

GLOBALIZATION, DEMOCRATIZATION AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

AT THREE SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

by

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## ABSTRACT

Following the demise of apartheid in 1994, new higher education policies have placed high expectations on universities to play a pivotal role in the transformation. This study examines the responses of academics, graduate students, senior managers and librarians at three universities to the changes resulting from globalization (neoliberal reforms, growth and new technologies) and democratization (redress and equity) and whether these universities have the research capacity to contribute to social justice in South Africa. .

Case studies were conducted at the universities of Port Elizabeth, Fort Hare and Rhodes. In-depth interviews and surveys were conducted with 108 participants across the disciplines who identified the dominant changes as increased managerialism/entrepreneurialism, the establishment of representative governance structures and equity policies and a shift from Mode 1 (pure, basic and fundamental research) to Mode 2 (applied, transdisciplinary and transinstitutional) form of research.

Adopting critical postmodern, feminist and decolonising methodologies, I find that the tension between the dual goals of globalization and democratization has made it difficult for universities to pay equal attention to achieving growth and social redress. The effect of the neoliberal policies embedded in modernist assumptions has been to silence the redress intentions of these policies, thereby bringing into jeopardy the transformation of South African higher education. First, managerialism redirects the energies of these institutions away from the democratization project. Second, neoliberal economic reforms place pressures on researchers, reducing their research capacity. Third, the equity emphasis on representativeness and numbers serves the project of modernity instead. Fourth, the neoliberal preoccupation with merit reproduces the hegemony of the dominant group. Fifth, Mode 2 research is not being applied appropriately in research involving communities and indigenous knowledge systems. Sixth, decolonizing methodologies, as well as critical

postmodern methodologies, are needed to deconstruct and 'de-struct' the modernist and hence colonial and racist apparatuses of these institutions.

Although the three universities evince commitment and hope for the future, their capacity to contribute to growth and redress through research remains constrained by the dissonance between policy intents and implementation. The study makes a number of recommendations for building research capacity that will advance the transformation of these institutions and allow for stronger research partnerships with indigenous communities.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CHE	Council for Higher Education
CHET	Centre for Higher Education Transformation
COSALC	Coalition of South African Library Consortia
DNE	Department of National Education
DoF	Director of Finance
DoR	Dean/Director of Research [UPE has a Director; Rhodes and Fort Hare have Deans]
EAD	Encoded Archival Description
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistributive Policy
HBI	Historically Black Institutions
HBU	Historically Black University
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Institutions
HE	Higher Education
HWI	Historically White Institutions
HWU	Historically White University
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ILL	Interlibrary Loan
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IT	Information Technology
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NEPI	National Education Policy Initiative
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRF	National Research Foundation
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
R&D	Research and Development
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Program
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPSE	South African Post-Secondary Education
SASLI	South African Site Licensing Initiative
THRIP	Technological and Human Resources for Industry Programme
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UPE	University of Port Elizabeth
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTORY

The demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa in 1994 resulted in the initiation of a new social order founded on one of the most democratic Constitutions in the world. The transformation process was accompanied by a proliferation of new policies in every sector, not least of all higher education. Given the grossly inequitable, ethnicised and racialised system of higher education that had been developed to serve the needs of the apartheid state and economy, the intention of the new government was to bring about an equitable and democratic higher education system that would contribute to social change and the establishment of social justice for all its people.<sup>1</sup>

The major new higher education policies, such as the Higher Education Act (1997) and the White Paper 3 (1997), impose high expectations on universities to play a pivotal role in the transformation in terms of the dual goals of economic growth (globalization) and social redress (democratization). At the global level, universities may help to position South Africa as a competitive player in the knowledge-based economy through knowledge creation, high skills and innovation whereas at the local level universities may, through their research and community service, contribute towards solving the backlog of social problems arising from the apartheid era, as well as helping to reconfigure the racialised notions of identity and culture that continue to exist.

Although the new policies appear to emphasise the knowledge producing role of South African universities, little research has been conducted on their research capacity and the impact of these new policies on researchers and their contribution to knowledge production. Scholarly debates and analyses of the new policies have centred on the binary effects of marketization and democratization. Previous studies have focused on effective

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, the terms higher education and university are used interchangeably to denote post secondary institutions, which offer degrees at the baccalaureate and post baccalaureate level.

governance, leadership and management; institutional culture; racial attitudes and behaviours. The equity policies and their implementation and effectiveness have been analysed by using the yardstick of access and numbers and the legal terrain for non-compliance. There have been few attempts to interrogate the modernist and liberal constructs of the policies that align themselves so well with neoliberal philosophies, leading to the inherent inability of employment equity to bring about the desired redress and social justice. Although equity has been linked to notions of equality, it has been interpreted mainly as increasing the numbers of previously disadvantaged groups to ensure that the student and staff demographics at these institutions more closely resemble the national demographics of the country (South Africa, 1997a; Cloete et al., 2002, ch.1, 12). Scholars have discussed Mode 2 research and notions of relevance mainly as they pertain to the market and industry.<sup>2</sup> There has been no examination of what 'socially relevant' research involving partnerships with local indigenous communities might entail.

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study has been to examine the responses of academics, graduate students, senior managers/ policy makers and librarians at three South African universities to the forces of globalization (neoliberal economic reforms and new technologies) and democratization (redress and equity), with a particular focus on how the changes resulting from these forces relate to their research programs and knowledge producing processes. The study investigated how these universities are attempting to develop their research capacities, as one very important aspect of their contribution to a new democratic social order in South Africa. As a result of this analysis, I consider and make recommendations about the steps that might be taken to enhance the implementation of the transformation policies at these universities.

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<sup>2</sup> Mode 1 knowledge production refers traditional knowledge --pure, basic and fundamental research-- whereas Mode 2 is carried out in the context of application and is transdisciplinary, transinstitutional and transnational (for further discussion see Gibbons et al., 1994; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, p.204; Delanty, 2001, pp.112-114).

## **1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Universities are at once international and national institutions. As scholar Altbach (1999, pp. 15-16) posits, "Universities are international institutions with common historical roots yet are deeply imbedded in their societies, in national cultures and circumstances." In this section, I discuss both the global and local contexts of higher education as an introduction to the history and context of the three universities in this study.

Scholars point out that globalization is a complex and highly contested concept, meaning different things to different people, depending on where and how they position themselves within the discourse (Block & Cameron, 2002, pp. 2-5; Carnoy, 2000, p. 44; Currie & Newson, 1998, p. 1; Dale & Robertson, 2002, pp. 10-11; Jones, 2000, pp. 25-26; Odora Hoppers, 2000, p. 99; Robertson, 1992, p. 182; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000b, pp. 3-4). Globalization can be discussed in economic, political and cultural terms, from neoliberal, critical and postmodern perspectives (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000b, p. 3; see also Block & Cameron, 2002, pp. 1-4). Some scholars offer a range of interpretations of the term (Block & Cameron, 2002; Burbules & Torres, 2000; Currie & Newson, 1998; Robertson, 1992; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000b), while others offer none, assuming that readers already have an adequate understanding of the term (Brown, Green & Lauder, 2001; Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002; Rodrik, 1997; Scott 1998). I shall not attempt to define the term globalization, an undertaking that could consume this entire chapter, instead I begin by sketching a common understanding of the term for use in this dissertation.

### **1.2.1 Higher education and globalization**

Universities around the world are undergoing epochal changes as a result of the rapid pace of globalization. The neoliberal economic processes driving globalization call for open markets, the liberalization of trade barriers and reduced public spending, resulting in a highly competitive global market. Neoliberalism flourished during the Reagan and Thatcher periods during which cuts to spending resulted in the drastic reduction of social welfare programmes.

Concomitantly, however, globalization has resulted in strong appeals to a sense of universal values and a common humanity, urging us to ascribe to global citizenship (Cohen, 2000 and Nussbaum, 1986, as cited in Willinsky, 2002). According to Walters, globalization has two forms, namely, competitive and co-operative (Walters, 2000, p. 109). Competitive globalization is the dominant form; it has a top-down approach and its internal logic is the accumulation of capital shaped by the corporate interests of transnational corporations and rich countries. Co-operative globalization, in contrast, has a bottom-up approach with human development as its motivating force and its internal logic is the accumulation of human capacities. Despite the existence of these two forms, globalization has been viewed predominantly as a competitive economic trend towards expanding capitalism globally, seeking out new markets and being driven by communications and information technologies (Currie & Newson, 1998, p. 1; Hickling-Hudson, 2000, p. 219; Rodrik, 1997; Stiglitz, 2002). This competitive trend has exacerbated the gap between the rich and poor nations of the world (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000b, p. 12).

Technology, innovation, knowledge production and higher education have been identified as key ingredients for the successful development and progress of countries (Bhagwati, 2002; Brown et al., 2001; Carnoy, 2000; Mokyr, 1990; O' Rourke & Williamson, 2000). Mokyr attributes Europe's growth and development in the 1700's, which resulted in the establishment of the 'gap' between Europe and the rest of the world, to technological progress (1990, p. 153). Information technology and innovation, the main basis for globalization, are in turn highly knowledge intensive (Carnoy, 2000, p. 43). As technology drives globalization, knowledge (as opposed to labour) assumes an increasingly powerful role in production (see Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 9). The production of knowledge has been recognised as an essential factor for successful economic growth and competitiveness (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000b, p. 12; Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 17).

Economists have shown that higher levels of education have contributed to development in many countries (Bhagwati, 2002, pp. 28, 44; O' Rourke & Williamson, 2000, pp. 271-273). OECD countries as well as newly industrialised countries show higher rates of return from higher education than primary and basic education (Carnoy, 2000, p. 53). It is believed that a more highly educated population will have a greater impact on the economic and social development of a country (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000). Globalization causes a demand for skills associated with higher levels of education (Carnoy, 2000, p. 52; see also Brown et al., 2001). Considering that the main role of universities is the creation and dissemination of knowledge, the production of high skills and the reproduction of national cultural traditions, it would appear that they have a central role to play in globalization and social development (Stromquist, 2002, p. 103; Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 92).

Two aspects of globalization have led to the transformation of higher education, the essentially neoliberal economic influence of globalization as a process and, the new mode of knowledge production known as Mode 2 (Gibbons et al., 1994). Mode 1 knowledge production refers to traditional knowledge --pure, basic and fundamental research -- whereas Mode 2 is carried out in the context of application and is transdisciplinary, transinstitutional and transnational (for further discussion see Gibbons et al., 1994; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, p. 204; Delanty, 2001, pp. 112-114). Post-Fordist neoliberalism has been characterised by cuts to social spending, the reduction of welfare programs, streamlined labour (as production has become less labour intensive and more capital intensive), a move from manufacturing industry to service industry, greater emphasis on knowledge intensive products and processes and, a move from a mechanized industry to a high-tech information society (Brown et al., 2001; Burbules & Torres, 2000; Rubenson & Schuetze 1995; Schuetze, 2002; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, p. 1). The budgetary constraints in higher education have led, in many instances, to the "corporatization" of higher education and the advent of the entrepreneurial university and academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997, p. 8; see also De Angelis

1998, p. 124; Newson, 1998, p. 296, 297; Stromquist, 2002, p. 108). There has been an increase in massification and the internationalization of higher education as universities vie with each other to corner the higher education market.

The challenges experienced by universities worldwide include the pressure for more professional and corporate-like administrative and management systems and private sector involvement in decisions concerning academic developments and research, such as autonomy, academic freedom, accountability, intellectual property rights, and the tension between basic research *vis a vis* applied research (Altbach, 1999, p. 29, 32; Berman, 1998, p. 230; Vidovich & Currie, 1998, p. 205). Academics have expressed growing dissatisfaction at being drawn away from their traditional teaching and research roles to perform time-consuming administrative duties. There is a growing gap between senior management and faculty, as well as the growing perception that management has become a proxy of government and corporate interests (Newson, 1998, p. 296; Vidovich & Currie, 1998, pp. 207-208).

Scholarly response to the changing nature of knowledge and its impact on the university differs (see Gibbons et al., 1994). Some express concern that Mode 2 will signal the end of Mode 1 knowledge production --pure research-- weaken the knowledge base in the long run or spell the end of the university, citing as evidence the rise of the entrepreneurial university. Others, like Delanty (2001), posit the view that although the university may have lost its position as the central producer of knowledge and be in danger of becoming a site of corporate capitalism, it remains an important knowledge producer amongst multiple producers. In addition, the university must assume the important function of facilitator of the increasingly public value of knowledge in the future (Delanty, 2001, p. 9, 116, 152; Gibbons et al., 1994, p. 7, 156; Willinsky, 2000). Delanty (2001) explains that the task of the university is to open up sites of communication in society, to institutionalize dissensus, thus

reversing the decline of the public sphere and enabling the democratization of knowledge instead (p. 6, 7).

The fiscal constraints confronting higher education in the developing world have consequences well beyond merely forcing universities to become entrepreneurial, as has been the case in the developed world. Faculty members in the developing world are usually under-qualified; teaching methods are outmoded; salaries are low, providing little incentive or means for faculty to improve their skills; infrastructure and facilities such as laboratories and libraries are often poor and inadequate, and in some instances, uninhabitable; and classrooms are overcrowded (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000; Atteh, 1998). Furthermore, the existing high skills base and research capacity is diminishing, as these countries continue to experience a "brain drain" (Outward bound, 2002, p. 24; Stromquist, 2002, p. 109; Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 73). Not only do developing countries lose highly skilled human resources, but also their investment in higher education, usually from severely strained financial coffers --taxpayer's money. The emigration of professionals also erodes the tax base of the sending country (Outward bound, 2002, p. 24). Moreover, these trends have the effect of concentrating knowledge and research in the North (Stromquist, 2002, p. 109). Whereas in the colonial days raw materials flowed to the industrial centres, there is now, in the new knowledge-based economy, a flow of high skills and knowledge to these centres, leading to a growing gulf between universities in the developed and developing world (Altbach, 1999, p. 32).

One of the corollaries of globalization has been the development of supranational organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank. These organizations have played a major role in providing finance and setting conditions for the economic development of nation states (Carnoy, 2000, p. 46; Odora Hoppers, 2000, pp. 109-111; Stiglitz, 2002, p. 9). But this financing is often characterized by what Stiglitz, in his scathing attack on the IMF and its failures to ensure development in the Third World, refers to as "conditionality" -- conditions

that coerce developing nations to adopt IMF policies such as liberalising trade (Stiglitz, 2002, p. 44). Supranational institutions have also played a role in intellectual property rights which has had negative consequences for developing countries, where the concept of intellectual property rights takes on a completely different meaning (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, pp. 78-79). To reduce competition from states with lower labour costs and rising educational attainment, industrial countries establish and maintain the protection of intellectual property through bodies like the European Union, GATT and NAFTA (Slaughter, 1998, p. 57).<sup>3,4</sup> These institutions recognise copyright, patents and the attendant royalty and licensing agreements, and they have strong sanctions for the violation of these regulations (Slaughter, 1998, p. 57). For developing countries, these regulations presenting yet another financial barrier to knowledge creation and dissemination.

Several universities in the developing world find it difficult to function, let alone improve the quality of and even publish research (Sadlak, 1998, p. 102). In the first instance, they do not have adequate library facilities. Books and journal holdings are sparse and outdated; preventing academics from being acquainted with the latest research developments (see also Altbach, 1987, p. 31; Canagarajah, 1996). This impinges negatively on their capacity to produce research, especially cutting edge research. The costs of library subscriptions to journals are exorbitant, especially when foreign exchange rates are taken into account (see also Willinsky, 2000).

The developed nations also dominate the systems that distribute knowledge by controlling publishing houses: 34 industrialised countries with only 30 % of the world's population produce 81 % of the world's book titles (Altbach, 1987, p. 18). Hence, these countries define research paradigms and the foci of the field, rendering the rest of the world peripheral in determining the research agenda (Altbach, 1987, p. 17; 1997, p. 16). Prohibitive

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<sup>3</sup> GATT - General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

<sup>4</sup> NAFTA - North American Free Trade Agreement

factors to publishing in developing countries, which perpetuate dependency on the West include: costs of printing, lack of access to technology for printing, lack of clients for published journals, copyright regulations and costs, heavy teaching loads of academics, unsupportive research environments and language barriers (Altbach, 1987, pp. 17-27; Day, 2002, p. 3). According to Altbach (1987), neo-colonialism is maintained through foreign aid programmes and loan policies and is a factor that must be considered in any analysis of publishing in the Third World (p. 33).

A further factor curtailing the proliferation of published research from the developing world is what Canagarajah refers to as the “ ‘nondiscursive’ requirements” of academic publishing houses in the West, which make it virtually impossible for researchers from the developing world to publish successfully in the West (1996, p. 1: see chapter nine). According to him, “these publishing conventions are deeply implicated in the politics of knowledge production and the hegemony of intellectual property of the developed nations” (1996, p. 3).

Given these constraints that universities in the developing countries face with regard to knowledge production, the pertinent question to pose is whether the appropriation of new technologies, provided by globalization, might not be harnessed to alleviate the challenges facing the developing world. Virtual universities attended by “cyberstudents” (Sadlak, 1998, p. 102), may be one way of meeting the demand for access to higher education in the developing world. As Sadlak reassures us, the virtual university does not spell the end of the traditional university, but rather increases our range of options. Already the five largest distance education universities are situated in the Third World (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 31). The University of South Africa, the oldest distance education university in the world, makes wide use of technology, creating virtual classrooms for students all over the world (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000, p. 31). The African Virtual University, with headquarters in Nairobi and five regional partners, viz. Rwanda,

Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania, was established by the World Bank and commenced operations at the beginning of 2003. The use of the Internet to disseminate scholarship through online journal systems, institutional archives and knowledge systems may be a way of meeting some of the challenges facing higher education in developing countries (Willinsky, 2000). Open access systems may be of particular value as we calculate the prohibitive costs of journal subscriptions for developing countries.

South African universities have not been able to escape the changes and challenges experienced by universities around the world as a result of globalization. These challenges presented by globalization have led to the inclusion of neoliberal imperatives within the new higher education policies in South Africa, which have served, consequently, to heighten the urgency and magnitude of these changes for South African universities. In the section that follows, I discuss the historical background and context of South African higher education. While I may allude to the broader national policy changes in this section, I discuss the relevant higher education policy in detail in chapter two.

### **1.2.2 South Africa and the global context**

Entering this global stage sketched above is South Africa, a country that for its entire history was deprived of a sense of nationhood because of the fragmented and divisive nature of its society, the result of harsh, draconian apartheid policies and legislation. South Africa currently seeks to position itself both as a new democracy and as a player in the global arena. The need to establish itself as a nation is both compelling and unavoidable; the need to forge a 'rainbow' nation from the ravages apartheid inflicted on South African society. At precisely the same moment, after years of having been a pariah state, isolated from most of the world, it needs to find its niche in the global economy (see Soudien & Corneilse, 2000, p. 300). We have here a surrealistic vision of Robertson's notion of the universalisation of the particular and the particularization of the universal (1992, pp. 177-178). Soudien and Corneilse (2000) point to the "seemingly contradictory demands of cosmopolitanism and

indigenisation” (pp. 299-300). In a sense, South Africa exemplifies the tension between the local and the global as it simultaneously carves out its role as, on the one hand, a new democratic nation and, on the other, a global player.

Currie and Subotsky (2000) contend that the point on which South Africa pivots, namely the need to forge an equitable society while competing on the global market, is the source of its alternative response to globalization (p. 133; see also Subotsky, 2001; Waghid, 2001a). South Africa, they say, represents a vivid case of the challenge faced by all countries responding to global pressures while simultaneously trying to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunity (Currie & Subotsky, 2000, p. 133). To realise these goals, South Africa has adopted two policies that are the cornerstone of development on two different fronts, namely, the neoliberal Growth, Employment and Redistributive (GEAR) policy (1996) and the socialist Reconstruction and Development Programme, (RDP) (1994) (Bolsmann & Uys, 2001, p. 173; Currie & Subotsky 2000, p. 134; see also Bawa, 1997, p. 44). Many have been surprised that the new South African government, given the strong socialist character of the struggle against apartheid, voluntarily adopted neoliberal economic policies favoured by supranational organizations like the World Bank and the IMF. Nevertheless, the new government has not ignored the imperatives of equity. On the contrary, recognition of the importance of equity has given rise to a highly progressive Constitution and public policy framework, which specifically aim to redress the inequities of the past. This has given rise to a sense of *carpe diem*, as the country seizes the opportunity to balance concerns for the redress of social injustices with the need for neoliberal economic reforms (Currie & Subotsky, 2000, p. 125). According to Currie and Subotsky (2000), the nation state must exercise:

Political will in critically challenging the neoliberal orthodoxy and justifying a strong role for the state in regulating transnational capital flows and in fulfilling its redistributive agenda. The state must actively drive basic development to complement the private sector’s role in driving growth.  
(p. 135; see also Jones, 2000)

Giddens refers to this as the “Third Way”, a path of complementary development that accommodates global and redistributive concerns (Currie & Subotsky, 2000, p. 135; Giddens, 1998).

