Leadership Philosophy and Interventions to Support Middle-level Units within Large Academic Institutions: Experiences at the Makerere Peace and Conflict Studies Centre

Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala* & Dickson Kanakulya**

Abstract

This article discusses practical lessons on how leadership intervention philosophy can be used to design and ensure that an academic unit within a big institution realises its mandate. The interventions took place at the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (MPCSC) at Makerere University between 2015 and 2019. The undertaking was guided by systemic leadership intervention philosophy and transformational leadership. The methods used in the intervention included: leadership interventions, secondary data analysis, narrative analysis and autoethnography. The article uses a combination of analytical and auto-biographical reporting styles. Major findings include the following: there is a leadership skilling gap between high-level and mid-level managers in large university units; in large academic institutions, mid-level managers must combine traits and process leadership approaches in order realise progress. Key observations: student enrolment drives achieved a slight improvement in numbers (from 14 % in 2015/2016 to 42 % in 2018/2019); a minor improvement in workstations led to a more than 100 per cent increment in usage by staff and students; the Centre noticed a 63 per cent completion rate of specialised skills training by staff; on average, interdisciplinary research teams perform better than single discipline teams, but the former required extra effort to keep together; the interventions led to a 70 per cent increase in community outreach through avenues such as projects, experiential learning sessions, consultancies, etc.

Keywords: leadership, interventions, middle-level units, academic institutions, Makerere University

*   Department of Religion and Peace Studies, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University. Email: helen.nambalirwa@mak.ac.ug; nhnambalirwa@gmail.com
** Department of Philosophy, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University. Email: dickson.kanakulya@mak.ac.ug; tdkana@gmail.com

Résumé

Cet article traite des leçons pratiques sur la façon dont la philosophie interventionniste du leadership peut être utilisée pour concevoir et garantir qu'une entité académique marginale au sein d'une grande institution exécute son mandat. Les interventions ont eu lieu au Centre d'études sur la paix et les conflits (MPCSC) de l'Université de Makerere entre 2015 et 2019. L'entreprise a été guidée par la philosophie interventionniste du leadership systémique et le leadership transformationnel. Les méthodes utilisées dans l'intervention incluaient : les interventions de leadership, l'analyse des données secondaires, l'analyse narrative et l'auto-ethnographie. L'article utilise une combinaison de styles de rapport analytique et autobiographique. Les principales conclusions sont les suivantes : il existe un écart de compétences en matière de leadership entre les administrateurs de niveau supérieur et ceux de niveau intermédiaire dans les grandes entités universitaires ; dans ces dernières, les administrateurs de niveau intermédiaire doivent combiner des qualités et user d'approches de leadership pour réussir sa mission. Principales observations : les campagnes d'inscription des étudiants ont permis d'améliorer légèrement les statistiques (de 14% en 2015/2016 à 42% en 2018/2019) ; une amélioration légère des postes de travail a entraîné une augmentation de plus de 100 pour cent de leur utilisation par le personnel et les étudiants ; le Centre a enregistré un taux d'achèvement de 63 pour cent de la formation aux compétences spécialisées par le personnel ; en moyenne, les équipes de recherche interdisciplinaires obtiennent de meilleurs résultats que les équipes monodisciplinaires, mais les premières nécessitent des efforts supplémentaires pour rester soudées ; les interventions ont entraîné une augmentation de 70 pour cent de rapprochement communautaire par le biais de projets, de sessions d'apprentissage par l'expérience, de consultations, etc.

Mots-clés : leadership, interventions, entités de niveau intermédiaire, institutions académiques, Université de Makerere.

Introduction

On a bright sunny morning I cautiously opened the door to the co-ordinator's office at the Makerere University Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (MPCSC), filled with a mixture of apprehension, excitement and burdensomeness. It was 2015 and I had just been elected co-ordinator of the Centre, under the Department of Religion and Peace Studies. My election made me the first woman to lead that unit, which is sited in one of the leading universities on the African continent.[1] At the time of my election to the office, I was heavily pregnant. It was therefore a very heavy season for me, both

physically and in heart. Amidst that state, I remembered the wise words of my grandmother (Ms. Agnes Babirye Wakaisuka, RIP), 'My granddaughter, you are such a strong woman and I know you will one day serve this world in a major capacity.' The remembrance of those words encouraged me and I set out to undertake the task ahead, to deliver satisfactory services to clients and put the Peace and Conflict Studies programme on the map, locally and internationally.– Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala

The Centre had a number of challenges which included low staff morale, low student enrolment, inadequate resource mobilisation and inadequate institutional space, among others. As a Centre, it was not quite clearly positioned within the bigger university structure, especially after the transition to a collegiate administrative system. It also needed a clearer leadership philosophy alignment by the time the new co-ordinator assumed office, to execute its mandate within the department and the overall university. Faced with such challenges, a combination of the co-ordinator's personal wit and support from a transdepartmental team enabled her to transform the Centre, and the Centre was able to register some successes and learnt the lessons contained in this article.

