a growing trend where minutes of some upper decision-making structures are indiscriminately manipulated to put staff at a disadvantage in disciplinary matters". This was said to be institutionalized as no action was ever taken against the perpetrators by the Vice Chancellor whom at one point he himself was accused of forgery by altering council minutes in order to end a contract of a staff member. The victim took the matter to Court of Appeal and its president was reported to have been shocked by Fako's forgery of the council minutes (Pheage 8-14 February 2017).

Fako's penchant for expensive international travel was pointed out as disturbing. "We have never been taken into confidence about the institutional benefits of the Vice Chancellor's globetrotting in his first term of office. The only obvious benefits we know of are those accruing to him in terms of the pleasure of the adventure of global travel, and meeting billionaires (as he has sometimes bragged about it), as well as personal emoluments in the form of per diem claims" (UBASSSU 8 November 2016).

The union also demanded that council involve the union in instituting a committee of inquiry to investigate a broad range of allegations of mal-administration, corruption and financial irregularities during Fako's tenure.

Government's Suspension of Fako and his Face-saving Resignation

UB's financial woes worsened as 2016 wore on and the minister responsible for UB and his deputy were unbending on their position that UB should adapt or perish in the new higher education market. However, given Fako's arrogance and craving for globetrotting he could not appear at some critical platforms such as parliamentary committee on statutory bodies and enterprises (PCSBE) to make a case for UB. In September 2016 Fako sent his deputy Vice Chancellor for student affairs (also acting as deputy Vice Chancellor for academic affairs), Professor Martin Mokgwathi, to represent him at PCSBE and this greatly annoyed the committee chairman, Guma Moyo. He condemned Fako's attitude of not appearing before the committee himself as out of order and undermined it. He even threatened to jail him for what he felt amounted to insolence. Moyo also worried that Fako had previously avoided appearing before public accounts committee (PAC) of parliament. The annoyed Moyo chased Mokgwathi away (Batenegi 19 September 2016).

It was not until November 2016 that Fako swallowed his pride and made an appearance at PCSBE. Perhaps, mindful of the UBASSSU petition, he set aside his political loyalty and made a strongly-worded accusation of government as seemingly hell-bent on starving UB of funding and students to ensure its demise. It was reported that projected figures showed that private institutions would enroll more students than public institutions. According to a report produced by HRDC "the enrolment at tertiary level has almost doubled, rising from 31,129 in 2007/08 financial year to 60,583 in the 2014/15 financial year. During the 2014/15 financial year, out of the 60,583 students enrolled in tertiary institutions, private tertiary institutions accounted for 42.6 per cent of the students. A drastic growth by almost all private institutions" (Masokola 29 November 2016). This phenomenal growth of private tertiary institutions was taking place alongside controversial debate questioning their credibility, ownership, accreditation, quality of courses they offered and professionalism of some of their staff.

Fako was also reported to have said that "government should understand that the university has already made some commitments by signing contracts with academic staff and such decisions by government continue to sink the university in crisis" (Masokola 29 November 2016). It was stated that in addition to the above concerns government had also failed to pay UB tuition fees for three consecutive financial years. Fako said that the institution needed about P1 billion to cover operational costs but for the past three years it received P776 million, P714 million and P703 million respectively.

He then went for the jugular as "he openly stated that some private institutions have been given an illusion of being a 'university' while in actual fact they are not, given their capacity, resources and the learning environment. To me a university is a prestigious institution, and the name 'university' should be protected" (Masokola 29 November 2016). This seems to have been an effective presentation of which Moyo sympathized with and blamed government and HRDC for UB woes. Private newspaper editorials also supported Fako and lambasted government's mistreatment of UB. National trade unions also threw their weight behind UB against what was viewed as unfair competition.

In mid-January 2017 it was reported that council was under pressure to devise a strategy to sack Fako as a result of expression of no-confidence in the direction he was leading UB. It was alleged that Fako and Dr Alfred Madigele, Minister for Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology, had fallen out and their relations ebbed very low. "Impeccable sources say Fako's remarks blaming the Government for under-funding, as well as harbouring intentions to collapse the UB, was the last straw that broke the camel's back" (Kayawe 13

January 2017). When reached for his side of the story Madigele dismissed the view that Fako's tirade at PCSBE had any impact on his ministry's relations with UB. "As a Ministry, we are concerned about the way things are at UB, as well as the negative perception that has been created around it", Madigele was cited as saying (Kayawe 13 January 2017).

To make matters worse for Fako, students went on strike complaining of delayed payment of their subsistence allowance by government. In the process some students rioted, destroyed property and looted shops on campus. Madigele responded by closing UB until 6 March 2017. This development took place while Fako was away.