These wider tensions are embedded in the new higher education policy in South Africa. In addition to their traditional role of creating and disseminating knowledge, universities are being called upon to perform multifarious roles (ibid.). These roles include the “entrepreneurial” university in response to decreased government spending on higher education (Currie & Subotsky, 2000, p. 123, 128), massification as universities shift from traditional elitist institutions to institutions that are more equitable and responsive to diverse social needs (Kraak, 1997, as cited in Soudien & Corneilse, 2000, p. 302; Subotsky, 2001, p. 56), the production of applied knowledge in response to economic and industrial demands and, greater social accountability (Waghid, 2002, p. 457). According to Currie and Subotsky (2000), the market-oriented university model is in direct tension with collegial ethos, democratic governance, community development, equitable social renewal and the public good (p. 123). These two scholars consider how the broader social purpose of higher education may be achieved in the face of increasing globalization and its inherent market ethos (p. 124). In order to understand the policy intentions and expectations and the challenges these present for higher education in South Africa, it is necessary to revisit the history of higher education in South Africa.

### **1.2.3 Higher education and the legacy of apartheid**

Higher education in South Africa has mirrored the apartheid societal context, having developed along racial and ethnic lines with the establishment of separate universities (Documentation, 1991, p. 3; Mabokela, 2000, p. 3; Mosadi, 1994, pp. 2-3; Nordkvelle, 1990, p. 6). Towards the end of the apartheid era in 1990, there were 11 white universities, 10

black universities and 15 technikons (Clery, 1995).<sup>5, 6</sup> The oldest English university in South Africa, the present day University of Cape Town (UCT), was established in 1829, followed by the Afrikaner Universities of Potchefstroom and Stellenbosch in 1869 and 1887 respectively (Mabokela, 2000, p. 3; Nordkvelle, 1990, p. 3).<sup>7, 8</sup> The origins of the University of South Africa, now one of the foremost distance education universities in the world, go back to 1873.<sup>9</sup> Between 1896 and 1909, four more universities were established, three of them English, including Rhodes University (1904) (which features in this study), and one Afrikaans university.<sup>10</sup> The passage of the University Act of 1916 saw the establishment of the first black university, the University of Fort Hare (Mabokela, 2000, p. 3). Hence, the segregation of higher education, even between English and Afrikaans speaking whites, began long before the Nationalist government came to power in 1948. As Morrow (1998) asserts,

The Apartheid state can be seen as making explicit what was merely implicit in colonialism. It imposed on society its own racially inspired definition of the groups... and systematically consolidated those definitions in ramifying legislation. As part of that project the unequal dignity, status and privileges of the officially defined groups were reinforced in such a way that their advantages and disadvantages would be carried forward into the future. (p. 387)

Following its inception, the apartheid government committed itself to Afrikaner nationalism, the consolidation of a Christian state as well as to furthering the development of its "volk". The latter was aimed at providing opportunities for "working class" Afrikaners and to meet the demand for skilled labour in the well-established mining and manufacturing industries and the emergent agricultural industry (Bolsmann & Uys, p. 177; Mabokela, 2000,

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<sup>5</sup> Black is a generic term referring collectively to previously disenfranchised African, Coloured and Indian people, as defined in the Employment Equity Act, No 55 of 1998 (Bolsmann & Uys, 2001, note 1, p. 175; see also Mabokela, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Technikons are vocational education and training institutions, which were also racially segregated.

<sup>7</sup> Historically, there has been a distinction between universities attended by English-speaking whites and those attended by Afrikaans-speaking whites.

<sup>8</sup> In some instances, Mabokela and Nordkvelle present conflicting dates for the commencement of the universities. The dates mentioned in this paper were verified against the universities' web sites.

<sup>9</sup> It became a distance education institution in 1946 (<http://www.unisa.ac.za>).

<sup>10</sup> These were the Universities of the Witwatersrand (1896), Rhodes (1904) and Natal (1909), all English, and Pretoria (1908), an Afrikaans university.

p. 3). This led to the establishment of three Afrikaner universities between 1950 and 1967,<sup>11</sup> one of which (the University of Port Elizabeth) is included in this study. The Afrikaans universities implemented stringent policies preventing the admission of blacks. Prior to 1959, the English universities admitted a small number of blacks, never exceeding 6 % of the total student population, but failed to grant them equality despite professed principles of academic freedom and non-segregation in their admission policies (Adam, 1971, p. 198; Mabokela, 2000, p. 3; 2001, p. 72). Some English universities, such as the University of Natal, had separate non-European sections prior to the promulgation of separate education legislation, the philosophy at the time being academic equality as far as teaching and standards were concerned, but social separation in terms of classes, accommodation and extra-curricular activities (K. Adam-Moodley, personal communication, January, 2005).

Mabokela (2000) asserts that the white mining industrialists saw the education of blacks as a threat to economic stability because the mines required an abundant supply of cheap black labour (p. 3). The infamous statement by former prime minister and architect of apartheid, H.F. Verwoerd, was based on the apartheid economy's need for cheap labour:

There is no place for the [African] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour.... Until now, he has been subjected to a school system<sup>12</sup> which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society, in which he was not allowed to graze. (Kuper, 1988, p. 201)<sup>13</sup>

By contrast, "white South Africans had the highest rate of youth attending universities compared to most industrialised countries in the world" (Nordkvelle, 1990, p. 5).

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<sup>11</sup> These were the University of the Orange Free State (1950), the University of Port Elizabeth (1964) and the Rand Afrikaans University (1967).

<sup>12</sup> This is a reference to the missionary schools for Africans.

<sup>13</sup> White South Africans were referred to as Europeans, Africans as Bantus, and blacks as a group were called non-Europeans or non-whites prior to the 1970s. The term black became popular among the people during the Black Consciousness movement in the 1970s (see also Mabokela, 1997).

### *Ethnic universities*

The introduction of the Extension of the University Education Act of 1959 saw the establishment of racially and ethnically based universities for Africans,<sup>14</sup> Coloureds<sup>15</sup> and Indians (Adam, 1971, pp. 198-199; Documentation, 1991, p. 3; Mabokela, 2000, p. 4; Mosadi, 1994, p. 3). Bunting contends that the establishment of the historically black universities (HBUs) was “overtly political and instrumental” (Bunting, 2002, p. 74). In a similar vein, Mabokela asserts that the black universities fulfilled three goals: first to legitimate the ideology of separate development,<sup>16</sup> second, to provide personnel to administer and support the newly created homelands, and third, to maintain and reproduce the subordinate social and economic position of black people (2000, p. 4; see also Adam, 1971).

Adam states that the aim of providing higher education to blacks was to socialise them into accepting the dominant societal values --in this instance, the apartheid philosophy-- and to prohibit English white universities from accepting black students (1971, p. 197). On the other hand, these black universities provided academic careers for young Afrikaner graduates and promotion opportunities for Afrikaner civil servants (Adam, 1971, p. 209), who received a ‘tolerance pay’, amounting to double the earnings of white academics at the HWUs (Vergnani, 1999).<sup>17</sup> Adam argues that despite the socialising role, education can also cause people to reflect on their situation and challenge the accepted social order (1971, p. 197). This was precisely what happened at these so-called “bush” colleges (see also Adam, 1971, p. 211; Documentation, 1991, p. 3).<sup>18</sup> The HBUs became the hotbeds of Biko’s Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s, despite strong police intervention, harassment, and

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<sup>14</sup> Separate universities for Africans on the basis of ethnicity (viz. Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tsonga and Venda) were established to lend credence to the separate development Homeland policy.

<sup>15</sup> Coloured refers to people of mixed descent, viz. white and Khoi or African (Mosadi, 1994).

<sup>16</sup> I would add that they sought to do so both domestically and internationally. At this point South Africa was under pressure from the UN lobby led by India and other African countries.

<sup>17</sup> Presumably this ‘tolerance pay’ was to compensate them for ‘tolerating’ having to work with black students and staff.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Bush college’ is a term describing not only the physical location of these institutions away from urban centres, but also the aim of locating blacks at the periphery, intellectually and institutionally. These institutions were academically and politically isolated (Documentation, 1991, p. 3).

mass detentions of students. Student politics helped to mobilize the masses into an intense and prolonged struggle against the regime.

Despite strong state control and management of these universities and the senior faculty affiliation with the Broederbond, the operations of the HBUs were often brought to a standstill during student riots and protests.<sup>19</sup> Although the leaders of liberation movements at that time were in prison or in exile overseas, there was a heightened political consciousness among young black intellectuals inside the country during the 1970s and 1980s. The following comments by students bear testimony to this:

When I went to Fort Hare, I wasn't politically conscious. My political awareness grew as my education at the college progressed and with it my resentment of the administration as a symbol of separate development. (Adam, 1971, p. 211)

And,

We are treated like school children by the administration. The lecturers teach you to question things but then you find that if you start questioning some things like the police presence on campus, you are immediately victimized by the administration. (Adam, 1971, p. 21)

Despite this repression, black South African youth remained both resilient and exuberant.

#### *Open access at white universities*

Subsequent to the escalation of mass action against the government internally and the intensification of sanctions and disinvestment internationally, the government passed the University Amendment Act in 1983, legalizing the admission of black students to historically white universities (HWUs) (Mabokela, 2000, p. 4). Some universities embarked on aggressive measures to recruit black students, while others were resistant and did not actively seek to diversify their student population (Mabokela, 2001, p. 70). Black enrolment dramatically altered the "complexion" of some of these universities; for example, the percentage of blacks students at the University of Cape Town increased from 13.2 % in 1983

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<sup>19</sup> The Broederbond is an Afrikaner secret society established in 1918, which controlled not only the Apartheid State but every facet of society. It comprised an Afrikaner elite who occupied key positions in public service, judiciary, corporations, clergy and the universities, especially in the HWU-A and HBUs (see Butler, 1998; Bunting, 1969).

to 42.4 % in 1995, although at Stellenbosch, it was only 13 % in 1995 (Mabokela, 2000, p. 4; 2001, p. 71).

### ***Resource allocation***

Allocations for universities differed not only between HWUs and HBUs, but among HBUs as well. African universities received fewer resources than the Coloured university, which in turn, received fewer resources than the Indian university (Mosadi, 1994, p. 2). Afrikaner universities, in contrast, were well supported by the state and boasted some of the best facilities in the country (Mabokela, 2001, p. 71). Prior to 1984, the subsidy formula was based on the number of students enrolled and on their success rate (Mabokela, 1997), which did not appear to be overtly racial. In practice, however, the criteria for the subsidy impeded funding to HBUs because they had a higher proportion of students from low socio-economic backgrounds who not only required financial assistance but had lower success rates. Large numbers of black students also dropped out because black secondary schools provided substandard education. In 1991, for example, the University of the Western Cape, an HBU, had the largest number of undergraduate geography students among the residential universities, but fewer staff than geography departments at the HWUs (Documentation, 1991, p. 3). Mabokela correctly points out that an equitable system will only perpetuate the inequities that exist between HBUs and HWUs. In order to counterbalance the historical inequities she claims that: "The new system financing higher education will necessarily have to be biased in favour of supporting HBUs" (1997, p. 2; see also Clery, 1995). These funding policies are discussed further in chapter two.

### ***Research as tools of the apartheid state***

Not only were the universities characterised by the inequities of the apartheid system, but they also reproduced the power relations embedded in the national economic and social systems. Furthermore, the HWUs, through their research and education activities, provided the machinery for propping up the system. As Morrow (1998) observes:

Higher educational institutions can be seen as the epitome of this pattern of injustice. Such institutions are major distributors of benefits in society, especially those benefits which stretch forward into the future. Universities, in particular, are bastions of privilege and as soon as one presses the questions of who is paying for them and who their beneficiaries are, then their key role in the maintenance and perpetuation of an unjust society becomes clear. (p. 387)

According to Mamdani, the apartheid project would not have succeeded had it been a political project only; its success lay in it being an intellectual project enforced through intellectual apparatuses such as the university (1999, p. 130). As Rigney, an Australian scholar contends: "It would be simply naïve to think that the colonial racist movement... did not impact the research fraternity and its internal works... (leading to) a racialised research industry" (p. 113). Interestingly, Nordkvelle asserts that very few scholars have investigated the role of South African universities and the production of knowledge in the oppression of the majority (1990, p. 2).

The inequitable resource allocation from the state consolidated the implementation of apartheid policies among the universities. For example, between 1989 and 1990, just prior to the end of apartheid, the 10 white universities spent a total of more than 300 million rand on research while the six black universities spent a mere 24 million rand (Nordkvelle, 1990, p. 12). Needless to say, knowledge productivity at the black universities was curtailed by this limited access to funding. Although the academic research tradition has been strongest at the English white universities, the five universities that dominated research output during this period by producing 80 % of South African papers in the Science Citation Index included two Afrikaner universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch. The remaining three were the Universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand and Natal. These universities received the largest portion of funding allocations which were based on student numbers and research output.

Black universities were predominantly teaching universities, focussing on limited fields of study, such as the humanities, social sciences and a narrow range of science faculties. HWUs, on the other hand, were largely engaged in research that reproduced the

social and economic relations within the society. Some scholars implicated these universities in maintaining the apartheid status quo through their research activities. As Keenan (1981) succinctly puts it: "Universities are as they are not because of the twin pressures of the State and big business, but because the majority of members share values and interests with the State and big business" (p. 44). Nordkvelle, for example, argues that for white scientists, "autonomy was relatively strong" because the scientific community had strong ties to the government (1990, p. 7, 11).

HWUs developed high skills among whites to assume important positions in politics, public administration and industry (Ashley, 1971; see also Mabokela, 2001, p. 71). By contrast, HBUs were engineered to deliver an inferior education to blacks in order to ensure that they could not compete for white positions. According to Ashley (1971), English universities existed primarily for preparing students for careers in commerce, industry and the professions, whereas the Afrikaner universities indoctrinated Afrikaner youth with racial superiority, thereby producing a political elite who assumed ideological positions in government, public administration and politics (p. 42; see also Mabokela, 2001, p. 71).

Investment in research was considerable during the apartheid era (File, 1986). The total sum spent on research and development (R&D) in the 1979/80 fiscal year was 0.64 %, of the GDP, while the total investment in higher education was 1.4 % (File, 1986, p. 30). State funding to higher education amounted to 80 % of universities' income (Nordkvelle, 1990, p. 10). Apparently, during the apartheid era, the white population of South Africa had the highest numbers of R&D personnel per million inhabitants in the world (see Clarke, 1985, p. 169). Nordkvelle, writing before the abolition of apartheid in 1994, attributes the international recognition of South Africa to the standard of their scientific research, but argues that quality of research should not be the sole criterion (1990, p. 14). Humanitarian values and social contract with the majority population should have also been criteria (Nordkvelle, 1990, p. 10).

### *Epistemologies, methodologies and relevance*

Much of the research in science and technology was related to mining and industrial technology, military research and armaments development, including the production of coal from fuel and nuclear research to produce atom bombs (Nordkvelle, 1990, pp. 10-11; Bawa & Mouton, 2002, p. 299). There has been a mismatch between higher education and the demands of economic and social development (Currie & Subotsky, 2000; Kraak, 2001; Waghid, 2002). In addition, disciplinary approaches and programmes have been Eurocentric and inclined towards a closed system (Jobbins, 2002; Makgoba, as cited in Clery, 1995; Mamdani, 1997, 1998). Bawa and Mouton (2002) conclude that the research system designed to serve the needs of the apartheid government was “hopelessly disarticulated from the needs of the majority of South Africans” pointing to, for example, the lack of research in infectious diseases at the very time that the world’s first human heart transplant operation was performed by Christiaan Barnard (p. 299).

As can be expected, methodologies were embedded in notions of universal truths since there was only one way to maintain the apartheid status quo. According to Nordkvelle, academic scientists believed in the positivist paradigm and the autonomy and objectivity of science – that science was unaffected by the social context (1990, p. 13). As Habermas asserts, universities and science are not free from serving political functions (1971, pp. 1-10). Thus, scientific results are cultural products of their own society and not objective truths. This is true for humanities and social sciences as well; anthropology, sociology, law and even theology were imbued with the ideology of apartheid (Kuper, 1988). Masodi states that geography, and most significantly industrial geography, was used as a tool to promote the policy of separate development (1994, p. 3). Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, was originally a sociology professor at Stellenbosch University before becoming the Minister of Native Affairs, and finally, Prime Minister of the country. Thus, the dominant forces of a society may be reflected in the scientific knowledge being generated.

Professor Makgoba, Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in 1995, claimed that: "The liberal institutions have failed to capture the essence of Africa and its people" (Clery, 1995). Jobbins (2002) concurs that an anomaly of universities in South Africa is that they are, by and large, institutions of the developed world and their European research traditions are unsuited to a developing country in Africa (p. 55-56; see also Documentation, 1991, p. 3). Mamdani (1998) relates how his efforts to Africanize the African studies course at UCT were met with resistance. He deconstructs the notion of African Studies and of a Centre for African Studies at a university located at the tip of Africa. He claims that the notion of "African Studies" had been developed outside Africa, and not by Africans (1997, p. 149). Ekong and Cloete (1997) assert that the sovereignty of universal scientific knowledge is being greeted with increasing scepticism throughout the world (p. 5). Instead, there are calls for accountability and relevance (ibid.).

Many HWUs have not realised that they need to undergo significant changes in order to meet the needs of a transforming society (Mabokela, 1997, p. 1). Mabokela explains that the "problem" has been identified as a skills deficit on the part of blacks. Blacks are perceived as being "under-prepared" for the institutions, rather than the institutions being perceived as under-prepared for meeting the needs of such students (Mabokela, 1997, pp. 1-2; see also Mandew, 2000, p. 3). Mandew, drawing on Bourdieu and others, points out that African students tend to be viewed not only as under-prepared but as lacking the requisite cultural capital to shape, influence and benefit from the processes of knowledge construction (2000, p. 3). The following statement made by a Potchefstroom University professor at an international conference in San Francisco as late as 1997 confirms this argument and shows blacks being positioned as the 'other' at HWUs:

White universities are Western animals and they have to conform to the high academic standards of the West. If black students want to attend *our* universities, they have to adjust to the way things operate at these universities (my emphasis). (cited in Mabokela, 1997, p. 1)

As Goduka (1996a) states: "Educational necessities and moral imperatives point to a need to move beyond the deficit model (norm) which assumes that different is equal to deficient and therefore inferior" (as cited in Mandew, 2000, p. 3).

Although some scholars argue that the English universities, also known as the liberal universities, have never accepted the apartheid policy (Clery, 1995; Jobbins, 2002), others believe that their liberalism has been of hardly any significance (Keenan, 1981; Kuper, 1988; Gerwel, 1988; Nordkvelle, 1990). Clery (1995) and Jobbins (2002) assert that some white universities defied the government's policy and admitted black students, placing these institutions at the centre of white resistance to the government. Keenan, however, refers to these institutions as "open minds in a closed society" (1981, p. 1); Kuper claims that they "kept their heads down," (1988, p. 46), while Gerwel maintains that they had not "sufficiently explored the space they (had) available for opposing and actively working against apartheid" (Gerwel, 1988, p. 13). According to Nordkvelle (1990), the English universities supplied the labour market with highly skilled professionals who largely refrained from questioning the political order run by the Afrikaner elite (p. 12).

Thus, in 1994 the democratic government of South Africa inherited a higher education system characterised by pervading and gross disparities between HBUs and HWUs, such as uneven access, inequitable funding, resources, facilities and infrastructure, unequal staffing, under-representation of women, duplication and waste inherent in the ethnically based system of provision, discrepant student success rates and research output and, a lack of responsiveness and democratic accountability to the wider society (Currie & Subotsky, 2000, p. 135; Kraak, 2001, p. 21; Waghid, 2002, pp. 450-460).

### ***To unscramble the apartheid egg***

It is not surprising that the new government considered that nothing less than a complete transformation of the social, economic and political systems was necessary to redress the inequalities of apartheid. Van Niekerk (1998) evinces that "transformation is not its own

goal; the goal is an improved, more just and more equitable society” (p. 65).<sup>20</sup> According to Bolsmann and Uys (2001), there are five redress goals for the transformation of higher education: 1) greater access for disadvantaged communities; 2) changing the Eurocentric curricula; 3) emphasis on career orientated qualifications; 4) flexible teaching and qualifications frameworks; 5) increased postgraduate enrolments to meet global challenges. Clearly, a total overhaul of the education system was necessary to redress the inequalities embedded in the system (Waghid, 2002, p. 458). Hence, the new policy emphasises democracy, equity and relevant research that would contribute to redress, growth, development and social justice.

Notwithstanding the establishment of policies to bring about democracy, equity and redress, the anomalies of apartheid are still very much in existence at universities in South Africa. The racial profile of staff at the HWUs is still predominantly white, while black students, despite their large numbers, continue to be regarded as the “other” (Mabokela, 2000, as cited in Mabokela, 2001, p. 73). For example, at one of the most progressive white universities, UCT, the percentage of black students increased from 13.2 % in 1983 to 42.4 % in 1995 (Mabokela, 2000, p. 4). Despite the existence of an Equal Opportunity Employment Policy at UCT, the proportion of black academics only increased from 1 % to 4.13 % for Africans, 1.51 % to 2.4 % for Coloureds and 1.13 % to 1.74 % for Indians (Mabokela, 2000, p. 5). Although affirmative action for whites had been legislated by the Job Reservation Act during the apartheid era, Mabokela’s study finds that the prevailing view among whites towards the current affirmative action policies at these universities to be hostile, based on their belief that the policy privileges blacks over whites, lowers standards and creates havoc (2000, p. 11).