This article discusses practical lessons on how leadership intervention philosophy can be used to enable a marginal unit within a big academic institution to realise its mandate. The interventions took place at the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (MPCSC) at Makerere University between 2015 and 2019, and some are still ongoing. The undertaking was guided by systemic leadership intervention philosophy and transformational leadership. The objectives of the interventions were:

1. To increase enrolment and delivery of interdisciplinary and skill-based graduate teaching;
2. To promote an interdisciplinary research culture; and
3. To increase visibility and outreach of the MPCSC at national, regional and global levels.

Using an autoethnographic lens, the authors present an analytical and autoethnographic report of part of the story of the MPCSC. The report starts with a brief history of the university and the Centre, presents the leadership gap and methodology applied, then gives a brief outline of the leadership philosophical and theoretical framework, and concludes with a discussion of the practical interventions implemented during this period and their impact.

Leadership Needs in a Changing African University: The Makerere Case

Makerere University, which started as a small technical college in 1922, was formally incorporated under The Makerere University Act in 1970. This status continued until the enactment of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA) (2008). Further amendments occurred, and in 2012 the university was transformed from a faculty-based to a collegiate system, with nine colleges and one School of Law.

Just like many African universities, Makerere has undergone rapid expansion in the past decades, in terms of the increase in student enrolment, staff recruitment, academic programmes, community outreach and internationalisation, among other areas. This growth, however, has not been followed by the requisite leadership skilling and preparation to meet the demands of a twenty-first-century university. In many cases these changes have stretched the leadership capacities of the university.

The wider context within which the expansion of African universities has taken place has been discussed by Mahmood Mamdani (2007), who explores the neoliberal reforms pushed by the World Bank on African higher education and their resulting wider implications and challenges for the African university. In his book, *Scholars in the Marketplace*, Mamdani delves into the leadership crisis that rocked the Makerere University Business School (MUBS), a semi-autonomous affiliate of Makerere University, which drew in government officials (Mamdani 2007: 206–7). The institutional reforms that Mamdani discussed started in 1992 through the urging of the World Bank and brought about enormous changes at Makerere University. The university's decision-making became decentralised to the extent that no one, neither the centre nor any of the constitutive units, had a comprehensive idea of the reforms in the university (2007: 32). Mamdani observed that university leadership had a duty to 'safeguard [academic] quality and encourage innovativeness' (2007: 54); but this presented a challenge to Makerere University.

The reforms led not only to a rapid duplication of academic programmes, especially in the humanities, which were turned into cash cows for the almost wholly privatised university, but also to people taking up university leadership positions without the requisite preparations and skilling. The university leadership has continued to address this challenge over the years. Recently there have been more calls for leadership training and more practical steps are being taken to meet this need. The principal of MUBS has since instituted several leadership training programmes to equip the managers with change management skills.

The Makerere Peace and Conflict Studies Centre

By 2015, when the new co-ordinator took office, the Centre had problems in certain areas of performance, such as student enrolment and research collaboration, among others. As Mamdani (2007) discussed, the initial reforms at the university had led to some diversification in programmes offered by the department. While government and high-level university managers pushed for governance changes at Makerere University, mid-level leaders were charged with implementing the rapidly evolving university policies. But at the Centre we soon realised that there was not enough research and knowledge on how mid-level university leaders implemented these changes in relation to the university mandate, of research, teaching and community outreach.

The Makerere University Peace and Conflict Studies programme falls under the Department of Religion and Peace Studies, which is within the School of Liberal and Performing Arts, in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Department runs several undergraduate and graduate programmes in religion, peace and conflict studies. Of these, the Master of Arts degree in Peace and Conflict Studies commenced in 2003 as an interdisciplinary, two-year course, the primary goal of which is to produce competent and well-grounded scholars and practitioners in peace, conflict resolution and transformation. The MA programme has since produced fruitful research working with Ugandan government institutions, universities and other tertiary institutions in Uganda, East Africa and the wider sub-Saharan Africa region. It also has collaborated with institutions in Norway, the United Kingdom, and with organisations such as the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the German scholar exchange service – DAAD, the Norwegian Programme for Research, Development and Education – NUFU, UN Women-Uganda and the United States Institute of Peace – USIP. Given Uganda's geopolitical location and its importance in the volatile region of East and Central Africa and the Great Lakes Region in particular, strengthening the existing Peace and Conflict Studies programmes and approaches enable Makerere University to contribute to peace research in the region and enrich stakeholders' interventions.

The Centre has also managed exchange programmes for students from North America, Europe and Africa's Great Lakes Region. During these exchange visits, students have visited refugee settlements and camps for Internally Displaced people (IDPs) in Uganda. In turn, Students from the Centre have visited several universities in North America and Europe. The Peace and Conflict Studies programme has also produced several

publications. In addition, the programme has hosted, convened, moderated and or facilitated several important public dialogues around governance, human security and peace-building issues in Uganda.