Communication appeared stating that Fako had been suspended but soon it was announced that he had tendered a resignation letter (UB, 17 March 2017). He immediately went on sabbatical leave which he had made very difficult or impossible for others –a case of double standards. Former SRC president, Mokotedi, who claimed to have chafed under the full wrath of Fako's yoke or "the Fako Syndrome" as he called it, danced on the grave of Fako's doomed second term tenure through a letter in the media (Mooketedi, 24 February 2017). Nonetheless, like any despotic ruler throughout history, Fako also had his praise-singer(s). For instance, a lone staff member, who disparaged UB professors, described him as "a great leader and a good Vice Chancellor". In mid-April an anonymous pro-Fako diatribe appeared in the *WeekendPost* slandering UB professors. It also vilified and de-campaigned those perceived as angling to succeed Fako as Vice Chancellor (Anonymous, 15-21 April 2017). The vicious and libelous diatribe also pontificated on how UB could be run efficiently.

Following Fako's exit an acting Vice Chancellor was appointed with indication that by September a new substantive office holder would be anointed. However, by the beginning of November no one had been appointed. Fako's legacy of having many management positions held on acting capacity affected the functioning of UB because some office holders, who hoped to be appointed on substantive basis, were unwilling to make decisions that would jeopardize their chances. This paralysis led to a disappointed European Union university teacher development advisor joking that the UB was like Hollywood because everybody was "acting".

The Likely Reason for the Ruling Elite's Loss of Confidence in Fako

It is highly unlikely that Fako was suspended for aggravating the alleged negative perception of UB. The BDP does not take kindly to party member criticizing its government in public. Even in parliament members who express strong reservations against government have been forced to retract their

statements and apologize publicly. In a worse-case scenario a parliamentarian for Tonota constituency was recalled as the party's candidate for the general election. This development took place despite the parliamentary immunity guaranteed to members against victimization (Molomo 2012).

The BDP demands total obedience and praise-singing from its members. Therefore, for Fako, who had been done an extraordinary favour with the Vice Chancellorship, criticizing government could have made him viewed as disloyal. His castigation of government for supporting what was seen as "Micky Mouse" universities may have rubbed some elements in the ruling elite with vested interest in these institutions the wrong way. An editorial comment by the local and private *Telegraph* newspaper is quite instructive, "the biggest challenge to University of Botswana has come from political corruption…. Government officials, clearly taking instructions from their political masters have been capricious and manipulative in their disbursement of tuition fees" (*Telegraph* 3 November 2016). It continued, "over the recent years we have seen private colleges that have no claim to being called colleges enjoying excessive patronage in the form of government sponsored students. There is now ample evidence that suggests some of the money ends up lining the pockets of these political elite, a thing that could not happen had the money been sent to finance students at the University of Botswana". It has been observed that in recent years government has shown astonishing unwillingness to combat growing elite corruption and mismanagement (Mogalakwe and Nyamnjoh 2017).

One wonders why Fako ran riot at UB for such a long time without council reining his despotic impulse in. We can only hazard an informed guess that as a political appointee his political patrons had to maintain a fiction of confidence on him, and it was not until Fako started openly campaigning against government's funding of private universities at the expense of UB, hence threatening interests of sections of the ruling elite.

Interestingly, while UB was being turned into Botswana's Makerere, by October 2017 Professor Totolo as Vice Chancellor of the well-funded BIUST was swearing "to turn BIUST into Botswana's 'Oxford'," (*WeekendPost* 28 October to 3 November 2017).

Although we use the rather unpleasant history of Makerere University to illustrate grim developments at UB, to be fair to Makerere, in recent years it has consistently performed much better than UB in terms of international rankings based on research output.[5] This has not been helped by continued reduced government funding which led to contracts of several eminent professors not renewed with real possibility to impact negatively on UB's international standing.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated the impact of Thabo Fako's leadership style on UB management that led to institutional paralysis at UB. This was a result of the ruling party cadre deployment common in sub-Saharan Africa and flies in the face of the widely acclaimed public service initiatives which emphasize competence and merit as well as on *botho* or *ubuntu.*

For Fako, victimization and humiliation became his stock-in-trade in dealing with those he felt somehow undermined his authority or misrule. Bad interpersonal relations made him an uncompassionate (mis)ruler as opposed to a *botho*-driven leader in the twenty-first century. As a political appointee the natural expectation was that he protected and defended government and not castigate it. Acting against this expectation was tantamount to betrayal of elite interests for which he seems to have paid a price.

Notes

1. The Ministry has since changed names but here we stick to the name that was in use at the time.
2. Contributions were received from Professor Andy Chebanne, Professor John Holm, Professor Jacqueline Solway, Professor Joseph Mbaiwa, Dr Tachilisa Balule, Professor Lovemore Togarasei, Dr Joseph Tsonope, Dr Boga Manatsha, Mr Isaac Ndai-Paulos, Mr Sandy Grant and Prof Francis Nyamnjoh.
3. Email communication from Dr Tachilisa Balule, 20 March 2017.
4. Email communication from Professor Joseph Mbaiwa, 18 March 2017.
5. For instance see https://www.afterschoolafrica.com/4768/top-100-universities-in-africa/ and https://answersafrica.com/top-50-universities-in-africa-latest-rankings.html

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