As HWUs grapple with transformation and institutional change, HBUs have been struggling to survive, let alone transform (Vergnani, 1999). They have been characterised by

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<sup>20</sup> See also Subotsky (2001) on assimilationist versus transformative change.

declining enrolments, financial crises, huge budgetary deficits, duplication, external audits, poor management, mismanagement, fraud and corruption (Mösadi, 1994, p. 2; Vergnani, 1999). Yet, HBUs play an important role in higher education by serving the most underprivileged black students at one third of the costs incurred by more established white universities (Vergnani, 1999, p. 4).

In attempting to address these challenges, through the implementation of new policies, universities have been faced with entrepreneurialism (see also Bolsmann & Uys, 2001), new modes of knowledge production, changing demography and racial profile of students, changing institutional climate, affirmative action, greater social responsibility and accountability, external audits and, in some cases, demise. The predicted massification, co-operation between institutions and elimination of duplication and wastage of resources has not occurred (Hay & Fourie 2002, p. 116). Instead, there has been increased competition as universities vie for the limited pool of resources and compete with technikons and international and private institutions that attract their “client” base with the promise of more stable campuses and vocationally oriented qualifications (Jansen, 2002, p. 511). An additional policy, legislated in June 2002, is directed at addressing these problems and at giving impetus to the implementation of these policies, and the transformation process, thereby enabling the efficient transition from the old apartheid order to a new higher education system. This policy, *Transformation and Restructuring: A New Institutional Landscape for Higher Education* (South Africa, 2002), calls for the merging of the higher education institutions. As this policy was developed, it became the subject of contentious debate in the higher education sector in South Africa. A study by Hay and Fourie (2002) shows that barriers to mergers among staff included fears about staff reductions and retrenchment, loss of positions and institutional identity, paradigm shifts, clash of institutional cultures, philosophies and priorities, loss of subsidies and a drop in standards (pp. 119, 129). Staff was not concerned about the additional workload or the

dominant/subaltern relationship between institutions (p. 129). Jansen (2002) refers to Robinson and Daigle (1999) in support of his view that partnerships tend to underestimate “institutional readiness” with respect to differences in vision, commitment, culture, risk, power and adaptability among partners (p. 519). Although it is premature to predict how these mergers will unfold, there is little doubt that this topic will dominate South African scholarship over the next few years.

The literature reviewed shows that the new higher education policies impose high expectations on the higher education sector to contribute towards transformation. Yet, there is a dearth of research into the research capacity of South African universities, especially with reference to the impact of globalization and democratization on research and knowledge producing processes. In this study I investigate the responses of participants at three universities to the changes resulting from globalization, democratization and the new policies. I seek to determine how the institutions are attempting to develop their research culture and capacity amidst these changes.

In this dissertation my use of the term “research culture” does not include institutional culture but rather focuses specifically on the universities’ orientation towards research and what priority has been given to research historically by the past administrations. Factors that emphasise the importance of research have included the formulation of research policies, the promotion of research by management and staff, status of office of research at the institutions and resources made available to research.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Among the major policy changes affecting researchers and their research are the democratising and equity policies (such as the establishment of democratic and representative governing structures and the affirmative action plans) and the emphasis on the new mode of knowledge production, Mode 2. Although in my case studies I enquired about the impact of the merger policies (as contained in the *Transformation and Restructuring: A New*

*Institutional Landscape of Higher Education (2002)*) on their work, most academics at the universities undergoing merger processes, namely the University of Port Elizabeth and the University of Fort Hare, claimed that this process was taking place at management level, leaving them largely unaffected at the time of the interviews in 2002-2003. For this reason, I have excluded herein any questions pertaining to the changes relating to the merger, but note that there is reference to the process in their responses to other questions, for example, access to resources or equity. The following questions related to the higher education policies and research capacity framed the study:

- How has the neoliberal emphasis in the higher education policies, resulting in cuts to spending and pressures for increased corporatization and marketization, affected researchers and the knowledge making processes at the universities?
- How do the research culture, resources and infrastructure compare across the three institutions, given the apartheid histories of these universities?
- To what extent have the democratizing and equity policies been implemented at the three institutions, and how have these changes been perceived and regarded by their members?
- More specifically, how do they see these policies affecting the research programs at these three institutions?
- In what ways, if at all, do the equity policies result in increases in social justice?
- What has been the response of South African researchers to policy imperatives for a shift to what is known as Mode 2 knowledge production?
- What has been their experience of conducting 'socially relevant' research in 'partnership' with local indigenous communities?
- To what extent have they reflected on developing appropriate methodologies for collaborating with indigenous people and their knowledge systems?

#### 1.4. THESIS STATEMENT

The new policy framework establishes the foundation for a unified, equitable, well-planned, program-based system of higher education. According to the participants at the three universities in my study, the dominant changes in response to global and local developments and the new policies have been a series of not always complementary policies, programs, and actions, including: 1) increased managerialism or entrepreneurialism in their institutions; 2) the establishment of new democratic governing structures and equity policies; and, 3) a shift to Mode 2 forms of knowledge, so that the research generated is responsive both to the market and social needs. Later in this dissertation, I draw a distinction between managerialism and entrepreneurialism. For now, a brief explanation will suffice. Managerialism is used in a sense that the university, as a result of the neoliberal macro-economic policies of the state and their impact on public institutions, has adopted a style of administering the university on business principles of economic efficiency, expecting maximum outputs from minimum inputs, similar to for profit organisations (see Edwards, J.D., n. d.). Managerialism has also been defined as a technocratic ideology that views the analytical tools that managers use to solve organizational problems as ends in themselves (ibid.). By entrepreneurialism, I refer to the university maximizing opportunities to commercialise research activities.

In examining the impact of these three factors (managerialism, democratization, and Mode 2 type research), I find that the tension and dissonance felt by the participants between the dual goals of globalization and democratization have made it difficult for universities to pay equal attention to achieving growth and social redress, not just in their student intake, but in their support for a new generation of scholars and a new approach to developing a research culture among them. The influence of the globalising trends, in the form of neoliberal macro-economic policies embedded in modernist assumptions, has been to silence the democratizing

and redress intentions of these policies, thereby potentially bringing into jeopardy the transformation project in South African higher education.

Based on the perceptions and experiences of the participants in this study, I find that the forces of globalization threaten the democratizing project in several ways: First, the severe resource constraints at two of the three institutions in the study have placed extreme pressures on researchers and hampers the capacity of these universities to contribute to knowledge production and dissemination. Second, the neoliberal imperatives reflected in the policies have led to increased managerialism, which serves to redirect the focus and energies of these institutions away from the democratization project. Third, equity, as defined in the policy documents and given effect through implementation, sheds its democratic portents and serves the project of modernity instead. Furthermore, the neoliberal focus on effectiveness and efficiency leads to a preoccupation with unexamined and unquestioned notions of merit and excellence that may serve to reproduce the hegemony of the dominant group. Fourth, neoliberal interests have led to Mode 2 research and its related notions of 'relevance,' 'partnership,' 'stakeholder' and 'collaboration' not being appropriately understood or applied in relation to research involving local indigenous communities. Fifth, decolonising methodological approaches in addition to post-modern critical approaches are required to deconstruct the inherently modernist and hence racist apparatuses of these institutions, given their historical context and relation to colonialism and apartheid.

## **1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

The dissertation comprises three parts. Part One consists of chapters one to three. Chapter One, the introductory, defines the research purpose, sketches the context of the study and reviews the literature of higher education both globally and locally; it poses the research questions and outlines the thesis statement. Chapter Two contains a review and analysis of the higher education policy scenario that frames this study. Chapter Three deals with the theoretical framework and methodology for the study.

Part Two consists of a presentation of the data in case study profiles for each of the three universities examined herein. Chapter Four presents the case study of the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE), a historically white Afrikaner university (HWU-A); Chapter Five presents the case study of Rhodes University (RU), a historically white English university (HWU-E); and Chapter Six presents the case study of the University of Fort Hare (UFH), a historically black university (HBU).

Chapters Seven to Twelve comprise Part Three and consist of a presentation and analysis of the empirical data across the three case studies as they pertain to three particular changes these universities have experienced in response to global and local developments, namely, managerialism, democracy and equity and “socially relevant” research. Chapter Twelve is the concluding chapter. It begins with reflections on existing studies and ends with a set of recommendations for building research capacity and improving policy implementation.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE NEW HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss South Africa's new higher education policies in relation to the dual national policy goals of globalization and democratization, that is, economic growth and social redress. I discuss mainly the Higher Education Act (1997) and the White Paper 3 (1997) and will at times refer to the precursors and successors of these policy documents, such as the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) (1996) and the Council for Higher Education (CHE) (2000) policy documents. According to Kraak (2001), these policy documents emphasise two central areas of the transformation, democratization and globalization (pp. 20-21). Scholars portend that the South African higher education context provides possibilities for achievement of these dual goals of globalization and democracy despite the inherent tension between neoliberalism and socialism that frames these dual goals.

Higher education's commitment to transformation is enunciated in the new policy documents, beginning with the NCHE report (1996), the Department of National Education's Green Paper (1996) and White Papers (1997) on higher education, and the Higher Education Act of 1997 (Currie & Subotsky 2000, p. 135; Kraak, 2001, p. 20). The White Paper (1997), for example, clearly situates the transformation of higher education within the broader context of South Africa's transformation from an apartheid past to a democratic future: "The transformation of higher education is part of the broader process of South Africa's political, social and economic transition, which includes political democratization, economic reconstruction and development, and redistributive social policies aimed at equity" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 9). Scholars have claimed that the policy spectrum is informed by national redistributive development priorities at one end, and globalized conditions of financing, governance and accountability, quality assurance and national qualifications models at the other (Currie & Subotsky, 2000, p. 136; Subotsky 1999, as cited in Waghid, 2001a, p. 456

and 2002, p. 464). The new policies focus attention on higher education's agency in the transformation to a new democratic, equitable society nationally, and in providing the country with high skills, innovation and knowledge to compete globally (Ekong & Cloete, 1997, p.

7). The CHE (2000) report, for instance, recommends:

The provision of person power to strengthen the country's enterprises, services and infrastructure. This requires the development of professional and knowledge workers with globally equivalent skills, but who are socially responsible and conscious of their role in contributing to the national development effort and social transformation. (p. 9)

These higher education policies seek to redress the inequalities that exist within and between HWUs and HBUs, in order to eradicate the inefficiency, waste and duplication inherent in the segregated higher education system, and to set higher education standards that articulate internationally. The empirical evidence from my study seems to indicate that universities are failing to attain a balance between these seemingly contradictory goals of economic growth and social redress; that the third way has eluded the policy expectations and the hopeful views of several scholars who argued that South Africa's particular history and context represents a socio-econo-political environment in which it might in fact be possible to balance these goals (see chapter one). In the sections below, I focus on the policies relating to increased managerialism, democratic governance, equity and redress, research and funding.

## **2.2 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED**

In the previous chapter I sketched the challenges facing the new nation with regard to higher education. The White Paper (1997) identifies the following challenges within higher education:

- ...inequitable distribution of access... for staff and students along lines of race, gender, class and geography... and untenable disparities between historically black and white institutions...
- ...mismatch between the output of higher education and the needs of a modernizing economy.
- ...[need to] strengthen the democratic ethos, the sense of common citizenship...

- ...research policies which favour academic insularity and closed system disciplinary programme(s)
- ...governance... characterised by fragmentation, inefficiency and ineffectiveness.

(South Africa, 1997a, p. 8)

In addition, reference is made to the low participation of African students in higher education. According to the NCHE report (1996), as cited in the White Paper (1997), the participation rate for white students was “just under 70 percent” whereas for African students “it was about 12 percent” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 20). The White Paper (1997) also recognizes that “Unlike the changing student profile, especially in undergraduate programmes, the composition of staff in higher education fails to reflect demographic realities. Black people and women are severely under-represented, especially in senior academic and management positions” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 34).

These local challenges outlined here exist within a framework of global challenges whose impact is also being felt within the South African higher education sector. The White Paper (1997) portends: “This national agenda is being pursued within a distinctive set of pressures and demands characteristic of the later twentieth century, often typified as globalization” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 9). Globalization is defined as “multiple, interrelated changes in social, cultural and economic relations, linked to the widespread impact of the information and communications revolution, the growth of trans-national scholarly and scientific networks, the accelerating integration of the world economy and intense competition among nations for markets” (p. 9). The challenge posed by globalization is elucidated thus: “The policy challenge is to ensure that we engage critically and creatively with the global imperatives as we determine our national and regional goals, priorities and responsibilities” (p. 9). The economic nature of these global challenges and their relation to new technologies is acknowledged:

The South African economy is confronted with the formidable challenge of integrating itself into the competitive arena of international production and finance which has witnessed rapid changes as a result of new communication and information technologies. These technologies, which place a premium on knowledge and skills, leading to our notion of the "knowledge society," have transformed the way people work and consume. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 9)

Hence, as noted above, the policy imperatives speak to both local and global challenges facing higher education in South Africa.

Concerns related to the "production, advancement and dissemination of research" include:

- ... insufficient articulation between... the research system and national needs for social, economic, cultural and intellectual reconstruction
- ... insufficient research capacity in higher education and existing capacity is poorly co-ordinated and not adequately linked to postgraduate studies
- ... stark race and gender imbalances
- the distribution of research capacity is skewed... HDI's [historically disadvantaged institutions] have only recently integrated research into their core functions. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 31).

An additional concern is the "insufficient attention to the... problems and challenges of the broader African context" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 8). This latter concern has led institutions to iterate their African identity within their individual mission statements as noted in the case study chapters below.

### **2.3 POLICY INTENTS**

The opening paragraphs and the Purpose section of the White Paper (1997) focus on South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy, the need for transformation and the RDP, while clearly situating the expected role of higher education in our transforming society:

South Africa's transition from apartheid and minority rule to democracy requires that all existing practices, institutions and values are... rethought in terms of their fitness for the new era. Higher education plays a central role in the social, cultural and economic development of modern societies... In the context of the present-day South Africa, they must contribute to and support the process of societal transformation outlined in the RDP, with its compelling vision of people driven development leading to a better quality of life for all. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 7)

Similarly, the Preamble to the Higher Education Act (1997) sets out the aspirations for higher education:

Establish a single-co-ordinated higher education system which promotes co-operative governance...; Restructure and transform programmes and institutions to respond better to the human resource, economic and development needs of the Republic; Redress past discrimination and ensure representativity and equal access; ... Promote values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom; Respect ... scholarship and research; ... Pursue excellence... ; Respond to the needs of the Republic and of the communities served by the institutions; Contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, in keeping with international standards of academic quality... enjoy freedom and autonomy... within the context of public accountability. (South Africa, 1997b, p. 1)

It would appear that this document is weighted slightly in favour of the RDP, redress and equity, as these are mentioned ahead of growth and the labour market in the 'Purpose' section. The four purposes outlined in the White Paper relate to equity, growth, socialization and the creation of knowledge.

As noted, the higher education policy mirrors the national approach of establishing dual goals of economic growth and social redress to achieve progress, development and social justice. The White Paper 3 on Education (1997), and its precursors, the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) report (1992) and the NCHE report (1996), all emphasize the following principles: equity and redress; democratization; effectiveness and efficiency; development; quality; academic freedom; institutional autonomy and public accountability (see South Africa, 1997a, pp. 8-10). The NCHE (1996) document, which informed the White Paper 3 (1997) recommends the adoption of the following principles as a departure from the apartheid higher education policy, which had ignored equity and redress: "A new funding framework for higher education in South Africa should be developed which is consistent with the principles of equity (including redress), development, democratization, efficiency, effectiveness, financial sustainability and shared costs" (South Africa, 1996a, p. 216)

These principles seek to correct the problems inherent in these apartheid institutions. The focus on equity and redress is intended to ensure that the barriers to access for blacks, women and other previously excluded groups are removed; democratization will be achieved through the establishment of representative, participatory governance structures such as Councils and Institutional Forums to ensure the implementation of the transformation process at institutions; effectiveness and efficiency will help to remove the duplication and waste inherent in having separate and unequal institutions and uneven access to disciplines like science and technology and commerce and, it will increase responsiveness to labour markets; development will ensure that the institution engages with students and other sectors in society to build its own capacity and contribute to the common good; quality will ensure that international standards are matched and it will allow for better throughput rates and research productivity; academic freedom and institutional autonomy, which were curtailed during the apartheid era, will be upheld and restored; public accountability means greater responsiveness and responsibility to society at large, which never existed in the previous system.

The document qualifies the meaning of 'institutional autonomy' leaving little space for institutions to balk at their role of contributing to transformation: "However, there is no moral basis for using the principle of institutional autonomy as a pretext for resisting democratic change or in defence of mismanagement. Institutional autonomy is therefore inextricably linked to the demands of public accountability" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 13). This qualification is necessary within the South African context where institutions can use their autonomy as a foil for refusing to engage in the democratic change processes.

### **2.3.1 Principles of equity and redress, and democratization**

In terms of "equity and redress", the first "fundamental principle" listed in the White Paper (1997):

The principle of equity requires fair opportunities both to enter higher education programmes and to succeed in them. Applying the principle of equity implies, on the one hand, a critical identification of existing inequalities

which are the product of policies, structures and practices based on racial, gender, disability and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, and on the other a programme of transformation with a view to redress. Such transformation involves not only abolishing all existing forms of unjust differentiation, but also measures of empowerment, including financial support to bring about equal opportunity for individuals and institutions. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 11)

With regard to “democratization,” the White Paper states:

The principle of democratization requires that governance of the system of higher education and of individual institutions should be democratic, representative and participatory and characterized by mutual respect, tolerance and the maintenance of a well-ordered and peaceful community life. Structures and procedures should ensure that those affected by decisions have a say in making them, either directly or through elected representatives. It requires that decision-making processes at the systemic, institutional levels are transparent, and that those taking and implementing decisions are accountable for the manner in which they perform their duties and use resources. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 12)

Equity is to be achieved through the development of “race and gender equity goals and plans” (p. 22). The policy pays attention not only to equity and redress, but also to equity of outcomes: “Ensuring equity of access must be complemented by a concern for equity of outcomes... the Ministry is committed to ensuring that public funds earmarked for achieving redress and equity must be linked to measurable progress toward improving quality and reducing the high drop-out and repetition rates” (ibid.). This policy goal set out in the White Paper (1997) is aided by a crucial piece of legislation, namely, the Employment Equity Act (1998) (South Africa, 1998). The Employment Equity Act (1998) requires individual organizations to develop Employment Equity Plans, setting out procedures to guide the redress of previously disadvantaged groups (ibid.). Employment Equity plans, commonly referred to as affirmative action policies with set targets, have had to be developed by all institutions as a way of ensuring greater equity among university staff.

Interestingly, whereas racial equity is addressed in general together with other areas of differentiation such as gender, age and disability, specific attention is given to gender equity in the White Paper:

The Ministry is committed to an institutional culture in which there is gender equity. Institutions have a responsibility for creating an equitable and supportive climate for women students and staff. Priority areas affecting women's participation include women's representation in senior academic and administrative positions and institutional governance structures, child-care facilities at institutions, affirmative action for women's advancement and mechanisms to draw women students into postgraduate studies and into science and technology. Institutional information systems should incorporate mechanisms for monitoring and collecting data on women students and staff. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 43)

Nowhere does the White Paper single out racial equity to the same extent as it does gender equity. Nor does it refer directly, as cited above, to the institution's responsibility in providing a "supportive climate" for black students and staff, ensuring their "participation" in senior academic and administrative positions. Nor is specific reference made to "affirmative action for the advancement" of black people, as we see in the case of gender cited above. This apparent oversight in the policy may also account for universities' interpreting equity as gender redress only, as will be shown in the forthcoming chapters.

To give impetus to the realisation of the principle of democracy, the goal was that: "New structures should provide for co-operative decision-making between... stakeholders" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 14). The White Paper is explicit about the need to transform the governance of universities:

The transformation of the structures, values and culture of governance is a necessity, not an option, for South African higher education.... Wholly transformed governance arrangements are needed to chart and steer the development of a single, integrated national system of higher education. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 35)

Universities were required by legislation to ensure greater representation and participation of previously disadvantaged people in higher education decision-making, through newly constituted representative structures – Governing Councils and Institutional Forums. Completely new governing structures were established through broad consultative processes at all universities post-1994. These Governing Councils were representative of the wider South African society and included participants from sectors as diverse as local government,

business, industry, civic organizations, formal and non-formal education institutions, health and legal and commercial professionals. The Governing Councils, proclaimed by the White Paper (1997) to be the “the highest decision making bodies of public institutions,” were to operate in accordance with principles and procedures set out in the Higher Education Act (South Africa, 1997a, p. 41). This Act states that Senate is “accountable to Council for the academic and research functions” of the institutions (South Africa, 1997b, p. 24, clause 28(1)). Council members consequently assumed unprecedented responsibilities in terms of public accountability for the governance of the institution, specifically with regard to its progress and development, transformation and fiscal management. Whereas Councils developed the framing policies, the Institutional Forum was expected to:

- a) advise council on issues affecting the institution, including –
  - i) the implementation of this (Higher Education) Act and the national policy on higher education;
  - ii) race and gender equity issues;
  - iii) the selection of candidates for senior management positions;
  - iv) codes of conduct, mediation and dispute resolution procedures; and
  - v) the fostering of an institutional culture which promotes tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights and creates an appropriate environment for teaching, research and learning; and

- b) perform such functions as determined by the council.