Theoretical Framework and Leadership Gap

Middle-level academics play an important role in running universities in Africa. They provide co-ordination for faculty, design and execute academic programmes and ensure quality control. At the same time, these academics face difficult responsibilities, such as integration into a complex organisation, performance amidst rapid change, and talent development among others. Lisa Haneberg (2010) has argued that middle-level academics require coaching and induction to realise their full potential, but, in most organisations, leadership development at this level has been given little attention.

Wolverton and Gmelch (1999) carried out research on the duties of heads of departments in academic institutions in the United States and Australia, and reported that middle-level academics who are appointed to leadership and management roles were given six main responsibilities, namely: routine administration, resource management, scholarship, leadership, faculty development and resource development. Mampane (2017) has argued that since most middle-level managers in higher education are former class teachers, they require leadership training, which would equip them with 'updated abilities, interests and knowledge for leadership' (Mampane 2017: 143). Her research concluded that acquisition of leadership and management skills for effective teaching and learning by HoDs has a positive impact on learner performance and teacher commitment (Mampane 2017: 148).

The need for leadership skilling for middle-level managers at academic institutions has been affirmed by various bodies, such as the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA). In their report, *Building Regional Higher Education Capacity Through Academic Mobility* (2011), they note that SADC universities had an increase of 5.8 per cent in foreign students that year, which presented a unique challenge in educational management (SARUA 2011: 1–2). The report also identified issues of quality assurance and staff depletion or attrition as affecting effective university education. It recommended more staff and student mobility, plus other novel ideas, such as 'diaspora lecturers'. The Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) also raised concerns about the need for skilful leadership at universities in that region. It recommended strategic leadership training and robust quality control measures to mitigate this challenge. It encouraged the engagement of middle-level managers at universities in the region, quality control and the establishment of high standards of self-assessment (IUCEA 2010).

Leadership Intervention Frameworks and Philosophy

It has been argued that leadership interventions are successful in enhancing leader effectiveness (Reichard and Avolio 2005). This assumption is premised on the type of leadership exercised and the nature of the interventions that are determined or designed. It was therefore important for our intervention scheme to understand the nature of leadership at the Centre. We observed that there are two major types of leadership: *Traits* leadership ('Nature') and *Process* leadership ('Nurture'). The former is the type of leadership that is based on innate qualities or capabilities, whereas the latter refers to leadership skills that are groomed qualities through training or observation. The type of leader affects interactions with followers, and this is a critical factor in determining the intervention (see Falk 2003). A review of the leadership type that the co-ordinator was providing at the Centre showed that it was a combination of both traits and process leadership. So, to achieve our goals, we agreed to design interventions that incorporated both types of leadership.

Bolman and Deal (1991) have developed a Four Framework Approach to explain four types of leadership framework and philosophy: political, human resource, symbolic and structural. They tested these frameworks on a number of leaders and managers and found that 'Managerial effectiveness is related to an emphasis on rationality and organisational structure. Leadership effectiveness is linked to symbols and culture. For men and women in comparable positions, gender is unrelated to leadership orientations or to their effectiveness as managers or leaders.' Their framework is illustrated in Figure 1.
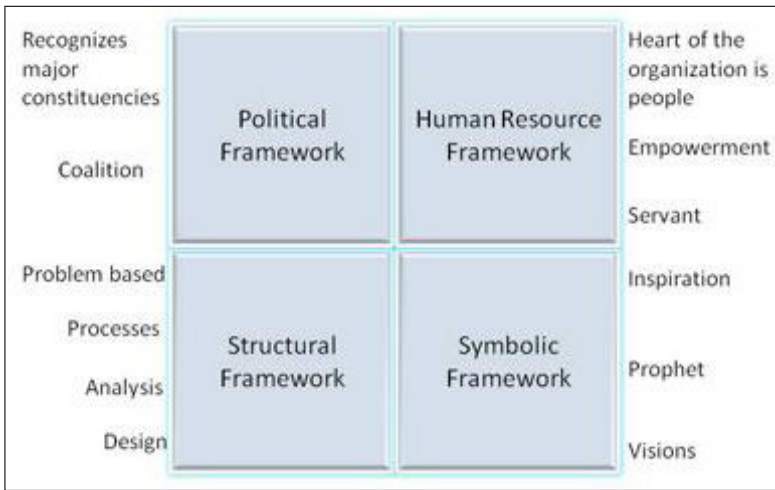

Figure 1: Leadership framework
Source: Adapted from Bolman and Deal (1991)

The political framework considers pleasing a leader's constituency and building coalitions; the human resource framework is aimed at building the capabilities of the people who are working in the unit; the symbolic framework is focused on keeping the organisation inspired and motivated; the structural framework is concerned with organisational design and set-up. This framework was used in the interventions at the Centre, by selecting from the different sections of the grid and designing interventions in tandem. However, a limitation was recognised in terms of the structural interventions because at middle-level management there is little that can be done to change the structures in place.

Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) have used an African critical gender approach in researching women's leadership in Africa. They have generated what they refer to as the integrative framework, drawing from African feminism and postcolonial theory. They propose it as a framework that can advance the understanding of African women in leadership and management. Their critical review shows that even though women's representation in leadership had grown exponentially over thirty years (1970s to 2009), there had not been a keen study of the impact of African women on leadership and management. They observed that there is a glaring paucity of systematic research focusing directly on African women leaders and managers (Nkomo and Ngambi 2009: 53). They further argue that their integrative framework provides a way in which to apply postcolonial theory and African feminism to analyse women's leadership. The leadership interventions designed for the Peace Centre were cognisant of this approach and applied in the sense of giving African women the opportunity to explore their leadership potential and fill the observable gap.

Administration Theory

Metagovernance is defined as the science of managing amalgamated groups of units, which share interests and a common vision. It is the engineering of the administrative and governance environment and conditions towards specific goals (Jessop 2008: 7). One of the key thinkers on the concept of metagovernance is Bob Jessop. He states that, '… the emergence of metagovernance…[is] part of the more general change in the forms of statehood. Metagovernance is a response to governance failure' (Jessop 2008: 218). He advances three basic modes of metagovernance, namely, 'meta-exchange', 'meta-organisation' and 'meta-hierarchy'. The first deals with redesigning markets, the second with redesigning organisations and the third with organising the conditions for self-organisation. Metagovernance is about the engineering of the political and social environment to ensure that institutions work. In Jessop's view, there are three ideal styles of

metagovernance: hierarchical, network and market styles (Jessop 2011: 106–23). Jessop postulates that, 'The calibration of the three in an overall framework is the subject matter of meta-governance.' (ibid.).

From this perspective, the administrator needs to be well versed in administration to apply any of the three types or variations of metagovernance. 'Hierarchical' means governance that lays emphasis on top-bottom structures and respects traditional power structures and positions in each organisation. 'Network' means the administration of organisations through purposefully establishing networks; it spreads organisational power horizontally. 'Market' places emphasis on the role of market forces in shaping or framing the organisation. It is suffice to note that there are scholars who think that a combination of all three is better for administrators who are dealing with a mixed administrative environment where public and private interests meet (Meuleman 2008).

Jessop's study recognises the reality that most public academic institutions in Africa are hierarchical in power structure due to the governance bureaucracy and colonial legacies. Therefore, this leadership intervention took into consideration the hierarchical power structures at Makerere in application and analysis. A hierarchical power arrangement is one in which authority is arranged in such a way that the higher the power grid, the more sacred the one in charge is portrayed or viewed to be. Vredenburgh and Brender (1998) analysed the ethical nature of hierarchical power and the implications of its abuse. They developed a 'process' model (1998: 1340) for analysing the impact of the abuse of hierarchical power, which contains two parameters: disrespect for people and interference with job performance. A cursory observation of power dynamics in East Africa indicates that the abuse of hierarchical power could be the dominant expression of power relations in the region. And it has caused a lot of ethical challenges in the political and administrative processes, which this study considers a bit more in the subsequent sections.

Likewise, Vredenburgh and Brender (1998) also recognised that there is a need for networking at higher institutions of learning because of the nature of academic and research work. The network type means an interlocking system of power relations or interconnected groups of power holders, sometimes expressed as public–public and public–private partnerships (Sørensen and Torfing 2009). The 'public–public' type refers to public or state authorities collaborating on given projects or policies, whereas 'public–private' networks mean the collaboration between a state unit and a private entity on a given project. Sørensen and Torfing (2009) argue that networking governance is useful because it fosters democratic and effective

administration (2009: 240). It facilitates the regulation of standards across a wide spectrum of units, the conflict resolution of difficulties that result from national policy differences, broader planning purposes and the mobilisation all the stakeholders (2009: 234).

Collaborative Leadership

In the intervention, there is a combination of metagovernance with collaborative leadership to encourage the development of horizontal research collaborative approaches to meet international norms of interdisciplinary and interinstitutional collaboration. Horizontal collaboration enables project teams to collaborate across institutional and organisational borders, such as across academic and business lines. It also allows for knowledge fertilisation across academic boundaries and learning best practices from cutting-edge or fast-emerging fields. At the institutional level, administrative interconnections were established between the Centre and other universities and institutions in other parts of the world. This encouraged inter-unit and interdisciplinary prospects and projects for the cross-fertilisation of research ideas and dissemination.

Intervention Design and Methodology

The research methodology we used was qualitative because of its good analytical value in context-rich research that deals with leadership interventions. The interventions were premised on the acknowledgement of the need for leadership intervention at middle-management level to deliver satisfactory services to clients. The intervention was conceived using a systemic intervention philosophy, which means that the interventions were carried out within the framework of the Makerere system or structural set-up within which the Centre exists. This intervention was designed as a qualitative study aimed at observing the impact of intervention mechanisms adopted at the MPCSC and to evaluate the capacity of middle-level academic managers to transform academic units within complex institutional environments such as Makerere University.

The assumption that guided the co-ordinator's practice was that achieving sustainable leadership within a rapidly changing African university education environment is dependent on effective mid-level leadership. The key question was: How can mid-level leadership interventions enable the Peace Centre improve the delivery of its research, teaching and community outreach mandate? The methods used in the intervention included leadership interventions, secondary data analysis, narrative analysis and autoethnography. These methods are depicted in Table 1. The specific

tools used included document and records review, evaluative analysis and observations. The interventions designed included student enrolment drives, space improvements, skills training, positive reinforcement and motivation, building research teams and community outreach.