(South Africa, 1997b, p. 26, clause 31(1))

This excerpt from the Higher Education Act illustrates the important role expected of the Institutional Forum in guiding the implementation of the transformation. The forum was to be comprised of representatives from all levels of the institution who would participate in debates and discussions and develop further policy related to transformation. As can be seen from the policy, the Governing Council and the Institutional Forum are expected to play a significant role in enabling and supporting the actual implementation of the transformation. In addition, institutions were expected through a strategic planning process to develop new Missions and institutional cultures (South Africa, 1997a, pp. 19, 24). With such policies and

structures in place at universities, it is not difficult to see that society had great expectations for the transformation of these institutions.

### **2.3.2 Principles of quality and, effectiveness and efficiency**

According to the White Paper (1997), quality is associated with “ideals of excellence” and “entails evaluating services and products against set standards with a view to improvements renewal or progress” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 12). The principles of effectiveness and efficiency focus on the growth goals for higher education and on the more efficient use of financial and other resources:

An effective... institution functions in such a way that it leads to desired outcomes or achieves desired objectives. An efficient system... is one which works well, without unnecessary duplication or waste, and within the bounds of affordability and sustainability.... Making optimal use of available means. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 12)

Later in the document, institutions are advised to seek out private funding: “In the present context of limited real growth in public expenditure, making progress in achieving equity and redress goals will require institutions, in turn, to mobilize greater private resources as well as to reallocate their operating grants internally” (p. 22). To realize the principle related to growth, the White Paper (1997) calls for a “single coordinated system”: “Higher education must (be) replanned, governed and funded as a single national co-ordinated system, in order to overcome fragmentation inequality and inefficiency... in the pursuit of multiskilling and reskilling” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 17). Furthermore, a “programme-based approach” is adopted (ibid.). It promotes articulation within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to ensure that quality is maintained in accordance with local and international standards (South Africa, 1997a, p. 18, 28).

To give effect to these principles, institutions are expected to develop “three-year rolling institutional plans, with data, resource estimates, targets and plans annually updated, (that) enables the planning of growth and change in higher education to be more flexible and responsive to social and economic needs, including market signals” (South Africa, 1997a, p.

19). As can be seen, market signals are significant for growth. To aid efficiency, the White Paper (1997) calls for:

Regional co-ordination and collaboration...(to) enhance articulation of programmes... the sharing of resources, including scarce academic and technical staff, library and information services... (and to) reduce programme duplication and overlap. The Ministry will provide incentives to encourage and facilitate regional planning and co-ordination. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 20)

This new policy framework establishes the foundation for a unified, equitable, well-planned, program-based system of higher education. It is necessary to note that efficiency and growth are intended as a means to creating a “unified and well-planned” higher education system. It is when growth and efficiency become ends in themselves that they risk compromising the transformation project.

To give effect to the transformation of higher education through the implementation of these policies, the White Paper (1997) calls for the establishment of a “new Higher Education Branch of the Department of Education” whose functions include “policy development and planning, resource allocation and financing, information collection and analysis, and monitoring and reporting on higher education” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 40). In addition, the documents call for the establishment of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) “to give effect to the transformation of higher education institutions” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 36; see also South Africa, 1997b, pp. 10-18).

### **2.3.3 Policy intents for research**

The importance of knowledge creation and dissemination within higher education is emphasised early on in the Higher Education Act (1997) and the White Paper (1997).

Research is identified as one of the core functions of higher education:

The production, advancement and dissemination of knowledge and the development of high-level human resources are core functions of the higher education system. Research plays a key role in both these functions. It is the principal tool for creating new knowledge. The dissemination of knowledge through teaching and collaboration in research tasks are the principal tools for developing academic and research staff through postgraduate study and training. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 31)

As noted earlier, the Preamble of the Higher Education Act proclaims a higher education system that will “provide optimal opportunities for the creation of knowledge... respects... research and scholarship... (and) contributes to the advancement of all forms of knowledge” (South Africa, 1997b, p. 2). Among the four “purposes” outlined at the beginning of the White Paper (1997) is the following related specifically to research: “To contribute to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge. Higher education engages in the pursuit of academic scholarship and intellectual inquiry in all fields of human understanding, through research, learning and teaching” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 8).

It is significant also to note that, early on in the White Paper, the future research agenda is linked to economic and technological changes that result from globalization:

These economic and technological changes create an agenda for the role of higher education in the reconstruction and development. This includes (among others)... Production, acquisition and application of new knowledge: national growth and competitiveness is dependent on continuous technological improvement and innovation, driven by a well-organised, vibrant research and development system which integrates the research and training capacity of higher education with the needs of industry and of social reconstruction. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 10)

At the same time, there is a focus on local needs. Among deficiencies noted in the apartheid higher education system was lack of focus on local problems:

While parts of the South African higher education system can claim academic achievement of international renown... there is still insufficient attention to the pressing local, regional and national needs of the South African society and the problems and challenges of the broader African context. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 8)

In addition, the “Vision” for higher education enshrined in the White Paper calls for the advancement of all forms of knowledge that address the African context:

The Ministry’s vision is of a transformed, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist system of higher education that will: ... (among others) contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, and in particular address the diverse problems and demands of the local, national, southern African and African contexts, and uphold rigorous standards of academic quality. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 11)

This policy does not make explicit what exactly may be deemed to be “all forms of knowledge”. In fact, there is no reference to indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) in the White Paper 3. The notion of IKS only emerges later in the NRF policy documents which pay increasing attention to IKS. Indeed, the NRF identifies IKS as one of nine research focus areas for which it provides funding (NRF profile, 2004). These policy intents, however, attempt to balance the dual goals of globalization and democracy with reference to research undertakings in higher education, as will be discussed in the next section as well.

### *Mode 2 research*

The higher education policies and several scholarly analyses seem to indicate that one of society’s expectations of the university, as a knowledge producer and disseminator, is to contribute towards solving the tremendous social problems facing South Africa. According to Kraak (1997), there is clear evidence in higher education of knowledge being harnessed through partnerships, a feature of Mode 2, in the interests of social struggles (p. 65).

The NCHE (1996) recommendations and the White Paper 3 (1997) are explicit about the role that Mode 2 knowledge production has to play in higher education in South Africa (Jansen, 2002, p. 508; Kraak, 2001, p. 20). The White Paper (1997) thus specifically recognises shifts in the mode of knowledge production:

The nature of the research enterprise has undergone radical change through: the development of multiple sites of research and knowledge production which are partly or wholly separated from higher education...; the impact of transdisciplinary and transinstitutional research; new forms of communication –the information highway- which have accelerated and widened access to data and research findings. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 31)

Furthermore, the policy asserts that the changing nature of research gives rise to greater accountability processes so that the outcomes of research are not only measured by traditional tools such as peer-reviews, as is the case for traditional research, but also by other indicators “such as national development needs, industrial innovation and *community*

*development*” (my emphasis; p. 31). According to the White Paper (1997), higher education must

Broaden its capacity to undertake research across the full spectrum, that is, traditional or basic research, application-driven research, strategic research, and participation-based, in partnership with other stakeholders in the national research system. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 32)

As part of the implementation of the government’s policies, a formal partnership programme, the Technological and Human Resources for Industry Programme (THRIP) has been developed and “comprises a partnership between higher education institutions, business, industry, and government. THRIP aims to develop the competitiveness of South African industry” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 32).

While application-based research is promoted, the policy is clear about the status and importance of basic research. As noted in the excerpt above, the policy encourages the undertaking of the “full spectrum of research”. In addition, it states:

The importance of traditional or basic research must be underscored, as it is crucial in nurturing a national intellectual culture, generating high-level and discipline-specific human resources, and providing opportunities for keeping in touch with international scientific developments – all of which facilitates innovation. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 32)

Clearly, there is an attempt to balance the generation of Mode 1 and Mode 2 forms of research.

The policy recognises that capacity and resources are necessary to improve the national research system in higher education: “Strengthening the role of higher education in the national research system requires increasing current research capacity, protecting current research resources, finding new sources of research funding, and using all these resources more effectively” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 32). The funding policies, including those that target research development, are outlined in the section below. Suffice to say that the ministry recommends and supports:

The development of a national research plan which will identify national priorities for research and postgraduate training, processes for the

identification and establishment of centres of excellence and niche areas, targets and performance indicators to achieve redress by developing a more representative research community and incentives for collaboration and partnerships. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 32)

We see here the Ministry's commitment and support to improving knowledge creation and dissemination. Several other organizations are named as collaborators in this effort, including the NRF whose responsibility it is "to provide early advice on the current state and future needs of research infrastructure and capacity, including institutional redress in the higher education system" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 32). The role of the NRF and its policies are discussed further below. Redress measures include funding for HBUs, and prioritizing access to masters, doctoral and post doctoral programmes for blacks and women students (South Africa, 1997a, p. 33). The policy is clear on the need to build research capacity, to maintain and improve capacity at institutions that currently excel in generating research, and to target the redress of HBUs and other marginalised groups, such as blacks and women.

#### ***NRF rating policy***

The NRF has an evaluation system for rating researchers from higher education institutions (NRF: Evaluation). The system is based primarily on "the quality of their research outputs in the recent past (seven years)" (ibid.). The evaluation is undertaken by national and international peers and rating applications are considered by 21 specialist committees constituted according to the disciplines.<sup>21</sup> By means of this evaluation system, the NRF generates data requested for various scholarly and policy reasons. Attaining a NRF rating is regarded as a significant achievement within the academic community in South Africa and it is regarded as a means for obtaining funding and promotions.

## **2.4 FUNDING POLICIES**

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that the inequitable resource allocation to universities consolidated the apartheid plan for higher education. Needless to say, therefore, adequate

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<sup>21</sup> For further information on this system see <http://www.nrf.ac.za/evaluation/>.

funding is evidently required to implement the policies described above. Chapter Four of the White Paper (1997) enunciates the new funding policies. The policy poses the problem of meeting the costs of higher education right at the beginning of the chapter: "The transformation of the higher education systems to meet growth, equity and quality objectives will involve additional costs. The obvious question is: how are these costs to be met when significant real increases in public expenditure on higher education are unlikely to greatly exceed the real rate of economic growth?" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 45). The policy then recommends that institutions undertake neoliberal reforms:

Implement system-wide and institutional reforms that reduce wasteful expenditure, improve efficiency and enhance quality... reducing unit costs... duplication... broadening the use of high quality but less labour intensive teaching and learning strategies.... Improving student throughput and completion rates, aided by ... targeted public funding measures. (South Africa, 1997a, p. 45)

While the policy states that the present level of public expenditure on funding is "rather high by international standards and has been growing at a faster real rate than in many countries," it also recognizes that expansion without new investment can result in "overcrowded facilities, low staff morale and poor quality programmes" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 45). The policy is clear, too, about the need for government commitment to higher education, despite the neoliberal macro-economic policies and national commitment to fiscal discipline (South Africa, 1997a, pp. 45-46).

The new policy, described as "goal-oriented, performance related public funding," is two-pronged:

General purpose *block funding* to institutions on a rolling triennial basis, and *earmarked* funds to achieve specific purposes, including targeted redress of inequities in access and capacity, student financial assistance, staff development, curriculum development, research development, libraries and information technology, capital works and equipment, and planned improvements in operational efficiency submitted by individual institutions. (my emphasis) (South Africa, 1997a, p. 47)

Block grants are payable on the basis of full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments in different fields and levels and the submission of triennial institutional plans, which should include missions, enrolment targets, equity goals, human resource development plans, programme development plans, academic development, research development and infrastructure development (South Africa, 1997a, p. 48). The policy recognizes the importance of providing for student aid within the South African context pointing out that “student aid is not an optional extra” (South Africa, 1997a, p. 51).

The policy also emphasises the importance of research and makes provision for research output within the funding formula. The policy states:

In view of the national strategic importance of research, and in order to ensure that the relatively scarce funds available for the development of research capability are well targeted, public funds for participation in research, whether basic or applied, should not be spread across all faculties or schools but should rather be concentrated in those areas where there is demonstrable research capacity or potential, in both HDIs [historically disadvantaged institutions] and HWIs [historically white institutions]. To give practical effect to this view, the Ministry will provide earmarked funds:

- To preserve and strengthen existing areas of research excellence
- To develop new areas and centres of research excellence
- To develop research links with industry and to facilitate industry-related collaborative research
- To facilitate inter-institutional research collaboration
- To facilitate collaborative research and technology development with Science, Engineering and Technology Institutions (SETIS), as defined in the White Paper on Science and Technology.

(South Africa, 1997a, p. 54)

As can be gleaned from this excerpt, the focus of collaboration leans towards industry rather than community-related research or indigenous research. This matter is discussed later in this dissertation. However, the policy does allude to the role of the National Research Foundation (NRF) in the co-ordination and funding of research activities (South Africa, 1997a, p. 54).

As can be seen from the above discussion, the new funding policy intents are to reduce waste through neoliberal reforms, improve efficiency and quality, encourage growth of the sector and redress inequalities of the sector. These funding intents can only be realized

if the neoliberal policies are used as a means to an end, the end being redress and the removal of current resource inequities. In addition, the timely and efficient implementation of these policies is crucial if these intents are to be realized. As will be seen from the discussion that follows here and later in the thesis, there have been delays in this funding policy, which have seriously compromised the functioning of an institution like Fort Hare and its capacity to produce knowledge.

The NCHE documents of 1996 highlighted the undesirable effects of the old South African Post-Secondary Education (SAPSE) formula (NCHE, 1996). According to the NCHE (1996) document, the SAPSE policy ignores the existing inequities and inequalities within the higher education system (see Bunting, 2002b). Having been designed specifically for HWUs, the SAPSE formula had negative consequences for HBUs (Bunting, 2002b, p. 127). Unfortunately, there have been delays in implementing the new funding policies espoused in the White Paper. To understand the full effect of these delays and how universities have responded to the challenges arising from these delays, it is necessary to explore the history of funding for higher education, especially since these funding policies continue to have an impact on the higher education system today.

#### **2.4.1 Higher education funding during apartheid**

The ramifications of the apartheid funding policies for the current higher education system are widespread and, at times, appear to be impervious to new systems and policies.

According to Bunting (2002b), two broad types of government funding were in place in South Africa during the apartheid era, namely, negotiated budgets for the HBUs and formula funding, known as the SAPSE formula, for the HWUs (p. 116). Bunting explains that HWUs were “given considerable administrative and financial powers” on how grants could be spent, how many staff to employ, what tuition fees would be charged and how surplus funds could be invested (ibid.). The SAPSE formula was based on the following criteria: 1) student enrolment and throughput rates; 2) subject groupings based on natural sciences and

humanities; 3) course levels with weightings from one to four --undergraduates were weighted by one and doctoral students by four; 4) cost units that included staff, supplies, services, building renewals, library book and periodicals (cost units increased annually with inflation); 5) gross formula totals based on tables of ratios between the cost units and the subject grouping funding; the nett subsidy total for the shared cost between the government and the consumer was determined by the gross formula income, less the amount raised from students and private sources, usually constituting on average 20 % of the gross formula for HWUs; 6) a-factors, which ranged on average between 0.75 and 1, for adjusting subsidies in line with the national budget (Bunting, 2002b, pp. 118-120).

HBU's, on the other hand, were not given these administrative and financial powers. Instead, their tuition fees and details of their expenditure budgets, for example staff employment, building maintenance and equipment purchase, had to be approved by their controlling government department and unspent funds had to be returned to the department. As Bunting points out, this meant that HBUs were unable to build up reserve funds and, because expenditure budgets were based not on student enrolment, but on the previous year's budget, allocations did not address areas such as library resources, laboratory and computer facilities, leading to increased disparities between HBUs and HWUs (2002b, p. 118). This difference in funding arrangements between the HWUs and the HBUs clearly illustrates the heinous inequalities that existed between the different systems.

In 1988, the six HBUs that supposedly fell under the jurisdiction of the Republic of South Africa, were placed on the funding formula known as the SAPSE formula "with its underlying apartheid assumptions and principles" explicitly designed for the HWUs (Bunting, 2002b, p. 120). The remaining HBUs were still at that time part of the homeland states known as the TBVC states (Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei). The University of Fort Hare, for instance, was controlled by the administration of the Ciskei homeland state. From 1986 until 1994, the last year of the apartheid government, the national

student enrolment increased by 73 % but, because of the high inflation rate in the floundering apartheid economy, the government could not maintain the SAPSE funding and consequently used the a-factor to reduce its share of funding from 90 % in 1986 to 65 % in 1994 (Bunting, 2002b, p. 124). This led universities to diversify their funding, which was effected mainly through increasing student fees (Bunting, 2002b, p. 125). In 1995 the HBUs in the TBVC states, including Fort Hare, which had enjoyed better funding in comparison to the RSA HBUs, were incorporated into the unified higher education system of the new South Africa and also fell under the existing SAPSE formula (Bunting, 2002b, p. 128).<sup>22</sup>

Bunting contends that the application of the SAPSE to HBUs “had unintended, but serious consequences for black higher education institutions in South Africa – not just during the years 1988-1994, but also during the years following 1994” (2002b, p. 117). I contend that the disastrous consequences of applying a policy specifically designed for HWUs to HBUs are obvious when one considers the SAPSE criteria listed above. When HWUs opened to all races, there was an exodus of elite blacks students from the HBUs. The students who remained at the HBUs came from underprivileged communities and could not afford the fee increases. According to Bunting, at least 33 % of fees would not be recovered (2002b, 127).

Success rates at the HBUs were lower because the students were from underprivileged backgrounds and had received an inferior primary and secondary schooling. These students required both financial aid and remedial assistance. As noted in chapter one, disciplinary choices were limited at the HBUs, favouring the humanities. Course levels were mainly undergraduate because these were teaching universities, and fewer blacks enrolled for postgraduate levels. Cost unit funding was based on historical funding meaning HBUs, which had never received funding for infrastructure and facilities, would remain under-equipped in terms of infrastructure and facilities, such as library holdings as we shall see from the

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<sup>22</sup> More funds were allocated to the homeland governments because the apartheid government was determined to give the homeland system the semblance of success, hoping thereby to make its policy more credible to the world.

evidence in the forthcoming chapters. It is not difficult to deduce that the SAPSE formula was disadvantageous for the HBUs, creating greater disparities between them and the HWUs in post apartheid South Africa. As Bunting (2002b) correctly asserts, the application of the SAPSE formula to HBUs from 1988 “sowed the seeds of the serious financial problems, which historically black institutions were to experience in the later 1990s” (p. 122).

Bunting found that higher education funding, which had been decreasing between 1988 to 1994, the last years of apartheid, in fact remained constant between 1997 and 2001 in terms of student subsidy. The total amount appropriated by government had, however, “increased in real terms,” making the often heard refrain that the new government had cut funding, empirically incorrect (2002b, p. 136). Rather, the level of funding was not high enough to meet the needs of higher education. But the disparity between HWUs and HBUs had increased over this period. The market value of the long-term investments of the HWUs doubled between 1993 and 1999 and accounted for their access to private income, suggesting, according to Bunting, that no redistribution of funds had occurred between HWUs and HBUs.

Bunting’s significant finding is that there was rapid diversification of funding by the late 1990s, as institutions adapted to the new global and national environment, with more than 10 % of the income of universities emanating from grants and contracts from industry and commerce. This a proportion was not achieved in many developed countries and matched at the time only by private US universities (2002b, p. 142).<sup>23</sup> A further 10 % was generated by their investment holdings. This successful adaptation applied mainly to HWUs. In real rand terms, government appropriations to HWU-A increased by 22 % and to HWU-E by 7 %, whereas to HBUs it decreased by 8 % between 1999 and 2001 (Bunting, 2002b, pp. 136-137), showing the reach of the apartheid machinery five to six years later.

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<sup>23</sup> Bunting draws on a study by Ziderman and Albrecht (1995) to make these comparisons.

Bunting points out that South Africa spends 22 % of the total state budget on education; 15 % of this amount goes to higher education, which is 0.8 % of the GDP and which “compares favourably with middle- and even some high-income countries” (Task Force report as cited in Bunting, 2002, p. 143). Bunting argues that the government’s “contribution to institutional budgets has consistently been at a level seen only in highly developed countries” (Bunting, 2002b, p. 143). When these statistics are viewed as a whole, they do not reveal how the funding continued to privilege the HWUs; nor do they show that this high level of funding pertained to the HWUs alone because the actual funding to HBUs decreased by 8 % during this period, as noted above. In the section below, I discuss the NRF funding policy for supporting the development of research capacity at institutions.

#### **2.4.2 NRF funding policy**

The NRF is a government funded national agency responsible for promoting and supporting basic and applied research (see NRF: Profile). The stated objective of the NRF is to support, promote and facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development “in all fields of the natural and social sciences, humanities and technology, including indigenous knowledge” through funding human resource development and the provision of research facilities (NRF: Profile). It aims to contribute “to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the country” (NRF: Profile). In addition, it is the NRF's vision to act as a key instrument in the creation of an innovative, knowledge-driven society where all citizens are empowered to contribute to a globally competitive and prosperous country (NRF: Profile). It seeks “to unlock the full creative potential of the research community and to establish equity and redress” (NRF: Profile).

This profile projects the NRF as serving the dual needs of research, namely, democratization and globalization. The commitment to democratization is indicated by the NRF's intention to “improve the quality of life for all the people of the country,” to “unlock the full creative potential of the research community and establish equity and redress” and, to

promote knowledge creation and innovation in all fields, “including indigenous research”, whereas the intention to support globalization is indicated by the intention to create a knowledge driven society where all citizens are empowered to contribute to a globally competitive economy (NRF: Profile). The NRF thus sponsors numerous research activities that are “relevant” and “community oriented”, involving stakeholders such as government, industry, private sector and rural communities.

The NRF’s Thuthuka programme is aimed at building research capacity and is aimed at new researchers below the age of 40 years. The programme offers funding in three categories: the RiT category for entry-level researchers; the WiR category for women in research and the RETIBA category for young black researchers (see [http://www.nrf.ac.za/thuthuka/thuthuka\\_programme\\_framework\\_2005.doc](http://www.nrf.ac.za/thuthuka/thuthuka_programme_framework_2005.doc)). This funding is offered for three consecutive two-year cycles. Universities are expected to match the 2:1 formula, i.e. to contribute two rands for every rand contributed by the NRF.

The THRIP (Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme) aims to boost South African industry by supporting research and technology development (NRF: THRIP). One of the participants, Murray, explained that the programme offers collaborative funding, on a rand for rand basis, received from government and industry, conditional on the HWU having an HBU partner in the project (I: Murray).<sup>24</sup> In chapter eleven I discuss “socially relevant” research and find that the NRF needs to pay more attention to defining what is meant by “relevant”, “community-oriented” and “partnership” research because much of the research currently being conducted under the rubric of socially relevant research may not be relevant or community oriented.

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<sup>24</sup> Quotations and citation from the participants interviews are denoted as (I: name of participant). A list of pseudonyms may be found in appendix A

## **2.5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

In this section, I discuss the implications of the new policies for the universities in my study. As noted, these policies reflect the national macro-policy trends that emphasize the dual goals of globalization and democracy, i.e. economic growth and social redress, and higher education's agency in contributing to South Africa's transition to a new democratic society. The expectations and responsibility of universities to play a role in the transformation is evident in these policies. The policy warns the old guard against balking at the process; it states clearly that institutional autonomy may not be viewed as "a pretext for resisting democratic change or in defence of mismanagement" (South Africa, 1997a, p. 13). For this reason, public accountability features very strongly on the new policy agenda. Furthermore, there is a call for situating the policy changes within a local and African context, a point that appears to have eluded the HWUs in this study, as will be noted in the later discussions.

### **2.5.1 Globalization versus democratization**

The White Paper (1997) and Higher Education Act (1997) appear to balance the dual goals of growth and redress. However, Cloete (2002) observes that whereas the earlier higher education policy agenda was oriented towards the local concerns of equity, democracy and unity (p. 412), later policy documents such as the CHE (2000) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001) place greater emphasis on neoliberal goals of growth, effectiveness and efficiency (see Cloete, 2002, p. 103). Hence, although there appears to be a balance in the concerns related to, on the one hand, growth and progress, expressed through the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, development and quality, and on the other hand, the principles of equity and redress, as expressed through democratization, academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability, more recent policies lean toward the goals of globalization.

Therefore, it is not without policy precedents that we see evidence of this shift towards neoliberalism in the way the policies are being implemented at the universities in this

study. The neoliberal policies that support growth and development assume predominance, leading to the obfuscation of democratizing policies. In response to my question about the impact of transformation on his research, for example, graduate student Siphon, a participant in the study, argued that the macro-economic policies of the government and their related cuts to spending would not assist HBUs to emerge from the inequities of apartheid:

[There is an] emphasis on economic growth that is propelled by the business sector inferring that government takes a back seat in the form of curbed government expenditure, downsizing of public personnel which works against the very aspirations of an improved delivery service. (I: Siphon)

Siphon sees this as being in "major contradiction" with the RDP that was aimed at the socio-economic development of the people of South Africa:

The RDP abruptly came to an end and it was substituted by the GEAR. A bag of lies has since been put forward in saying that the GEAR also encompasses an element of the RDP, in fact it is a vehicle through which the RDP could be realized. This is not true... because GEAR says the government will spend less and the private sector will spend more. (I: Siphon)

I do not intend to argue against growth and progress nationally or effectiveness and efficiency institutionally. The original intentions of the policy regarded growth and efficiency as a way of reducing the waste, inefficiency and duplication characteristic of the apartheid system and of bringing about a more unified and equitable system that would serve the ends of democracy and redress. It is when growth and efficiency become ends in themselves that they threaten the transformation project; when cuts to spending are just that without prioritizing, for example, research related spending; when massification is viewed as a way to generate income alone rather than to redress student access as well; that the ends of democracy and redress may be compromised. I am concerned that without conscious effort being paid to achieving a balance between neoliberalism and social justice imperatives, as was originally intended by the policy, neoliberalism will dominate and obscure the ends of social justices, as will be shown in the chapters to come. This would result in a higher education system that continues to reproduce privilege and power among the dominant group in South Africa, so

that the transformation exists in name only. The critics of neoliberalism have argued that it not only increases inequality and widens the gap between the poor and rich nations, but that there is no example in the world where neoliberal economic adjustments have produced socially progressive outcomes (Bertelsen, 1998, p. 136; Jones, 2000, p. 30; Marais, 1998, p. 171; Odora Hoppers, 2000; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000b, p. 12). Even self-confessed, classical economist Rodrik contends that the benefits of the open market are exaggerated. He argues that, when developing countries have succeeded in fostering long-term economic growth, they have adopted unorthodox innovations, “none of which came out of the Washington economists’ tool kit” (2001a, p13).<sup>25</sup>

The White Paper lists “inequitable distribution of access and opportunity for students and staff” among the challenges within the higher education system (South Africa, 1997a). There appears to be an understanding here that equal access does not necessarily mean equal opportunity. However, the only way institutions are expected to account for increasing opportunities for the previously disadvantaged is through the submission to the national department of the three year rolling plans that include “targets,” in the form of figures, to be reached. These plans then become the basis on which funding is allocated by the department.

In other words, funding is contingent on the plans demonstrating that the institutions have indeed planned for achieving equity and redress through targetted figures and equity plans. Hence, despite the policy intentions and the principles underpinning the notions of democracy and equity outlined earlier in this chapter, it finally percolates into numbers and target figures mainly. Aside from changes in mission and vision, the policy goes no further in calling on these colonial or apartheid designed institutions to demonstrate how they are going to effect changes to their institutional cultures, systems and structures in order to respond to a new society and to accommodate a new generation of student and staff. The policy does not go far enough in requiring institutions to interrogate their administration systems and

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<sup>25</sup> This refers to World Bank and IMF economists.

structures by asking, for example: What is the state of readiness or preparedness of these institutions to respond to a new generation of students and staff? The problem is articulated as one of numbers alone at the policy level. Without any clear notions of how such changes will be demonstrated, the principles espoused in the White Paper serve a symbolic purpose, as do the new institutional mission statements. These issues are discussed further in the later chapters.

As noted in this chapter, the White Paper makes specific mention of gender equity, whereas references to racial equity are lumped together with other areas of differentiation such as gender, age, and disability (South Africa, 1997a, p. 43). Nor is there any specific reference to affirmative action for black people, as there is for women. This oversight, although correctly intended to emphasise the low participation of women in the academy, may have led some universities to interpret equity as meaning the affirmation of white women mainly, as will be shown in chapter ten below.

### **2.5.2 Mode 2 research**

As noted, the policy is explicit about Mode 2, the applications based, context relevant, transinstitutional, transdisciplinary, heterogenous and problem-solving nature of this mode of research, and its suitability for South Africa's needs. Mode 2 allows for research that is responsive to both the market and social needs. The policy implies that the adoption of the Mode 2 approaches to knowledge production will assist universities in their pursuance of the dual goals of democratization, through its emphasis on accountability, relevance and community development, and globalization, through industrial sector partnerships and the commercialization of research. The vibrant debate among scholars focuses on whether Mode 2 research benefits social reconstruction and development or whether it instead accentuates marketization and commercialization of knowledge (Bertelsen, 1998; Kraak, 2001; Subotsky, 1999; Waghid, 2002) and to a lesser extent, whether it will erode the base of research, namely, pure research (Bawa, 1997; Bawa & Mouton, 2002; Muller, 2003).

The predominant view among these scholars is that Mode 2 research will supplement rather than supplant Mode 1 research (Bawa, 1997; Kraak, 1997; 2001; Subotsky, 1999; Waghid, 2002). Kraak (2001) emphasises that Mode 2 is not just a new way of conducting research, but also the outcome of powerful social forces (globalization and massification of access), and a move from an elitist academic culture to one that is accountable to the broader society (p. 15, 17). He evinces that the benefits of the democratization of higher education have been entirely missed by the marketization debate. Bawa and Mouton, however, point out that whereas basic research constituted 75 % of research output in 1991, only 23 % of research could be classified as fundamental research in the 1995/6 academic years (2002, pp. 315-316). He cautions that disciplinary experts are only produced in the context of Mode 1 type of research and teaching, which is essential to the production of high skills required for growth of the economy (Bawa, 1997, pp. 48-49). On the other hand, Subotsky argues that Mode 2 type knowledge could benefit development related research opportunities in the context of community partnerships (1999, p. 515). He posits that there are numerous accounts in the literature that characterize the market university but little sense of what reconstructive development might entail operationally (1999, p. 514).

The policies do not define how Mode 2 research should be applied when conducting research with communities. They provide no interpretation of terms like 'stakeholder', 'collaboration' or 'partnerships'. Although there is reference to "all forms of knowledge," the policy does not elucidate the usage of this term and the omission of any reference to IKS is glaring. This perhaps demonstrates that not much thought was given to IKS by 1997. Subsequently, however, NRF policy made this area of research one of its focus areas to which funding is allocated. Following this emphasis on IKS by the NRF and a few scholars like Odora Hoppers (2002), IKS is now beginning to receive attention but not necessarily of the kind that benefits it. In addition, terms such as 'responsive' and 'social engagement' are discussed mainly in relation to the market, rather than in relation to communities (see Centre

for Higher Education Transformation, CHET, Reports and publications, <http://www.chet.org.za/publications.asp>; Higher Education and the City, 2003). Whereas South African scholars have researched and debated this issue of market related research rather than community based research (Kraak, 1997, 2001; Soudien & Corneilse, 2000; Waghid 2002), as noted I wish to focus on 'socially relevant' research as it relates to community involvement in the research being conducted by academics; research as a "public good" (L.T. Smith, personal communication, 30 July, 2004). As noted, Kraak contends that Mode 2 allows for knowledge to be harnessed in the interests of social struggles (1997, p. 65). I discuss this notion of research and the participants' engagement in socially relevant research in chapter eleven.

### **2.5.3 Funding**

The new funding arrangements emphasise "the national strategic importance of research" and links research output directly to the formulae. Earmarked funds are allocated to strengthen existing research, develop new areas of research and facilitate inter-institutional collaboration. It must be pointed out though that the focus of research, as enunciated in the policy, leans towards industry rather than community related or indigenous research.

The government's delay in implementing a new funding plan led to some HWUs adopting strategies that generated considerable financial benefits (Bunting, 2002b, p. 174). The HWU-As, adopted managerial and entrepreneurial strategies, diversifying their programme offerings according to the market and dramatically increasing their student enrolment dramatically, like UPE for example, while retaining their white students and setting up satellite campuses and distance education programmes that enrolled mainly African students (see Bunting, 2002b, p. 176). The HWU-Es adopted an inward looking strategy that focused on improving academic programmes rather than expanding enrolments, while the HBUs adopted the strategy of waiting for redress, having been conditioned into awaiting decision-making from Pretoria (Bunting, 2002b, p. 177-178). I disagree with

Bunting's contention that included in the focus of the HWU-Es was the objective of "meeting government requirements in regard to student and staff equity" (2002, p. 176). Other studies, for example Mabokela's study of UCT, show that the equity requirements have not been met (Mabokela, 2000, 2001). The findings in this study show that the HWU-E a long way from meeting the equity requirements (see chapter ten below).

Bunting refers to this application of the SAPSE formula to HBUs by the past government as an "adaptive strategy" that had "unintended" consequences for the HBUs (2002b, p. 117). He posits that the apartheid government had adopted a "hands-off" approach, thus allowing universities to have greater administrative and financial autonomy in the face of market pressures (Bunting, 2002b, p. 121). I find it difficult to believe, though, that the apartheid government did not foresee the disastrous consequences for HBUs, given how clearly unsuitable the criteria were for them. By 1988, change was inevitable and the apartheid government was beginning to disintegrate. Yet, there was considerable resistance among the old guard to the imminent changes within South Africa.

Many HBUs struggled to survive during the 1990s and some faced closure. This meant that they might not survive the transition and hence, would not be able to compete with HWUs for the higher education market. The black elite would seek out the better-funded and well-managed HWUs. The inequitable funding allocation to universities by the former minority government thus consolidated the apartheid grand plan for separate and unequal higher education. The application of the SAPSE funding to HBUs appears to have been a part of the apartheid plan to ensure that the most disadvantaged institutions would become further disadvantaged. Of graver concern, however, is that despite the development of new funding policies, the new democratic government continued to operate on the old formula well into the beginning of 2004. The apartheid grand plan had been so firmly entrenched that 10 years of democracy have failed to unseat the old policy intentions.

The new higher education policies, discussed in this chapter, demonstrate that the point of departure is the important role of higher education in establishing a new democracy. A new Higher Education Branch has been established in the Department of Education to support the transformation and development of the higher education sector. Unfortunately, as noted by some participants, this organ of the government does not seem to have the capacity to support the sector, as is evident from the inefficient processing of funding allocations to universities and the delays in implementing the new funding policies. In the rest of this dissertation, I discuss how these policy changes have been experienced by the participants and what effect they have on the knowledge producing processes in the academy. I further examine what the challenges to their implementation have been.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study explored the responses of academics, graduate students, senior managers/ policy makers and librarians at three South African universities to the forces of globalization (neoliberal economic reforms and new technologies) and democratization (redress and equity), with a particular focus on how the changes resulting from these forces relate to their research programs and knowledge producing processes. The study investigated how these universities are attempting to develop their research capacities, as one very important aspect of their contribution to a new democratic social order in South Africa. Research of this social nature is “value laden, being rooted in a social world that is socially constructed” (Banister et al., 1994, p. 175). According to Hesse (as quoted in Lather, 1986, p. 257), “The attempt to produce value neutral social science is increasingly being abandoned as at best unrealizable, and at worst self-deceptive.” Carspeken contends that much of what passes as neutral objective science is in fact biased in favour of privileged groups (1996, p. 7).

I adopted a qualitative approach because it allowed me to take account of the local context within which research is conducted at these institutions.<sup>26</sup> As Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10) point out, qualitative research generates “‘thick descriptions’ that are vivid, nested in real context” and provides for in-depth analysis rather than offering “snapshots” of the phenomenon being studied. It helped me to understand how individual researchers create, modify and interpret the world in which they find themselves (Cohen and Manion, 1989, p. 8). Put differently, it allowed me to gain an insight into the complex world of the “lived experience” of the researcher (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). Qualitative research is inherently flexible and well suited for locating the meaning people attach to processes and structures in

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<sup>26</sup> My adoption of the survey method as a data gathering technique in addition to interviews does not detract from my approach being predominantly qualitative, as will be discussed below.

their lives, for example, their perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments and presuppositions (Van Manen, 1977, as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.10). The study was empirical, based on the assumption that “theory is emergent and ... ‘grounded’ on data generated by the research act” (Cohen and Manion, 1989, p. 39).

In particular, I adopted a critical orientation towards my research believing that society is characterized by increasing cultural, political and economic struggles and dislocations (Carspeken, 1996). According to Carspeken, “criticalists” are concerned with social inequalities and direct their work toward positive social change (1996, p. 3). Critical researchers are concerned with the nature of social structure, power, culture and human agency (ibid.). Although critical researchers share this definite value orientation, they do not really shared a methodological theory (Carspeken, 1996, p. 3). Kinchloe and McLaren (1994) outline the basic assumptions of critical epistemology as follows: 1) All thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations which are socially and historically constituted; 2) facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or from some form of ideological inscription; 3) the relationship between the concept and object and signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption; 4) language is central in the formation of subjectivity; 5) certain groups are privileged over others; 6) oppression has many faces and focusing on only one of them elides the interconnections among them and finally, 7) mainstream research practices are generally implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race and gender oppression (as cited in Carspeken, 1996, p.4).

Norton Peirce (1995) asserts that critical researchers investigate the complex relationship between social structure and human agency without resorting to deterministic and reductionist analyses (pp. 570-571). Critical researchers also assume that the inequities of race, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation produce and are produced by unequal power relations in society (Norton Peirce, p. 571). Critical researchers in particular are interested in

the way individuals make sense of their own experience. This is the reason that I focus on the perceptions and experiences of my participants as they respond to the changes within their working environments. Drawing on Smith (1987), Norton Peirce evinces that institutional ethnography is a method of analyses that “fully recognises individuals as competent practitioners of their every day worlds” (Smith, 1987, as cited in Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 571). Moreover, critical researchers seek to locate their research within an historical context because history is not merely background data but may provide, instead, explanations of the regularities explored in any specifics (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 571). Universities in South Africa today are embedded in an apartheid history that continues to determine most facets of their current operations.

A critical orientation appears to be well suited to my study. It allowed me to consider the unequal social and power relations within and between the different universities, on the basis of racial, ethnic, class, gender and language differences. It enabled me to take into account the contexts, locale and history of these institutions, as I considered the ways in which individual academics made sense of their own experiences as researchers in a changing South Africa. A postmodern approach allowed me to deconstruct perspectives and notions that arose from the interviews, and thus to consider how structures and systems have been complicit in privileging certain groups over others within the universities, thereby reproducing unequal relations. It also allowed me to consider the notion of agency afforded by new research orientations among academics, in response to the democratization of South African universities. A critical ethnographic approach brought to light the communities of practice that researchers engage in at the workplace and how these and other institutional and social changes have impacted on their notions of identity, culture and diversity. As Brodkey (1987) asserts, the goal of critical ethnography is to create the possibility of transforming institutions (as cited in Norton, 2000, p. 22).

### 3.1.1 Decolonising methodologies

During the analysis of my data, however, I found that postmodern critical perspectives did not go far enough in deconstructing the colonial and apartheid constructs underpinning the experiences of the participants in the study. In seeking to delve deeper and to derive explanations for the failure of the policy to bring about the desired changes within the higher education sector, I found that I had to draw on postmodern critical perspectives in conjunction with feminist and decolonising theories and methodologies as a lens for analysing my data. The works of Fanon (1963), Goldberg (2002), Harding (1994, 2000), McClintock (1995), Mohanty, (1997), Narayan (1989), Narayan and Harding (2000), Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) Odora Hoppers (2000, 2002), Smith (1999), Rigney (1999) and Young (1990, 2000) were better suited for my purpose.

In addition, I found that I had to return to Marxist, Hegelian and Gramscian concepts of hegemony, power and class, despite the post-Marxist leanings of the critical perspectives I had adopted at the outset. Gramsci's theories on hegemony, drawn from Bocock (1986) and Fontana (1993), were most useful for understanding the complex and deeply embedded power relations resulting from the influence of colonial and apartheid ideology within the higher education sector. According to Gramsci, "The supremacy of a social group is manifested in two ways: as 'domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership'" (cited in Fontana, 1993, p. 141). A social group or class assumes a hegemonic role to the extent that it articulates and proliferates throughout society cultural and ideological belief systems that are accepted as universally valid by the general population (Fontana, 1993, p. 140). The university, as an institution whose role it is to develop knowledge and craft national cultural identities, and its researchers play an important role in establishing and maintaining "intellectual and moral leadership." As Fontana points out, "Ideology, culture, philosophy (and their) organizers – the intellectuals – are intrinsic to the notion of hegemony" because for Gramsci, reality is perceived and knowledge is acquired through moral, cultural and

ideological “filter(s)” (1993, p. 140). Hegemony therefore implies the creation of a particular structure of knowledge and a particular system of values and intellectuals, as the educators of society and generators of knowledge are the intermediaries through which the dominant class and the subordinate classes are “organically” linked (ibid.). As “experts in legitimation,” intellectuals resolve the contradiction that Gramsci believes exists between the ruling groups and the subaltern masses (Fontana, 1993, p. 140).

I sought to go beyond the identification of sites of inequality, the existing hegemony and unequal social relations, to develop goals for counterbalancing the hegemony and unequal power relations within the universities. Decolonising methodologies allow for the deconstruction of the colonial and racial projects that were begun with modernity. As Goldberg (2002) argues, the modern state is derived from the racial state i.e. a set of colonial or racial projects (see further discussion in chapter ten) just as the notion of settler is linked to the notion of the native.