Table 1: Methods used

METHOD	TOOL(S)	INSTRUMENTS	EXECUTION	OUTCOME
Secondary data analysis	Document analysis	Document analysis scheme	Reports and documents analysed	Insights on theories, policy alignment, gaps and discourses
Narrative analysis	Interviews	KIIs on former managers of the Centre	Experts and key stakeholder interviews	Expert opinion and data on PSS
Autoethno-graphy	Observation	Reporting by mid-level manager	Change analysis	Intervention impact data
Leadership interventions	Tailored interventions	Intervention monitoring	Round table discussions	Intervention impact data

The Makerere Peace and Conflict Studies Centre was used as an atypical case study because of its capacity to yield a wealth of insightful information (Gerring 2007). Such cases can act as both a methodological paradigm and a data analysis technique and platform (Flyvbjerg 2006). The study was an in-depth examination of the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre aimed at understanding how middle-level leadership interventions impact on the performance of university units.

The study sought to bridge the knowledge and implementation gap (see Figure 2) that exists between high-level and mid-level university managers. This creates a divergence between policy designers and implementers, thus affecting the university mandate to provide research, teaching and community outreach.

The interventions designed were:

1. Space improvements
2. Skills training
3. Positive reinforcement and motivation
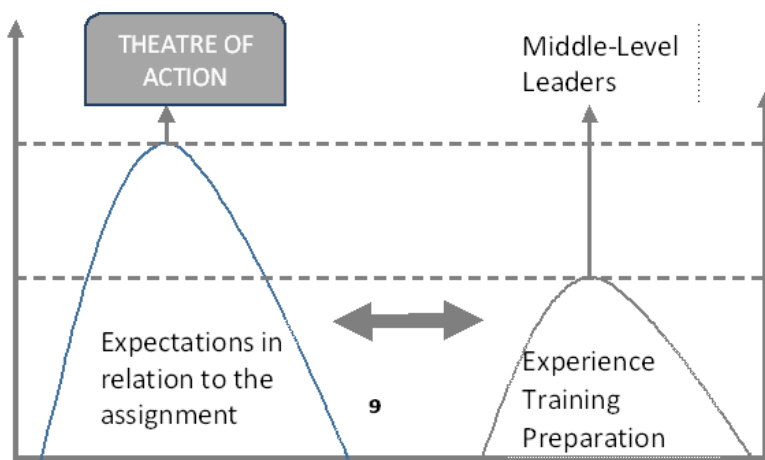4. Research teams building, and
5. Community outreach.

Figure 2: Middle-level leadership intervention knowledge and implementation gap
Source: Authors

These interventions were designed following given leadership frameworks. Autoethnography was used for the purposes of capturing the co-ordinator's story as a leader, using a personal journal to capture changes and challenges that the MPCSC was facing. Document review was done on institutional documents, journal articles, historical accounts of Makerere University and policy documents, to get an insight into the management of the university.

Implementation of Practical Leadership Interventions

The specific leadership interventions that were designed and executed included the following:

1. Enrolment drives and staff increment;
2. Environmental improvements (i.e. space increments and environment improvements);
3. Skills training (ToT skilling in virtual/online teaching; Alternative to Violence Programme skills);
4. Positive reinforcement and motivation (motivational talks and presentations);
5. Research teams building (interdisciplinary research team formation and functionality monitoring);
6. Community outreach (community-based experiential learning and consultancies); and
7. Promotion of the Centre (website development, promotional materials, dissemination, etc.).

The results of the leadership interventions are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Leadership intervention strategies

OBJECTIVE	INTERVENTION STRATEGY	EXECUTION	RESULTS
1. To increase enrolment and delivery of interdisciplinary and skill-based graduate teaching	- Enrolment drives - ToT interventions - Staff increment	3 Annual enrolment and recruitment drives 4 ToT and staff skilling sessions	- Few staff engage in student enrolment drives - Enrolment improved between 2017-19 - ToT improved AVP and online teaching
2. To promote interdisciplinary research culture.	- Formation of functional research teams - Positive reinforcement	- Two research teams suggested and formed: Research Team 1: departmental; Research Team 2: Cross-departments	- Research Team 1 proved dysfunctional - Research Team 2 has been functional but with challenges of cohesion
3. To increase visibility and outreach of the MPCSC at national, regional and global level	- Engage in community-based learning - Provide outreach services	- Targeted 1 community-based experiential learning session p.a - Targeted 2 major consultancies or community outreaches p.a.	- 3 extended community-based experiential learning sessions executed - 2 consultancy proposals won and carried out

Enrolment Drives and Staff Increment

The Centre carried out enrolment drives using online advertising, newspaper advertising through the Academic Registrar's office and word-of-mouth promotion through our alumni. This resulted in a revival in the numbers of graduate students enrolling (see Figure 3).