According to Smith, decolonising methodologies are about destabilizing the hegemony of the colonial project (Smith, 2004). The decolonization process is far from over because the events that were hailed as decolonization in the developing world during the 1960’s was a political process only and did not include economic, cultural or social decolonization. These forms of colonization are still largely evident in state systems and structures throughout the developing and developed world. Decolonising methodologies is about developing a set of tools for reconceptualising the goals of colonized peoples; of charting the work that still needs to be done (Smith, 2004). Existing tools, for example, the notion of equity and representative democracy, appear to be insufficient for achieving social redress because representation alone does not deliver power. Instead, as posited by Saloojee, equity ensures that the status quo remains intact (2000). A change in discourse is required away from, for example, the belief, given rise to by equity and representative democracy, that those who give up will lose and those who receive will gain. This, as we see in chapter

ten, leads to group schisms and cries of 'reverse racism'. Decolonising methodologies are not just about bringing other and smaller narratives to the fore but about doing so in a way that centers and privileges them; it is about using these narratives as tools for challenging hegemony. Decolonising methodologies are based on a subtle process of learning and unlearning; of deconstructing and reconstructing so that those who 'give up' gain as well as those who 'receive'. In this way, group schisms may be eliminated in the joint pursuit of social justice.

### **3.1.2 Methods**

The terms methods, strategies and techniques are used differently in the research literature. Some researchers differentiate between methods (surveys, case studies and action research) and techniques (interviews, observations and questionnaires), while others categorise them all as methods (Cohen and Manion, 1989, p. 41, 307; Banister et al., 1994, p. 17; McKernan 1996, p. 75). Perhaps it is not so much what we call them, but rather their congruency that matters most. Powney and Watts (1987, pp. 178-9) argue for 'methodological congruity', in other words, the methods or techniques used should be congruent with the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research. Schwandt (1994, p. 119) cautions that a focus on methods often masks a full understanding of the relationship between method and inquiry purpose. Having said this, it may be claimed, from the perspective of ontological hermeneutics that the 'correctness' of the application of method is meant as "an aid to good judgment" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 122). It is a guide to making ethical decisions (interpretation) in a concrete situation (Madison cited in Schwandt, 1994, p. 122).

In the literature on higher education, the comparative method using case studies was found to be the most suited to the study of higher education institutions. I, too, have decided that the case study method is best suited to my research purpose because it allows for the examination of each university as a 'bounded system'. Miles and Huberman define the case as "A phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context, a unit of analysis" (1994, p.

25). As Merriam (1988) explains, a bounded system may be a specific phenomenon, a program, a process, an event or an institution (p. 9). Merriam defines the case study as "An intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit. Case studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple sources" (1988, p. 16). Stake (1995) asserts that cases are usually people or programs whereas events and processes are less likely to fit the definition (p. 1, 133). Yin (1994), however, argues that this kind of definition is too broad in that it allows for any study that involves objects, regardless of the methodologies used, to be regarded as a case study (p. 17). Yin emphasizes the importance of the context, claiming that is impossible to separate the phenomenon's variables from their context (Yin, as cited in Merriam, 1988, p. 10). Yin (1994) renders the following useful and comprehensive definition of the case study:

A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. In other words you would use a case study because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they may be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study... The case study as a research strategy comprises an all encompassing method – with the logic of design incorporating specific approaches to data collection and to data analysis. In this sense the case study is not either a data collection tactic or merely a design feature alone... but a comprehensive research strategy. (p. 13)

This method, or research strategy as Yin puts it, appeared to be well-suited for my particular study purpose. Research and the world of the researcher at any South African university are inextricably bound to the context of the institution itself. In turn, the context of the university itself has been shaped by the broader societal and political contexts. For example, HWUs have developed within an entirely different context from HBUs, and English-speaking HWUs may also be compared and contrasted with Afrikaner HWUs.

In this sense, a survey method on its own would have been inappropriate for my study because its ability to investigate the context is limited (Yin, 1994, p. 13). As Yin asserts,

surveys are advantageous when 'what', 'who' and 'where' questions (or their derivatives 'how many' and 'how much') are posed, and when the research goal is to describe the incidence or prevalence of a phenomenon, or when we intend to predict outcomes (1994, p. 6). By contrast, the 'how' and 'why' questions are more explanatory and call for the use of case studies (Yin, 1994, p. 6). My research purpose was not only to enumerate research capacity by investigating, for example, how many journals researchers had access to, but also in understanding 'how' this access or lack of it affected knowledge production, the researcher and the institution. Hence, the case study as the predominant method was better suited to my purpose.

This, however, is not intended to diminish the value of the quantitative survey method and its role in supplementing the case study method. More importantly, case studies and surveys are not mutually exclusive (Yin, 1994, p.9). It is possible to use more than one strategy in any given study, for example, a survey within a case study --as I have done in this study-- or a case study within a survey (Yin, 1994, p. 9). The case study method afforded me the opportunity to conduct enquiry into the 'pond-life' of individual researchers in their individual institutions. It was an appropriate method for my study because it was particular about allowing participants to speak for themselves (Walsh, 1993, p. 41). It also had the potential to generate a wider interest and application, derived from its "very particularity" (Walsh, 1993, p. 56).

Yin evinces that case studies can include qualitative and quantitative evidence (1994, p. 14). According to Yin, there is strong and essential common ground between qualitative and quantitative research (1994, p. 15). In my study I have used interviews to gather qualitative data and questionnaires to gather quantitative data. The case study may be a single case or several cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 25; see also Yin, 1994, p. 14). Single cases can be very vivid and illuminating if they are chosen because they are critical or revelatory (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 26). According to Miles and Huberman (1994),

multiple cases provide an even deeper understanding of the processes and outcomes of the cases. (p. 26). Yin asserts that the evidence from multiple case studies is more likely to be compelling and robust than single case studies (1994, p.44).

Although Yin (1994) draws no distinction in the methodological design of single and multiple case studies, in some fields, for example anthropology and political science, multiple case studies, referred to as comparative studies, are regarded as different methodologies from single case studies (p. 45). According to Yin, the logic underlying multiple case studies is replication, either literal or theoretical (1994, p. 46). Each case must be selected so that it either predicts similar results (literal replication) or contrasting results (theoretical replication) (ibid.). In other words, multiple case studies allow the researcher to compare and contrast data from the selected cases, as I have attempted to do with the data gathered from the HBUs and HWUs.

In an embedded case study design, the “embedded” subunits, such as processes, are also studied (Yin, 1994, p. 42). As opposed to the holistic design, the embedded design allows for the examination of specific phenomena and can serve as an important device for focusing a case study inquiry (Yin, 1994, p. 42). Such an embedded design will allow me to examine how the systems (economic, political and cultural), the structures (policies, language, networks, power), the locale (external factors such as communities) and the settings (institutional rules, peer interaction, support) affect research and notions of identity.

#### ***Shortcomings of the case study method***

One of the pitfalls of the case study is when the focus remains at the subunit level, --for example, the individual researcher in my study-- and fails to return to the larger unit of analysis, which in my case would be the institution (Yin, 1994, p. 44). In this event, the original phenomenon of interest can become the context rather than the target of the study (ibid.). I do not believe this was a shortcoming in my study, though, because my focus on the subunit levels, i.e. individuals within institutions, provided deeper insight into the unit level,

i.e. the institution, and thus presented a contextual framework for understanding the operations of the institution.

Yin (1994) adumbrates the following additional concerns associated with case study research: They may lack rigour, thus resulting in equivocal evidence or biased views; they may provide little basis for generalization; and they can be time consuming and result in massive, unreadable documents (pp. 9-10). I believe, however, that my pilot study assisted me to recognize these potential shortcomings and to plan to overcome them in the following ways: Instead of dwelling on the individuals (subunit) alone, I was able to consider how their experiences related to the institution's response to change; I ensured that there rigour through the kinds of questions posed and triangulation of sources and methods, and I avoided generating massive transcripts by keeping the interviews focused.

Previous research experience and the literature on research methods have shown that case studies involving in-depth interviews can yield considerable unmanageable or irrelevant material. As a thoughtful and reflexive researcher, I considered myself to be a research tool as I conducted interviews and administered questionnaires, constantly bearing in mind my research purpose and questions, while at the same time remaining flexible and open to new insights and perspectives introduced into the study as data collection proceeded. In this way, I was able to ensure that unnecessarily massive data documents were not generated. Through thorough planning, and well-designed semi-structured interview protocols, this problem was averted in the study. As noted, qualitative methods do not necessarily imply a lack of discipline, planning and rigour.

### **3.2 PILOT STUDY**

A pilot case was conducted as an exploratory study for this multiple case study. The cases selected were the same as in this study (see below). The purpose of the pilot study was to explore the feasibility of the research questions in discussion with participants at the three selected universities, and to examine the suitability of my research methods and data

gathering tools, such as the interview protocols and questionnaires. I found that the pilot study was well received and that it yielded rich data, which I have admitted to my main study. Yin asserts that pilot studies are important for revealing inadequacies in the design (1994, p. 52). The main study can be modified because of new information generated during the pilot study. In the light of the pilot study and an extensive literature review, I effected slight changes to the research questions and the interview protocols.

### **3.3 SELECTION OF CASES**

The selection of multiple cases adds confidence to the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.29). By comparing similar and contrasting cases, we can understand a single case finding. The choice of cases is usually made on conceptual, not representative, grounds and must be theoretically driven, even if the theory emerges (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 29). I thus elected to conduct my study at three higher education institutions in South Africa, namely, 1) the University of Fort Hare, the first HBU established in 1916 and alma mater of Nelson Mandela and many other famous African and black South African leaders, 2) the University of Port Elizabeth, an Afrikaner HWU established in 1964 and, 3) Rhodes University, an English speaking HWU established in 1904 by the colonizer of former Rhodesia, Cecil John Rhodes. In the South African context, these different HWUs are referred to commonly as Afrikaans or English medium universities, referring not only to their language of instruction but also their prevailing cultural ethos. Alternatively, they have been known as Afrikaner or English universities. In this dissertation, I mainly use their names or alternatively I use HWU-A to refer to UPE and other Afrikaner universities, and HWU-E to refer to Rhodes or other historically white English-medium universities.

A practical reason for choosing these three universities was because of time and cost factors, as all three are situated in the Eastern Cape province, where I reside. Furthermore, I have an insider view of two of these institutions, UPE and Rhodes, having served on their first democratic governing Councils or Boards for a period of five years each. The

educational sector and context of this province is familiar to me as I have, for example, conducted other research studies on early childhood, primary and secondary education and on the transformation of Further Education and Training institutions, such as an evaluation of all the colleges of education and of some technical colleges in this province.

However, these three cases are selected mainly because their different social and historical contexts are not only typical of most other South African universities, but they also mirror the socio-political context of South Africa and the dilemmas it presents for transformation of the society from an apartheid past to a democratic future. These cases have allowed me to examine similarities and differences in knowledge production between privileged white institutions and underprivileged black institutions in South Africa. Although my intention is not to generalise the findings of this research, as Miles and Huberman evince, “Each setting has a few properties it shares with *many* others, and some properties it shares with *some* others, and some properties it shares with *no* others” (1994, p.29).

#### **3.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

Because this qualitative research is an in-depth study of people in their contexts, the samples tended to be purposive, not wholly specified and they evolved once the fieldwork had begun (see Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27). The initial choice of participants for the pilot study led me to select similar or different participants, to assist me in gaining wider insight into social interactions at these institutions and for making comparisons between different groups. In this way, understanding that developed in one setting revealed facets to be studied in others. This, Miles and Huberman contend, is “conceptually-driven” sequential sampling (1994, p. 27).

The participants were selected from four categories: academics (researchers), librarians, senior managers/ policy makers and graduate students (see Appendix A).<sup>27</sup>

Participants were selected from a range of faculties across the disciplines, from the sciences

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<sup>27</sup> NB. All references to “students” in this dissertation are to graduate students.

to the humanities and the social sciences. Participants were also selected to ensure that the sample included diversity of race, gender, age and language. Eliciting the viewpoints of diverse groups was crucial in answering the research questions posed. In the pilot study, senior managers and academics, for example, directors of research and executive deans were involved as liaisons to help establish a list of selected interviewees. The University of Port Elizabeth, for example, had a list of the Top 20 researchers to which I referred in selecting the academic participants. Originally, I had anticipated selecting between 10 and 15 participants at each site (university), thereby giving me at least 30 to 45 participants for the study. In the end, though, because of snowballing and interest shown in the study, and because I encountered difficulty in recruiting certain categories of participants (discussed below), the number grew to 108 participants. The data were gathered over a period of two years between February 2002 and February 2004.

### **3.5 DATA GATHERING**

The main data were gathered by using qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey. This allowed me to juxtapose, contrast and compare the data derived from qualitative and quantitative gathering techniques.



Figure 1.      Juxtaposing qualitative and quantitative methods.

Interviews and questionnaires were considered appropriate data gathering tools for examining the research capacity at the three universities in this study. The interviews allowed me to obtain rich, detailed material that was to be used in qualitative analysis (Lofland and Lofland, 1995, p. 18), while the questionnaires provided valuable quantitative data about access to and use of research support systems and resources such as library holdings and the Internet. On a smaller scale, a document analysis of the national and institutional higher education policies and 'walking the campus' observations were used as complementary methods of data gathering.

### 3.5.1 Interviews

Interviewing was the main data gathering technique. Guba and Lincoln (1981) describe interviewing as the backbone of qualitative research. The semi-structured interview was preferred in this study, because it allowed me to plan the main topics and issues to be discussed, while affording the necessary flexibility for a deeper exploration of information through follow-up, open-ended questions. As Cohen and Manion (1989) claim, this approach enables a truer assessment of what the participant really believes (p. 313). Separate semi-structured protocols have been designed for the different categories of participants, namely, academics, librarians, senior managers/ policy makers and graduate students (see Appendix A). My protocols follow Lofland and Lofland's (1995) advice:

*Not a tightly structured set of questions to be asked verbatim as written...Rather, (they are) ...a list of things to be sure to ask about when talking to the person(s) being interviewed...a checklist of sorts, a kind of inventory of things to talk about in the interview ...(and to) check ...off as they (were) accomplished. (p. 85)*

The semi-structured schedule (see Appendix E) was useful because financial considerations did not afford me the opportunity to conduct second interviews with the majority of the participants. Given that English was not the first language of many of the participants, careful attention was paid to the appropriateness of the language to avoid the pitfalls of ambiguity, double-barreled questions or vague and meaningless responses.

The interviews were conducted with academics, librarians, senior managers/ policymakers and graduate students at the selected sites. Although there was overlap in terms of questions posed to the various types of participants, the different categories of participants were chosen for the reasons that follow. Academics were an invaluable source of information regarding knowledge production at the universities; librarians were interviewed to determine what supports to research they provide, the constraints they experience in securing books, journals and technology and, their interaction with managers, academics and students; senior

managers/ policy makers were interviewed to determine their orientation towards research in their management and policy making, what the external demands for research were and what impact government policies were having; and, lastly, graduate students were interviewed to examine their experiences of research, library use and interactions with academics, librarians and administrators for research funding and resources.

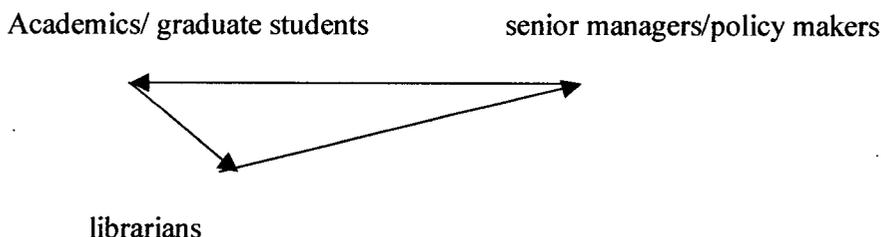


Figure 2. Triangulation of sources

The interviews were recorded in the form of field notes and audio tape recordings. I found interviewing an invaluable research experience that:

Led me to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the amazing intricacies... of people's experiences... of the issues... the complexities and difficulties ... Most important...interviewing (has led) me to respect the participants, to relish the understanding I gain from them, and to take pleasure in sharing their stories. (Seidman, 1991, p. 103)

Any contradictions between what was said in the interview and what the participants wrote was written in the questionnaires were further explored through dialogical processes (Baron and Sternberg 1986, pp. 130-143), namely, by redirecting questions to the participants for comment and further discussion during a follow-up interviews or via email.

Follow-up interviews were conducted with 6 participants because of the insight they had into research and the institution or the need to clarify or gather further data. Follow-up questions were posed to the rest via a series of emails. The purpose of the follow-up questions was threefold, 1) to clarify data from the interview, 2) to elicit new information arising from their responses and 3) to juxtapose their views against those of other participants for the purpose of triangulation.

### **3.5.2 Survey**

Structured Likert – type questionnaire items (i.e. ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) were used to gather quantitative data, which yielded valuable information on access to research resources at the selected universities (see Appendix F). The wording of these items was simple and straightforward to avoid ambiguity and confusion. Research methodologists have noted that questionnaires can have low response rates (Irwin, 1999; Palys, 1997, pp. 144-149). In South Africa, moreover, questionnaires often do not yield the data sought (Irwin, 1999). However, administered questionnaires have been found to be more useful in eliciting valuable quantitative data. In my study, I elicited information about access to scholarly resources, such as library and technological resources, access, usage and constraints experienced by the participants. To avoid low response rates, I presented the questionnaires to the participants at the beginning of the interview, briefly outlining the information sought, enquiring whether they had any questions and making firm arrangements to collect the completed questionnaires at a later date. I then followed up with email reminders of my impending visit to collect the questionnaires, using the opportunity to set appointments for follow-up interviews as well. Discussing administrative matters, such as the collection of questionnaires at the beginning of the interview, helped to establish a rapport, which proved useful for the subsequent in-depth interviews. Palys (1997) is optimistic that many of the disadvantages of questionnaires may be overcome when used in conjunction with interviews (p. 154).

### **3.5.3 Document analysis**

In addition to the two data collection methods described above, I reviewed certain national policy documents and regional policies relating to higher education as noted earlier in chapter two. These documents were retrieved mainly from the national government document websites and from participants at the universities. I also studied institutional policy documents that may have relevance to my study, for example, policies on research

development, incentives to academics and affirmative action. The document analysis assisted in the analysis of the data, especially in the areas of systems relations and regional networks with other institutions and communities.

#### **3.5.4 'Walking the campus' observations**

During the pilot study, I became aware that we gain impressions from very mundane experiences that, in fact, have a profound bearing on our interpretation of the data. Fisher refers to this as "walking the campus" and asserts that this kind of ethnographic research can be the source of valuable data for the study (D. Fisher, personal communication, 18 October, 2002). Consequently, as I walked around the campus sites, from one interview appointment to another, I formed impressions of the physical context and culture of the organization, which provided me with rich insights into the institution and its people. In a very practical way learned about access to resources, facilities, especially library facilities, faculty offices, the management of resources, institutional culture, faculty access to administrative support, interactions between students, in particular, black and white students, interactions between academics and students, academics and management, students and administrators, predominant languages, public relations capacity and interface with community, attitudes of administrative staff, which academics enjoy more privileges, and so forth. I recorded any striking or relevant observations between the interviews or at the end of the day. These observations have proven valuable and complementary to my data analysis.

#### **3.6 BIAS AND REFLEXIVITY**

As mentioned earlier, all research is value laden and cannot claim to be objective and free of bias. My underlying assumptions recognize the existence of bias on the part of the researcher and hence my need to be aware of my own discursive history as a black South African woman. As argued by Simon and Dippo (1986), the issue is not whether one is 'biased' but rather whose interests are being served (p. 196). According to Simon and Dippo, the problematic begins with a focus on ordered sets of social practices (in my case, knowledge

producing processes and research capacity), what particular groups of people (the researchers, senior managers and librarians), concretely situated in time and space (changes since 1994 at the three universities), constitute as their pattern of everyday life (their research) (1986, p. 197). I am interested in how existing power relations “structure how every day will be lived” at these universities, even as they respond to change (ibid.). In this sense, as mentioned above, the histories of these institutions and of the individual participants are an integral part of the explanations of the social practices I seek to analyse. Furthermore, my aim is not to merely “tell it like it is” but rather to challenge the assumptions and values of the discourse itself (Simon & Dippo, 1986, p. 200).

I believe that keen attention to rigour and remaining reflexive at all times have helped to keep my biases in perspective. It has involved awareness on my part that data are not “found” but “produced” (ibid.). On the other hand, this very bias may have been an advantage to my study. It has contributed to deeper understandings and has enabled me to analyse situations critically, so that I could probe responses to elicit additional information. It also afforded me greater insights as I analysed the data. In addition, black participants and female participants felt comfortable about sharing their experiences with me probably because I was a black woman.

Scholars often allude to the unequal power relations between the researcher and the researched based on an assumption that the researcher has power in terms of being the dominant “voice” asking questions and writing final reports (Carspeken, 1996; Cohen & Manion, 1989; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Norton, 2000; Palys, 1997). In this study, however, the participants were mainly senior researchers themselves, many of whom were white and male, and who may have viewed themselves as being in a position of power in relation to me, as a black female graduate student. My previous work in policy negotiations (including my work on various committees of the university Councils, such as the planning, audit and honorary degrees committees and on institutional transformation forums), affirmative

action, conflict resolution and organizational transformation, and my skills in human relations, negotiations and conflict resolution ensured that 'power struggles' did not emerge. The participants were magnanimous in sharing information and their valuable time with me. The pilot study was valuable in affording me the opportunity to establish relations of trust and mutual respect between the participants and myself (Carspeken, 1996). An advantage of this selection of participants is that they value research and understand the importance of completing the questionnaires and granting me the time to interview them.