The number of students enrolling for the MA Peace and Conflict Studies had dropped from the peak of fifty-six students in 2005/2006 to eight students in 2014/2015. Decreasing enrolment numbers and rapid changes in university education terrain had exerted pressure on the traditional approach to the university mandate at Makerere.
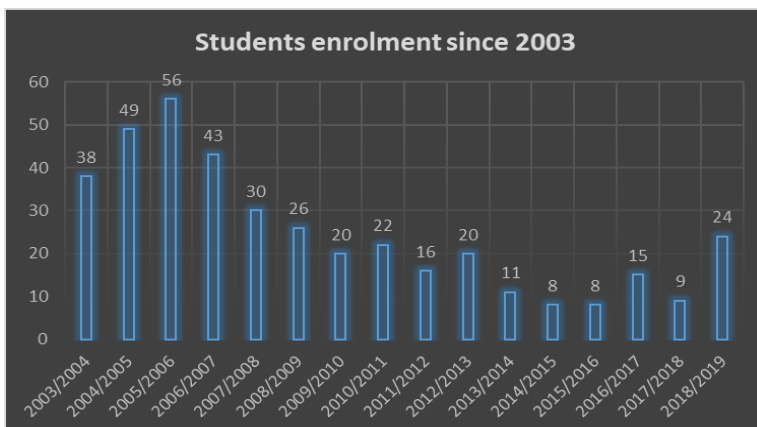
Figure 3: Student enrolment drives

Source: Departmental file record

The staff recruitment strategy was quite challenging because there was a government moratorium on staff recruitment at universities in Uganda except for replacements or in critical fields. So, we went through our mother Department of Religion and Peace Studies and then the college principal to engage higher-level administrators and find solutions to this challenge. The result was that some extra staff were recruited on a part-time basis. We also were able to borrow staff from other units to assist in teaching some courses and in supervising graduate students. This led to an increase in academic staff to twenty-four staff (including part-timers), as presented in Table 3, which provides a breakdown of current staff numbers.

Table 3: Staff capacity at the MPCSC

POSITION	CAPACITY (2014)	CAPACITY (2019)
Professor	2	4
Associate Professor	1	2
Senior Lecturer	4	7
Lecturer	5	5
Borrowed staff	0	1

The staff numbers improved a bit over the years as Table 3 shows. However, one of the biggest challenges that we still faced in 2019 was the high rate of staff turnover. Employee turnover is a general challenge for public universities in the country, and is due to inadequate remuneration. Currently, the situation is improving as a result of the salary increment in

the past two years. This increment, however, has led to the new challenge of dissatisfaction resulting from the divide between the senior staff in the rank of associate professor and above, and the middle or junior staff, including senior lecturers, lecturers and assistant lecturers. A study on the same will be of benefit to the grid. As a result, public universities are losing talented and skilled junior staff to the private sector in significant numbers.

Environmental Improvements

Under this category of leadership intervention, there was a deliberate effort geared towards improving the work environment. The MPCSC had been given some working space on the campus in a building that had been a residential house for senior staff. This house was being shared with other programmes under the Department of Performing Arts and Film. So, one side of the building was used by another department, which resulted in occasions of inconvenience to the staff and graduate students who held many learning activities there.

We approached higher-level university administrators to request better working and teaching space but had little success due to the high demand from the other units within the university. So, we settled for the existing space. Through funding from the embassy of Turkey, secured by Helen N. Nkabala the coordinator and Haji Abdu Haji Abdu Katende, a senior member of staff, we were able to acquire furnishings, a functioning boardroom and ten desktop computers for the graduate study space, and improved the staff offices. We also set up a space for making tea and coffee, plus minor gadgets for making hot drinks.

This intervention was able to make working space for twelve staff members daily (from five), which was an increase of over 100 per cent. Among the graduate students, the increase in usage was more dramatic: records on the use of study materials in the reading space showed that it increased, from six students to nineteen daily. This included students from other departments plus other staff. There was a 32 per cent increase in staff interaction at teatime in the space we provided for making hot drinks at break times.

Skills Training

We conducted Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions in order to update the skills of the staff teaching the Masters' programme on Peace and Conflict Studies. We were able to carry them out in three areas, namely: Advanced research skills in conflict studies; ToT skilling in virtual/online teaching; and Alternative to Violence Programme skills. Our records indicate that during these training sessions we had an average completion rate for each course of

63 per cent for each session (DRPS 2018). This could not be compared with earlier training because there were no records of completion of training by staff. But we think it is a commendable completion rate for staff training. However, there is room for improvement and we plan to work on this going forward. The annual staff evaluation reports indicate that staff[2] are more skilled than before. In addition, the students' evaluations show that 72 per cent of the staff are more confident, 83 per cent deliver their teaching well and 69 per cent carry out their supervision roles on time (DRPS 2018). However, we need to carry out a proper client and stakeholder satisfaction survey to establish these reports scientifically.