### **3.7 LIMITATIONS AND ISSUES OF VALIDITY**

The study was limited to an examination of the impact of managerialism/ entrepreneurialism and democracy, equity and socially relevant research on researchers and their research programmes at three South African universities, and to determine what measures may increase research capacity and access at these universities. As noted, the study was limited to the Eastern Cape, a province that is predominantly rural and not typical of larger industrialized centers, such as Johannesburg and Cape Town. Hence, the contexts of the University of the Witwatersrand or the University of Pretoria, for example, differ greatly from those of the universities selected herein. Furthermore, my study focuses on the experiences, views and perceptions of particular individuals at these universities, comprising academics, graduate students, librarians and senior managers/ policy makers.

#### **3.7.1 Generalizability**

Earlier in this paper, I noted that potential shortcomings of the case study method related to issues of validity. According to Cohen and Manion, a possible disadvantage of the case study method is that external validity is reduced and that it cannot be assumed that the results are applicable to other situations (1989, p. 129). However, I do not intend, nor presume, my study to be generalizable. The underlying assumption of a critical approach is that these particular cases were investigated in their own right. As Yin asserts, case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes (1994, p. 10).

Notwithstanding this view, some degree of generalization is possible in the very sense that it is not. An interesting observation made by Smith (1995, p. 9) may be true of the institutions and participants in my study: "All schools are like no other schools, like some other schools, and like all other schools." In that sense, the institutions and participants in my study may have some parallels with other higher education institutions in South Africa, and the rest of the world for that matter. Smith cites Spindler (1982) in support of this claim:

An in-depth study gives accurate knowledge of one setting not markedly dissimilar from other relevant settings, is likely to be generalizable in substantial degree to these other settings. (as cited in Smith, 1995 p. 304)

These universities do, in fact, represent three types of universities found in South Africa, historically white Afrikaans universities (HWU-A), historically white English universities (HWU-E) and historically black universities (HBU). Therefore, it is likely that an analysis of the selected cases may give us an idea of the constraints that researchers encounter in knowledge production at other South Africa universities, as well as of their response to globalization, the transformation policies and implementation processes, and of their visions for the future.

### **3.7.2 Triangulation**

I contend that the triangulation of sites, methods and sources (participants) on several levels lent validity and credibility to this study. Data from the different sites have been compared and contrasted. Data from interviews and questionnaires have been contrasted and compared with one another, as well as with information from the document analysis and the 'walking the campus' observations. The triangulation of data from the different categories of participants (academics, graduate students, librarians, senior managers on the one hand, and different gender, race, language and age groups on the other) has also enhanced the trustworthiness of the data. As Banister et al. (1994) contend, triangulation facilitates richer and potentially more valid interpretations: "Exploration from a variety of sources using an

appropriate combination of methods increases our confidence that it is not some peculiarity of source or method that has produced the findings” (p. 145).

### **3.7.3 Credibility**

Careful attention to thoroughness, coherence and comprehensiveness (Schwandt, 1994, p. 122) in the research planning and procedures can confirm rigour and validity. By undertaking to present the findings to these universities, I have established what Guba and Lincoln (1985) refer to as “credibility,” a major criterion of trustworthiness (pp. 213, 219). In more conventional terms, this refers to the ‘internal validity’ of my research.

In qualitative research of this nature, the theory is emergent from the data and not vice-versa as in the positivist approach (Cohen and Manion, 1989, p. 39; Walsh, 1993, p. 52). Thus, as a case study researcher I could meet the researchers and other participants on their own ground and, through the interviews, work on making the operative theories of their research practices explicit through my study (Walsh, 1993, p. 52).

## **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS**

According to Lofland and Lofland (1995), the data consist of whatever is recorded in write-ups, transcriptions, photographs and videos. For this reason, the recording task is considered to be “a crucial aspect of the naturalistic analysis of social life, the critical linchpin of our attempts” (pp. 67, 69). On the other hand, Powney and Watts (1987) claim that the concept ‘database’ refers to the “entire recorded and unrecorded data,” such as impressions gathered, ethos, posture, gestures and context. In my study, the data refer mainly to the recorded data (p. 143). The transcripts from the interviews, together with the completed questionnaires, constitute the major part of this data, while the field notes from my ‘walking the campus’ observations serve as complementary data.

The data were analysed according to the domains that emanated from the research design and that emerged from a preliminary analysis of the dominant themes or patterns in the data. These domains included the following: prevailing research cultures, managerialism/

entrepreneurialism in response to globalization and new local policies; access to research, disparities between HBUs and HWUs and innovations to overcome constraints, publishing and the public value of research; transformation of governance structures; implementation of equity and redress policies; Mode 2 type of research and 'socially relevant' research in partnership with communities and visions for the future. Although it may appear that I have identified too many domains, Merriam (1988) evinces that qualitative research, by its very nature strives to understand how all the parts work together to form a whole (p. 16). Therefore, the case study in qualitative research concentrates on many, if not all, variables present in a single unit (Merriam, 1988, p. 7). Analysis is not simply descriptive, it is "*the detailed examination of the database... a creative, constructive affair*" (Powney & Watts, 1987, pp. 158, 160). Powney and Watts point out that analysis should be consistent with the underlying philosophy of the research (ibid.).

The field notes from the interviews and observations were reviewed as soon as possible after the visit to fill in the gaps to constitute full field notes. Research methodologists warn of the dangers of memory loss with the passage of time and advise that full notes be written almost immediately after the interview or observation (Powney & Watts, 1987, p. 125; Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 91). The recorded interviews were transcribed while the quantitative data were analysed using a software programme.

In analyzing the transcripts, I paid attention not only to the words, but also to who spoke the words and the context in which they were spoken. Triangulation of the data and sources, careful coding and analysis, and allowing the voices of the participants to 'come alive' in the interpretation, lent further rigour to my approach. The data from the interviews were first analysed against the field notes, and then the questionnaires. The data were organised onto grids so that patterns and trends across the different participants could be examined. The data were then analysed according to the different categories of participants within and across the institutions, for example, academics and librarians within and across the

three institutions. Thereafter, the patterns and trends across the categories were analysed. In this way, I developed case study profiles of individual institutions and then of themes, issues and trends across the institutions.

Thereafter, the data were analysed by drawing on the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study, the document analysis and the literature review. I used comparative analysis strategies as outlined by Slaughter (2001) to compare and contrast the findings both within and across the cases. Slaughter has presented alternative theories to the dominant modernist theories. These include political economic globalization theories, political sociology theories of Mann, knowledge/power theories of Foucault, narrativity theories and feminist theories. Feminist theory, Slaughter contends, is important for comparative higher education because it urges us to consider, amongst other things, equal rights, salary equity and comparable worth (2001, p. 406). Feminist development theory allows us to see the multiple voices as different ways of learning and thinking, which can be understood if we adopt the viewpoint of the "other" (ibid.). Slaughter asserts that a useful approach to studying gender cross-nationally might be to study the connections between faculty and the private or public sectors because "the neoliberal state valorizes the private sector and enables private, profit-taking organizations to indulge their preferences for hiring men" (2001, p. 406).

Scholars, like Altbach (1997), Scott (1999), Slaughter (2001) and Tierney (2001), suggest that the new theories call for mixed methods, multiple sites, quantitative and qualitative data, and a variety of analytical techniques. Tierney (2001) emphasises that he does not seek the theoretical dominance of postmodernism: "Indeed, theoretical preeminence of any singular view of the world is antithetical to the lineaments of postmodernism" (p. 366). Postmodernism, he argues, allows for heterogeneity so that localized and regional interpretations of different facets of knowledge, rather than supranational definitions become

the organizing frameworks for comparative higher education (2001, p. 367). The interpretations of the findings were done in the context of the theoretical framework.

### **3.9 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

One set of findings is presented in the form of case studies of each of the three universities in the study in part two of this dissertation. The aim is create an understanding of the individual institution as it relates to my study. A further set of related findings is presented under specific themes where the data have been compared and contrasted across the institutions in part three of the dissertation. I have tried as far as possible to avoid any overlap of data but this has not been entirely possible because the case study is a part of the comparative study across institutions. I have thus taken the liberty to decide which data belong where, in other words what data best represent the individuals institution as a case studies, or the comparison of the three institutions.

Except for chapter eight and nine where I rely on the survey data, most of the data presented in the other chapters emanate from the interviews. As noted, I cite the participants as widely as possible in order to give voice to their authentic experiences. I have given the participants pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. I denote these quotations and citations as (I: pseudonym). Where I need to specify that the data emanated from the survey, I use (S: pseudonym). In part four, I consider the implications of these findings. I make recommendations for improving access to research resources, building research capacity and for enhancing the implementation of the new policies at the universities so that these universities may contribute to the new democratic social order through their research programmes and knowledge producing processes.

### **3.10 REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY**

During the course of my research, I found that critical postmodernism did not go far enough in helping me to understand and think about solutions to issues raised in this study. These issues related to the equity policies being implemented at the universities under study,

managerialism as a project of neoliberalism obfuscating the redress intents of the national democratizing policies, and Mode 2 relevant research involving partnerships with local communities and indigenous knowledge systems, was not being applied in appropriate and a respectful ways (see further discussion below).

Critical postmodernism is useful in deconstructing notions of power and privilege and instances of gate-keeping, whereas decolonizing methodologies are required in exposing and 'de-structing' sites at which these obstacles to transformation are located and embedded. I use the term 'de-structing' to convey a more tangible, active intention to go beyond 'deconstructing' in order to uncover and remove racialised sites within the technologies, systems, structures and apparatuses of the university. I see "de-structing" as a more active way of "deconstructing", and as a way that leads to practical results rather than theoretical propositions for problematising a concept or construct.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *“BECOMING MORE LIKE A BUSINESS” –* **THE UNIVERSITY OF PORT ELIZABETH**



#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The University of Port Elizabeth, the smallest Afrikaner HWU in South Africa, was established in 1964 and is currently situated on 830 hectares of nature reserve alongside the sea in the city of Port Elizabeth, which is now known as the Nelson Mandela Metropole. A few species of wildlife, such as duiker (a species of small buck), can be viewed with the naked eye from the offices in the tower block, the tallest building on campus. The current campus was established in the early 1970s and consists of modern concrete buildings, which some people have found unaesthetic, especially when compared to the old traditional campuses of Rhodes and Fort Hare (see virtual campus tour <http://www.upe.ac.za/start.asp>).

In September 2003, a merger agreement was signed between UPE and two other higher education institutions in the Nelson Mandela Metro region, namely, the Port Elizabeth Technikon, a historically white technikon (HWT) and Vista University, a black university. UPE is currently a dual and parallel medium university with a total student population of 13,500 of which 7,000 are distance education students.

Since 1994, the university, under the visionary and progressive leadership of its then Vice Chancellor, Professor Jan Kirsten, developed progressive new policies and established democratic representative structures, such as a democratically elected governing council and institutional forum, ahead of similar processes at other HWUs. These developments were in accordance with new national policies. Equity policies were developed through consultative processes. This achievement was laudable given the institution's apartheid history and its strong links to the Broederbond.<sup>28</sup> Sadly, however, this study has found that the impact of these well-intentioned policies have not always been felt at the departmental levels of faculties on the campus.

Historically, the university did not have a strong research culture like some of the bigger Afrikaans HWUs, or its neighbouring English medium HWU. The institution's orientation towards teaching is still evident today. The new senior managers, namely the Vice Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor, appointed at the beginning of 2002 and 2003 respectively, have placed a new emphasis on research in accordance with the new higher education policies. The post of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) is a new one, focusing specifically on research development within the university, and is occupied by the first black and female senior manager to be appointed at UPE. Over recent years, the university has become infused with a spirit of managerialism, but not necessarily entrepreneurialism (see distinction drawn between these two terms in chapter one). It is this feature that distinguishes UPE from Rhodes, the other HWU in this study, which has maintained its collegial ethos and has opted for the entrepreneurial model in its response to the global and local changes. In these chapters, four to six, I present case studies of the individual institutions. Comparisons and contrasts between the universities are discussed in chapters seven to eleven.

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<sup>28</sup> The Broederbond is an Afrikaner secret society of the apartheid State (see earlier definition in chapter one).

## 4.2 RESEARCH CULTURE

In chapter one I explained that I used the term research culture to refer to the institution's orientation towards research and to indicate what value is placed on research. The participants at UPE were unanimous in their view that the university did not have a strong research culture. At a group interview attended by four heads of departments and two head librarians, prior to the installation of the new senior managers noted above, one participant claimed that "research was not valued by top management and leadership at UPE," and that it has never been an item on the executive management's agenda (Group meeting, March 2002; see also I: DoR).<sup>29</sup> Prior to 1999, the post of Director of Research did not even exist at UPE (I: Murray). This claim can be attributed to several factors, not least of which is the history of the institution. As noted in chapter one, the HWU-As established in the 1960s were teaching universities mainly, designed to develop an Afrikaner elite to assume key political and professional positions.

Over the years, there has been a proliferation of master's degree programmes through coursework, resulting in a limited emphasis on research (I: Murray). Since the emphasis has been on teaching mainly, several lecturers were appointed without PhDs, a few even without master's degrees (I: Piet). Hence, in some departments there is little expertise for the supervision of master's or PhD students (I: students). The Director of Research estimated that about 15 % of academics were not conducting any research nor had they published any papers (I: DoR). In the past, promotions had not been based on research output as they are at present (I: Murray). Since 1994, the new policies have linked funding formulae to research output (see chapter two). According to the Director of Research, 3.2 million rands were allocated to research and related activities in 2003; this did not include capital expenses (I: Murray).

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<sup>29</sup> DoR refers to Director of Research in this chapter.

UPE did not have a staff orientation or mentoring programme to support new or emerging researchers (I: Charmaine; Murray). Xolile, a young academic, posited that a mentoring programme to support young and new researchers would be most useful:

Certainly, I think we could use something like that (support programme) which would be a helping hand for up and coming postgraduate students, incoming black staff, as well as some staff that have been here because certainly if you look across the board to black staff within this faculty, we are very few. I mean you could probably count us on one hand and one is not really aware of any kind of programme or incentive that is assisting and helping those individuals that are there.

Rita, senior librarian, believed that the lack of an “information culture” affected the research culture at UPE. She claimed that it was the responsibility of academics to go beyond giving a limited list of required readings to their students but rather to encourage students to seek out information more widely. She also pointed out that many academics never visited the library at all: “There are about 5,000 staff working [at UPE]... not half of them... come in here. You see the same faces all the time” (I: Rita).

As an incentive to build the research culture, UPE publicizes the list of the Top 20 researchers annually. Points are allocated for research output based on nine output categories ranging from low quality outputs such as unrefereed reports to high output based on masters and doctoral graduates and subsidised articles (Communication, DoR, 2004). An unrefereed report = 1; a doctoral thesis and subsidized articles = 10. The lower quality categories are also capped so that researchers can only attain a maximum of 5 points per year for conference presentations even if they deliver 20 conferences papers in one year, whilst if they publish four refereed articles in a year, they can attain 40 points with no maximum applied in this category (Communication, DoR). Thus, there is a weighting to differentiate quality of output. The person who generates the most weighted points (average-per-year based on outputs for the preceding five years) is recognized as Number One on the Top 20 list (I: DoR).

The format for honouring the researcher on the list varies each year, but usually includes a presentation by the Director of Research to the Council, outlining who the top researchers are, what their field of research is, and the external funds they raise for their research activities. A dinner to honour researchers and their spouses was held in 2004. The top new researcher and top teachers were acknowledged as well at the function.

(Communication, DoR). Goodall, a 'Top 20' researcher, expressed approval of this system of rewards because he found that many people, who had not been aware of his research previously, now approached him about it (I: Goodall). In this sense, it has brought him added prestige and recognition.

Several staff members believed that the new management would be committed to placing greater and significant emphasis on research at UPE (I: Verster; William; Xolile). According to Xolile, the new Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor had stressed the need for increased research output in meetings with his department:

They (the Vice Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor) are trying to really engender a culture of research in the institution so that we can actually attract postgraduates from outside... because... the university needs to have a cross-pollination of ideas. As much as we can grow our own students in the postgraduate level, it benefits the university even more if we can have students that we can attract from elsewhere.

Like a few others, Xolile, believed in these promises made by senior management:

"Personally, I am optimistic with the two, the Vice Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor, that they are definitely interested in research."

#### **4.3 CHANGE**

According to the UPE participants in this study, there have been two main changes over the period since 1994; the first of these was increased managerialism, as the institution tightened its reins on finances, and the second was a shift towards the production of what they termed "socially relevant" research (Interviews). Hence, it would seem that the university has undergone changes in response to both globalization and democratization, namely, increased

student intake accompanied by cuts to funding and the assumption of a social role in the transformation process through conducting socially relevant research.

Whereas academics and graduate students were supportive largely of the increased importance of applied research, involving stakeholder partnerships, they were not well disposed to the managerial ethos. They found that financial austerity has led to increased administration and heavier teaching loads in the midst of declining funding. The combined effect of these factors has meant that there is little time available for research. Hence, the main constraint to research was the lack of time to conduct research.

#### **4.3.1 Managerialism**

By and large, the university was short-staffed and had increased its student intake over recent years without any significant increase in the staffing contingent. As a result, academics were overburdened with teaching and supervision roles. A problem encountered at UPE, not unlike that encountered at the other two universities in this study, was that senior academics, the more prolific researchers, were often in senior management positions, such as Heads of Department or Deans of Faculties, where they were expected to become involved in management and administrative responsibilities. These managerial and administrative responsibilities, in addition to teaching, left little time for their research activities (I: Deans; HoD's and senior academics).

These senior academics, moreover, were not qualified necessarily for the management responsibilities expected of them as the university adopted an increasingly managerial style of operation. One black female academic, who was disconcerted by the move to managerialism claimed the university was "becoming more like a business" and pointed out the "paradox" that managers have been appointed to their current positions because of their research and not management capacity:

Unfortunately the management... is not equipped to make decisions like that.  
You cannot run a business where your managers are clueless as to business

concepts. You talk about an economically viable unit and you really can't operate in terms of that if your managers aren't properly trained. (I: Ronelle)

She is concerned that tremendous pressure and stress is placed on academic staff.

In addition to having to implement tighter fiscal policies within departments and in their budgeting activities, managers were expected also to manage the transformation of their departments in accordance with the new policies, for example, by adhering to the equity policies in the appointment of new staff. These academics, however, whose experiences were embedded in the Afrikaner ethos and apartheid ideology, have little or no understanding of, or skills in, change management and conflict management, so necessary for the smooth transition to a democratic and non-racial institution.

#### **4.3.2 Democratisation**

There appeared to be two areas around which responses from the UPE participants to the question about transformation gravitated, namely, 1) the shift to socially relevant research and 2) the transformation of the institution in terms of its democratization and equity policies.

##### ***Socially relevant research***

The shift towards socially relevant research and applied research was welcomed by most academics interviewed at UPE. Whereas some expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to contribute to social development through the generation of socially relevant research, for others the incentive appeared to be a more pragmatic one. Funding for research from the National Research Foundation (NRF) had been accompanied by a call for applied research that is relevant, community oriented and involving stakeholder partnerships (see chapter two).

Among those who spoke of welcoming the shift to more socially relevant research, which they believed was directly attributable to the broader socio-political changes, were three white female academics, Celine, Beryl and Annelise. According to Celine, academics have a "social responsibility... to make a change to the lives of the people of the country."

Beryl was happy that Mode 2 would allow for research that was more applicable to communities, while Annelise claimed that research has to play a role in the transformation of society. Male academic Goodall also found that the changes had made his research more relevant to society:

(There is) more emphasis on research now as opposed to five (or) ten years ago... Partially attributable to government endeavours ... Research has also been identified as a key intervention in terms of capacity building... South Africa generally lacks capacity ... in terms of (these) disciplines... hence the emphasis placed on masters and doctoral output by the Department of Education in the national plan for higher education... The changes are personally challenging and exciting. They make me more relevant than I was five and ten years ago, but they also represent an opportunity for the built environment disciplines... Given that research is one of my niche areas, it also holds a lot of potential for me in terms of academic research and commercial research.

The views of participants on the topic of socially relevant research are dealt with further in chapter eleven below.

### *Equity*

For some black academics, democratization meant more than changes in the type of research being conducted. They commented on the transformation of the institution in terms of equity at the departmental levels. The two female academics held very strong views about the lack of transformation at the university, claiming that the phenomenal change in the student racial profile at UPE had not been accompanied by a change in the racial profile of staff (I: Charmaine; Ronelle). The change in student demographics has been significant. Charmaine, who began her studies as an undergraduate student at UPE in the early 1990s, claimed that she was among five black students in the science faculty at the time. According to her, this was in accordance with the quota system: "A quota system that allowed [only] so many black students [to be admitted] and if they behaved themselves they'd be allowed into res[idence] the following year... once we graduated then the whole transformation started" (I:

Charmaine).<sup>30</sup> She is pleased that there has been significant transformation for students in that they are now able to obtain bursaries and information to assist with their studies: “For students I think it has been beneficial in that a lot of bursaries are made available. There is a lot of information that has been made available” (I: Charmaine).