Positive Reinforcement and Motivation

Since 2017 we have conducted five motivational events, such as workshops and talks, to inspire our students and staff: three were for students, and two were for staff. During those events we had a 92 per cent attendance by the students, whereas the staff events attracted a 72 per cent attendance. Even though the level of motivation acquired by the participants is difficult to measure, the increase in engagement at the Centre by the students and staff is indicative of a more motivated faculty.

Building Research Teams

In terms of building research teams at the Centre, the co-ordinator experimented with two types so that we could compare results, as depicted in Figure 4. The first type was an in-house research team, made up of members of the same department (Department of Religion and Peace Studies). The second research team was interdisciplinary, made up of members sourced from a variety of units (see Figure 4). These teams were encouraged to work together, generate projects and disseminate research findings together, plus other activities. The formation and findings were interesting and gave us lessons for the future.

IN-HOUSE RESEARCH TEAM
- 1 Dept. (Religion and Peace Studies)
- 7 members
- Formed in 2015

RT-1

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH TEAM
- 4 Depts. (Religion, Philosophy, History, and Statistics)
- 6 members
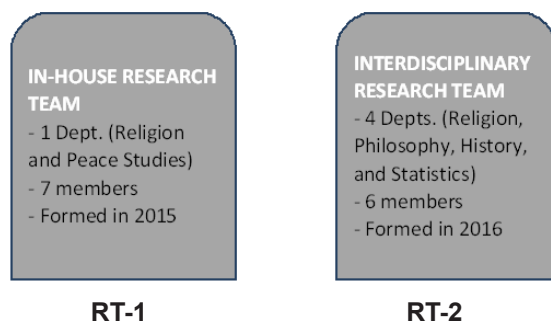- Formed in 2016

RT-2

Figure 4: Research team composition

The performance of the two research teams was monitored, and some interesting observations have been made about their functionality, as Table 4 shows. The differences are marked: it was easier and faster to form RT-1 because the members belonged to one department; it was more difficult to build RT-2 because they came from different departments. This also affected the cohesion of the two kinds of research teams, with RT-1 scoring high while RT-2 cohesion was ranked as medium. However, the interdisciplinary research team seemed to get their proposals written faster than the in-house research team. It should be noted that this experiment is still ongoing, and more observations will be made along the way.

Table 4: Research teams' performance

PERFORMANCE VARIABLE	RESEARCH TEAM	
	RT-1 (In-house)	RT-2 (Interdisciplinary)
Number of members	7	6
Year of formation	2015	2016
Average age	51 years	39 years
Disciplines represented	1	4
Proposals written (over 5 yrs)	4	11
Projects conducted	2	5
Level of team cohesion	High	Medium
Joint publications	2	10
Joint dissemination events	2	4

Community Outreach

The Makerere Peace and Conflict Studies Centre set out to engage in community outreach as one of the mandates of the university to make academia relevant to society. The Centre has mainly been involved in community-based experiential learning, outreach courses for the public, and consultancies for outside clients. In 2015 the Centre executed a project on experiential peace learning. It was carried out in four communities, with twenty-one students and seven staff members taking part in the project. This resulted in establishing collaborative relationships with several community-based organisations and NGOs, which included: Muslim Centre for Justice and Law (MCJL); International Alert (IA); Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI); Action for Fundamental Change and Development (AFCAD); United Religions Initiative Great Lakes (URIGL); and Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU). Table 4 shows selected community outreach projects and assignments carried out by staff at the Makerere Peace and Conflict Studies Centre.

Table 5: Selected community outreach projects

ASSIGNMENT	LOCATION	ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION	CLIENT	PERIOD
Intermediary course in: 'Peacebuilding, human security and conflict transformation'	Bwebajja, Uganda	Designing an advanced course, materials development and delivery	Uganda Police Senior Command and Staff Training College	Jan–Feb 2019
Conflict analysis and the implementation of 1325	Kigali, Rwanda	Designed, developed and delivered 5-day training to 22 senior prison officers from the East African Community	East African Community (EAC) Secretariat	19–24 Nov. 2017
Evaluation of CSO-led programmes for countering extreme violence in Uganda	Uganda (Northern and Central regions)	Developed specialised tools for evaluation of Civil Society Organisation (CSOs)-led programmes for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)	United States Institute for Peace (USIP)	Nov 2016–Nov 2017 (1- year project)
Conflict analysis, resolution and conflict reporting	Juba, South Sudan	Designed, developed and delivered 3-day training to 15 UN personnel in Juba	United Nations Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS)	16–18 October 2017
Advanced course in: 'Peacebuilding, human security and conflict transformation'	Bwebajja, Uganda	Designing an advanced course, materials development and delivery	Uganda Police Senior Command and Staff Training College	Oct–Dec 2017
Conflict transformation training	Juba, South Sudan	Preparing materials and delivering 5-day training to 25 UN personnel in Juba	United Nations Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS)	13–17 March 2017
Advanced course in: 'Peacebuilding, human security and conflict transformation'	Bwebajja, Uganda	Designing an advanced course, materials development and delivery	Uganda Police Force (UPF)	Oct–Dec 2016
Reconciliation and social cohesion	Juba, South Sudan	Designed, developed and delivered 2-day training to 20 UN personnel in Juba	United Nations Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS)	19–20 October 2017
Conflict Transformation training	Juba, South Sudan	Materials preparation and delivered a 5-day training to 25 UN Personnel in Juba	United Nations Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS)	13–17 Feb 2017
Advanced course in: 'Peacebuilding, human security and conflict transformation'	Bwebajja, Uganda	Designing an advanced course, materials development and delivery	Uganda Police Force	Oct–Dec 2016

Promotion of the Centre

The Centre embarked on promotional activities, which included website development, promotional materials and dissemination events. The Centre's first website was launched in 2016 and it led to contact from global audiences; many students have ended up applying to study at the Centre after coming across it. In 2019, after a very competitive process, the Centre was chosen to host the first Rotary Peace Centre on the continent of Africa. This led to further growth of the Peace Programme at Makerere University as can be seen on our new website: http://www.rpc.mak.ac.ug.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the above presentation, it is evident that people react differently when faced with an opportunity to take on leadership. In the case of Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, the co-ordinator presented in this paper, without much prior knowledge she adopted the traits of collective and distributive leadership styles, tapping into the strengths of her colleagues to drive the Centre forward. Also, the co-ordinator was very determined to transform the Peace Centre into an admirable place, and in this was again unknowingly driven by the transformational leadership style. Through this determination, by the time of concluding this publication, the Peace and Conflict Studies programme has grown to host the first and only Rotary Peace Center on the continent under the leadership of Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala. It is therefore advisable that new leaders faced with similar situations read about and engage with these styles to guide their action plans and points. The most important and most sustainable approach in the need for systemic university change and policy is deliberate and continuous holistic staff training and development avenues, through seminars and other means, for all – since they are all staff who are potential leaders. Indeed, there have been recent efforts in this line by the Makerere University Management through the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof. Umar Kakumba.

Notes

1. Makerere University was ranked 5th in Africa by the Times Higher Education in Africa report (2018); it was also 2nd in research output in Africa.
2. The Makerere staff review report is carried out annually but is subject to confidentiality clauses that limited the authors from sharing such data here.

References

Bolman, L. and Deal, T., 1991, Leadership and management effectiveness: A Multi-Frame, Multi-Sector Analysis, *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 509–34.

Department of Religion and Peace Studies, 2018, *Student Evaluation Report, Semester Two 2018*, DRPS, Makerere University.

Eisenhardt, K. M, 1989, Building Theories from Case Study Research, *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 532–50.

Falk, I., 2003, Designing Effective Leadership Interventions: A Case Study of Vocational Education and Training, *Leadership and Organisation Development Journal*, Vol. 24 No. 4, pp. 193–203.

Flyvbjerg, B., 2006, Five Misunderstandings About Case Study Research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 219–45.

Gerring, J., 2007, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Haneberg, L. 2010, *The High Impact Middle Manager: Powerful Strategies to Survive in the Middle*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Talent Development Series.

Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), 2010, *A Road Map to Quality: Hand Book for Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, Vol. 1, Guidelines for Assessment at Program Level, Arusha: IUCEA (http://repository.eac.int/bitstream/handle/11671/2044/Quality%20Assurance%20Handbook%20Vol%201.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

Jessop, B., 2008, *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach*, London, UK: Polity Press.

Mamdani, M., 2007, *Scholars in the Marketplace: The Dilemmas of Neo-liberal Reform at Makerere University, 1989–2005*, Dakar: CODESRIA.

Mampane, S. T., 2017, Training Middle Managers of South African Public Schools in Leadership and Management Skills, in *Current Business and Economic Driven Discourse and Education: Perspectives from Around the World*, Sofia: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society (https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED574239.pdf).

Meuleman, L., 2008, *Public Management and the Metagovernance of Hierarchies, Networks and Markets: The Feasibility of Designing and Managing Governance Style Combinations*, Heidelberg: Physika–Verlag.

Nkomo, S. and Ngambi, H., 2009, African Women in Leadership: Current Knowledge and A Framework for Future Studies, *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 49–68.

Reichard, R. J. and Avolio, B. J., 2005, Where are We? The Status of Leadership Intervention Research: A Meta-Analytic Summary, in Gardner, W. L., Avolio, B. J. and Walumbwa F. O., eds, *Authentic Leadership Theory and Practice: Origins, Effects and Development*, Oxford: Elsevier, pp. 203–223.

SARUA, 2011, *Building Regional Higher Education Capacity through Academic Mobility*, SARUA Leadership Dialogue Series, Vol. 3, No. 1.

Sørensen, E. and Torfing, J., 2009, Making Governance Networks Effective and Democratic through Metagovernance, *Public Administration Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 87, No. 2, pp. 234–258 (https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.2009.01753).

Vredenburgh, D. and Brender, Y., 1998, The Hierarchical Abuse of Power in Work Organizations, *Journal of Business Ethics,* Vol. 17, pp. 1337–1347 (https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005775326249).

Wolverton, M. and Gmelch, W. H., 1999, The Impact of Role Conflict and Ambiguity on Academic Deans, *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 70, No.1.