Black academics also claimed that, despite their qualifications and length of service, new white academics were placed in positions for which they had applied (I: Charmaine; Jeevan; Ronelle). Black academics believed that some staff members were resistant to the changes, making it onerous for those in leadership who were committed to change (I: Jeevan; Ronelle; Xolile). Black academics expressed concern that the equity policy was being interpreted as pertaining to gender rather than race differentiation and that it targeted mainly white women. As a result of these problems pertaining to the transformation, some academics have found the institutional climate unsupportive of them (I: Charmaine; Jeevan; Ronelle; Williams; see Mabokela for discussion on institutional climate 1997, 2000, 2001). Based on her own experience, Ronelle claimed that some black colleagues were being exploited by their white colleagues who used their names to secure black empowerment funding, but excluded them from the project. These issues appear to have had a major effect on Ronelle’s sense of identity as an academic in her department and others, like Charmaine, Xolile, Jeevan and William, noted that unfair and discriminatory issues consumed a considerable amount of their “energy” and “time” (I: Charmaine; Jeevan; Ronelle; William; Xolile).

Black staff were hopeful that the newly appointed Senior Managers, namely the Vice Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor, a black female, appointed at the end of 2002, were committed to transformation and would work towards solving the problems of discrimination and alienation experienced by black academics at UPE. A Black Staff Forum was established in 2002 because black staff felt the need to network and to table issues – such

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<sup>30</sup> The permit system allowed black students to attend an HWU only if the course they wished to study was not offered at an HBU and if the Minister deemed such a course as necessary for their studies. There was a special, ethnically based quota system, which restricted the number of black students admitted to HWUs.

as discrimination, promotions, appointments and funding-- that affected them as black academics at the institution. Democratization and equity are discussed further in chapter ten.

#### **4.4 ACCESS TO RESEARCH RESOURCES**

Access to research resources is crucial to an institution's capacity to produce research. The participants at UPE were of the view that they had good facilities such as office space, laboratories and access to computers and Internet. The librarians claimed they needed a computer laboratory or training classroom within the library in which to conduct information literacy programmes or courses (I: Helga; Rita). The maintenance of equipment remained a problem in the Eastern Cape where, unlike in larger urban centres, some services were not available (I: Murray). However, participants were most disturbed by the declining access to journals, especially in the sciences. Graduate students were even more severely constrained because they could ill afford the costs of interlibrary loans on which academics rely so heavily.

A science graduate student expressed frustration at difficulties in securing laboratory materials (I: Winters). He claimed that his research was compromised because he had to wait four months for glass test tubes. He attributed this delay to the lack of distributors in the Port Elizabeth area. Two students mentioned that the printer in their computer lab was not working, making it impossible for them to print articles off the Internet (I: Muriel & Peliswa). Students also claimed that because UPE was short-staffed, there was inadequate supervision for graduate students in her department (I: Gertrude; Muriel and Peliswa). On the other hand, a student from another department claimed that she had received good and supportive supervision (I: Emma). A few academics and students pointed to the lack of administrative staff and support (I: Beryl; Charmaine; Muriel; Pat; Peliswa; Ronelle). Although access to resources and supervision may differ between departments, the views of the participants at this university indicated that there was a shortage of staff and laboratory equipment in some departments.

#### 4.4.1 IT

Academics at UPE used the Internet extensively for their research purposes (I: Beryl; Charmaine; Ramdass; Ronelle). Ronelle, an academic, pointed out that there had been “excellent development(s)” in Internet access. One student, however, complained that the Internet access was slow, especially on weekends and after hours when telephone rates were cheaper (I: Winters). Ramdass claimed that he used open access journals from open access index such as Pubmed.

Aside from email and access to online journals, the Internet had provided Pat with the opportunity to participate in online discussion forums with scholars in her field from across the world, which she has described as “fantastic”. As Rita stated, the advantage of online access is that “we’re not an island anymore” and that one can access information anywhere in the world “at a price”. Beryl, from the Department of Psychology, was part of an international scholarly network, which included six South American countries. She stated that there was a need for a voice from developing countries in these scholarly networks and added that South African academics had much to offer: “We’re not behind, in fact, we’re ahead”. Researchers used the Internet to access the ‘Current Contents,’ a database of the abstracts of the latest publications and then requested copies of the article directly from the author (I: Murray; Myburgh; Pat). One academic, Annelise, pointed out that not only did she “rely very heavily” on the IT for electronic searches but that she used electronic computer programmes to analyse her data, recalling the inconvenience of doing this manually as a student: “When I was a 4<sup>th</sup> year student... I had to code with my hand basically, I had to count, draw up my own spread sheets... Now I am getting the data in a data base format already, so it opened my research for me – a world of opportunity” (I: Annelise). In a similar vein, Beryl, a researcher in psychology, used computer based and Internet testing. She explained that the application of technology to testing was a “big thing” (I: Beryl). However,

Goodall, who reiterated his dependence on email, maintained that the print version was indispensable to him because he could take it to the beach, on a train or a plane:

While flying from Port Elizabeth to Johannesburg, to London and back, I can take a hard copy. I do an enormous amount of reading on planes... I would lose sixty minutes if I didn't have a hard copy and I am flying to Johannesburg tomorrow morning at 06h30.

This section shows that IT is becoming indispensable to researchers, not just for retrieving articles online, but also for a variety of reasons that enhance the research capacity of these researchers, for example, participating in online discussion forums, testing, engaging in scholarly networks. These researchers may require information literacy programmes to ensure that they make optimal use of opportunities presented by IT (see further discussion, chapter eight and nine).

#### **4.4.2 Library**

##### ***Journals***

According to the Head Librarian, research was severely affected when “more than 200 journal (subscriptions) were cancelled” out of a collection of 1,057 journals in 2002 (I: Verster). This reduction included abstracts and indexing services. Journal subscriptions had been declining for a decade, from 1,589 in 1993 to 1,271 in 1997 to 802 in 2003 (S: Verster). Whereas the decision to cut journals is based on budgetary allocation made by the Exco and Council, faculties themselves decide which journals to cancel (I: Rita).

A legal researcher stated that access to SA law journals was good, but that there was limited access to international law journals. The library was helpful in sending law academics the latest indices of foreign legal journals so that they could order articles online. Celine was the liaison person between her faculty and the library, and she had received “many, many complaints” from faculty members about the lack of money to subscribe to foreign journals in, for example, tourism law and social security law (relatively new fields of law in SA). European journals and criminal law journals from the US were needed by

students reading for master's degrees in law (I: Celine; see African journals below). Celine believed that access to law journals from other developing nations such as India, would be more useful for the SA context.

Academics and students believed generally that decreased funding to the library was the cause for the declining access to journals (I: Celine; Charmaine; Piet; William). The head librarian, however, pointed out that the library budget had in fact increased annually but that the increase was not sufficient to overcome the rising costs of maintaining existing subscriptions and the unfavourable currency exchange rates over the previous two years (I: Verster; see also Ramdass; Stella). He pointed out that journal costs had increased tremendously over recent years. Hence, declining access to journals was not exclusively attributable to declining funding to the library, but more accurately to the failure of budgetary allocations to meet the rising journal costs and currency exchange rates.

One senior academic, who had claimed that the library was "a major headache", hoped that this study might help to improve library conditions: "If at the end of this you can go along to our librarian and say you really must do something about the library I would be pleased" (I: Grant). The findings show, however, that librarians are acutely aware of the problem and lay the blame squarely on the former senior management and their inability to both understand the crisis faced by the library and to prioritise funding for the library (I, S: Rita; Stella; Verster).

Given the unavailability of journals, the only alternative for researchers was the interlibrary loan system, with which some were satisfied, whereas others complained bitterly about the costs of retrieving articles from overseas. Costs were not the only problem. Academic, Charmaine, claimed that articles from overseas could take up to a month to arrive, a situation that was not conducive to the production of cutting edge research.

### *African journals*

By and large, except for South African journals, there was little or no access to African journals at the UPE library. Nor did many academics seek out African journals for their research purposes (I: Annelise; Piet; Ronelle; Xolile). The librarian, Helga, claimed that the library did not subscribe to African journals, but had “an abstract and database on CD-ROM called *African Studies*.” According to Helga, students can use the interlibrary loan facilities to retrieve these articles.

Nevertheless, law academic, Celine, expressed a need for African journals: “So that is very useful (the case law from Southern Africa). I think we often disregard *our own* continent in legal research, we really do.” She found it worthwhile to do a comparative study of Zimbabwean law of succession because “They have exactly the same culture, same traditions and many of them have the same background... being a previous British colony” (I: Celine). However, she believed that academics would make use of African literature only for customary law and diversity law, while focusing on European traditions in other fields of law: “In other fields, unfortunately, I think we are still a bit Eurocentric really” (I: Celine). Academic, Bonang, maintained that the focus at UPE was still Eurocentric. Although he did not advocate ignoring Western models altogether, he identified a need to move away from what he termed “American models” towards more “relevant knowledge” that emanated within South Africa.

#### **4.5 FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION**

Some academics and students at UPE found access to and the administration of funding problematic. It would appear that the procedures for obtaining funding and awards for research activities might not have been clear to all academics, resulting in Charmaine not obtaining earmarked NRF funds for her research (discussed further in chapter ten). In addition, the administration of funding appeared to be a problem. Charmaine attributed administrative problems to understaffing, stating that the “financial system was overloaded.”

According to Beryl, the lack of administrative support translated into diminished time available for research.

Graduate students also complained about problems encountered with administration staff in accessing their bursary funds or research assistant's monthly fees. Peliswa and Muriel talked at length about these frustrations, which appeared to be a source of great stress, and which usurped their valuable research time. Apparently, although the awards had been made at the beginning of the year, by the end of the first term students were still struggling to obtain these funds, not knowing how to pay for their rent, electricity, water and for research related expenses such as interlibrary loans and photocopying (I: Muriel & Peliswa). Peliswa asserted that there were no clear channels of enquiry about these funds. She and Muriel expressed their frustrations thus:

You don't get it (funds) for two months, the other thing is there is no channel ... in terms of ... where to go... when something is wrong. So, you get sent around and ... around and then at the end you actually find out the person that you went to first was the one who was actually supposed to help you... (As) student assistants... you work for the whole of February but you...only get paid at the end of March because somebody made a mess up with the whole admin thing... Now it is your problem... now (its) after the 25<sup>th</sup> and so they cannot process it. So you don't get the bursary and you don't get paid for anything... You cannot do anything... because it is not within your power. So it is kind of frustrating... you are so stressed about how are you going to meet the month's (expenses).

They claimed that this had a negative impact on their research; for instance, they had to avoid photocopying because they could not afford the costs. Peliswa adds: "The running of things is not to the benefit of the student and yet they always tell us that without students you wouldn't have a university... but it does not work that way practically."

#### **4.6 NETWORKING AND LINKAGES**

Local and international linkages were forged mainly by individual academics and often followed patterns of prior affiliations. Many academics, for example, continue to network with colleagues at universities where they had undertaken previous studies or had worked previously (I: Annelise; Charmaine; Xolile). In most instances, these were other Afrikaans

universities, such as Potchefstroom, Stellenbosch and Pretoria, which is understandable given UPE's history as an Afrikaner university. Interestingly, the black academics I interviewed no longer had linkages with HBUs in which they had studied. This may not be out of choice but rather based on the nature of their affiliation with those institutions, which they were forced to attend on racial grounds. Nevertheless, long-term networks had been established with fellow students professionally, and politically for those who were student activists.

According to Ramdass and Winters, the NRF facilitated linkages between researchers they funded, with local and overseas counterparts engaged in similar research:

The National Research Foundation... would have a liaison with Swedish counterparts, or the Hungarian people or the Japanese people. They will try to bring researchers together. So if the Hungarian people are working in my field, for example, and I have listed my name with our NRF, they would say look this is a collaboration that you could do with this individual and we take it from there... I am using the NRF more than I should, I know that, simply because... I am not an established researcher. (I: Ramdass)

Ramdass's experience indicates that this supportive role played by the NRF is particularly valuable to emerging researchers and assists in building their research capacity.

#### **4.6.1 Local networking**

##### *Collegiality*

Academic, Charmaine, found her department alienating in that there was little collegiality among staff. An individualistic atmosphere prevailed in which academics focused primarily on their own areas of research. Ramdass also commented on the reluctance of academics to work collaboratively, while Bonang found that academics preferred to "work in cocoons" (I: Bonang; Ramdass). On the other hand, Piet, a senior researcher in Computer Science and Information Science, happily reported his involvement in numerous inter-departmental research projects (I: Piet). It may well be that greater opportunities for inter-disciplinary collaboration are possible in Piet's particular discipline.

However, it is not unusual for academics to exhibit this type of individualism and insularity, which is well documented as being the nature of the academy and a consequence of academic autonomy (Austin, pp. 64-65; Berquist, p. 170; Tierney, 1999, pp. 10-11, 114, 156-157). Altbach and Finkelstein (1997, p. 256), for example, assert: "Research continues to be a lonely business on these campuses" while Tierney (1999, p 114) concludes: "The present conditions in academe are making individuals feel isolated from one another and bereft of social community." Interestingly, whereas Western scholars lament Mode 2 type of research as the harbinger of the end of collegiality (Currie & Newson, 1998, pp. 204-205; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, p. 243; see also Altbach, 1999, p. 31), South African academics appear to believe that the collaborative and team work styles of conducting Mode 2 type research might in fact contribute to greater collegiality and sharing among academics (see further discussions on Mode 2 type of research in chapter eleven; I: Charmaine; Murray; Ramdass).

According to the Director of Research, the university offered an additional 9 % funding if researchers worked together collaboratively. In other words, if a project received 100, 000 rands in funding, an additional 9,000 rands would be allocated if a team of researchers undertook the research. The director explained that UPE's goal was that 80 % of research should to be conducted by teams in the future (I: DoR). Ramdass explained that the NRF had encouraged collaborative research in the hope of reducing costs, when it came to, for example, using expensive research equipment.

### *South African universities*

There was little evidence from the participants, who represented a range of disciplines, of any major collaboration between UPE and other South African universities. Annelise and Celine, for instance, reported that there were no joint projects, but only communications with academics they had encountered during conferences, the co-authoring of articles or serving as external examiners for other universities (I: Annelise; Celine). Beryl claimed that it was

difficult to forge linkages when academics were “strapped” for resources and time, having to perform administrative tasks and deal with increasing workloads (I: Beryl). According to her, all she managed to achieve was information sharing. Celine attributes her lack of significant linkages with other universities in South Africa to the location of Port Elizabeth which, although a metropolitan city, is remote from the busier urban centres such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria where the larger universities are located: “We feel a bit isolated from where everything happens either in the Western Cape, the universities there, or on the Rand (Gauteng).”

Notably, Piet, from Computer Sciences, had forged collaborations with Rhodes University on a “regular basis” and found that “their technology is a bit more advanced than ours at this university” (I: Piet). He observed that Rhodes, unlike UPE, had computer laboratories in all departments. Piet was also a member of the Eastern Cape Technology Forum (I: Piet).

#### *Networking with HBUs*

As noted, linkages were based on historical affiliations with other HWU-As but, more recently, the new policies have encouraged joint projects between HWUs and HBUs in an attempt to rationalise resources amongst the universities (I: Murray). THRIP funding received from the NRF enabled a partnership between UPE and an HBU, UNITRA (University of Transkei) to develop a centre of excellence in computer science (I: Murray). As noted in chapter two, the THRIP funding is conditional upon the HWU having an HBU partner. Unfortunately, problems were encountered in this collaboration when poor infrastructure and management at UNITRA led to the disappearance of the equipment (I: Piet). In addition, only 3 out of 40 computers in the computer laboratory at UNITRA were in working condition, while only one of these three computers had Internet connections. The Internet and telephone lines were often disconnected because accounts had not been paid.

Moreover, although students were registered for computer science courses, there were no lecturers to teach the courses (I: Piet).

Piet claimed further that standards between UPE and UNITRA did not articulate, so that UNITRA graduates applying for the honours course at UPE were requested to repeat the third year at UPE, before being admitted to the honours course there:

That degree is not worth the paper it is written on. So they come to us. They say, 'I'd love to do honours with you... I've done third year'. We say, 'But it's not our standard.' Now, I don't think that is correct. (But) they don't even have computer science lecturers. Now how can you run a computer science department and have some person not qualified even to do these kinds of things? It's just wrong.

Piet, had apparently also worked with Fort Hare and observed that, "They too had their share of problems" (I: Piet). I pointed out to him that Fort Hare was emerging from its troubled past, and enquired whether he had encountered better conditions there since. Piet responded:

I've heard about Fort Hare. Fort Hare has dropped all entrance requirements... just to get students in, because their student numbers were dropping so much. So they just take in anybody at the moment, just to get the fifty percent government subsidy. But that's hearsay.

At the time of this discussion, Fort Hare had already begun to change this situation (see chapter six). Nevertheless, it seems that negative perceptions based on historical circumstances continue to abide, despite recent changes. Whereas the media had paid considerable attention to Fort Hare's demise, it has not reported the turnaround with as much vigour. Consequently, academia and the public at large continue to hold negative perceptions about this institution.

Black academic, Charmaine, claimed that her department had "close links" with Rhodes but not Fort Hare because the latter was short-staffed and was not involved in research. Her view was contrary to the empirical evidence provided by this study, which showed that several academics at Fort Hare (see chapter six), including a professor in a

corresponding department, were actively engaged in research and have published in rated journals (see Gumbi chapter six). It shows that negative perceptions of HBUs persist at HWUs and that these are common across the racial divide at these HWUs. As can be seen, very few participants at UPE collaborated with HBUs.

One of the problems encountered by these joint ventures is that the collaborations were usually based on individual rather than institutional efforts, so that when a member of these joint projects leaves the institution, the collaboration comes to a halt. Pat, for instance, had collaborated in a NRF funded joint project with a colleague from Fort Hare, who had since left the university and no one had been appointed to the project since. Murray and Xolile also made this observation of the negative effect of staff attrition on the research capacity at smaller universities, especially the HBUs. During the initial stages of the project, UPE had shared its equipment with Fort Hare. Later, Fort Hare purchased its own equipment with funding from the NRF. According to Pat, the equipment was not being used, but Gumbi from Fort Hare informed me that they were using this equipment. Pat correctly observed that Fort Hare colleagues used UPE's library resources when they visited UPE for research purposes. This has made her realise that UPE's access to resources is better than that of Fort Hare:

I think maybe our access to library (resources) and journals is actually better, in that when we did the joint work with Fort Hare, their students would come and spend some time here where we sort of share library resources... that was about two years ago [2000]. (I: Pat)

This section shows that networking with HBUs is relatively new and based on the new policy incentives. The collaboration between HWUs and HBUs is an essential part of the redress intentions of the policies, to ensure better utilization of the skewed distribution of resources that have resulted from inequitable funding during the apartheid era and which would continue to hinder the research capacity of HBUs if not addressed.

### *Perceptions of HBUs and HWUs*

In this section, I examine the perceptions that UPE has of other universities in order to examine whether apartheid stereotypes are dissipating and what effect their continuation may have on the relations between universities, given the need for collaboration and sharing among universities as mentioned above. These stereotypes are of particular importance as they are reinforced within the academe and impact negatively on academics' interests in developing research partnerships or collaborations with HBUs like Fort Hare. In addition, black students are affected by these perceptions, which results in postgraduates choosing to attend HWUs instead of HBUs. This, in turn, negatively affects the research subsidies to the HBUs (see further discussions of perceptions in the next chapter).

Murray believed that the brain drain affected HBUs more acutely than it did HWUs (I: Murray). He recounted how a former student of his, who had become the head of a science department at Fort Hare, had subsequently left the university during its period of turmoil in the 1990s. Citing a further example at the University of the North, he claimed that these HBUs often did not have any remaining capacity to continue projects after key staff had left, retired or died (I: Murray). Furthermore, black graduate students from HBUs preferred to study further at HWUs, thereby contributing to the brain drain at these historically black universities:

The brain drain of good people has been greatest from previously disadvantaged black universities because the other black students – postgraduate students – are allowed to the old white universities. They do not want to do a postgraduate, for example, at Venda or the University of the North... they would rather (go) to Pretoria or Stellenbosch or Wits... Secondly, the chances of them getting bursaries from those white universities are very good and they are big bursaries... I mean Tukkies [University of Pretoria] was advertising earlier this year of big bursaries of 45,000 rands for black students. So the student who stays at Venda, for example, to do postgraduate studies must be crazy. (I: Murray)

Murray goes on to point out that even UPE, an HWU, cannot compete with the bursaries offered by the larger HWUs: “We can’t compete with Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Tukkies – they are three to four times older than we are. They have millions deposited in trust funds.” UPE’s most substantial bursary amounted to 30,000 rands per annum for a doctoral student (I: Murray). Murray points out further, that this lack of reserve funding and infrastructure are among the main problems facing universities like Fort Hare:

In fact this is Derrick’s [Swartz, Vice Chancellor of Fort Hare] argument about Fort Hare. He says no matter how much you put into Fort Hare, you will never make it a good university unless you reconstruct the Alice area completely... to be attracting top academic staff. Who is going to go and live in Alice where there are no shops, no schools and no infrastructure. So he believes for rural universities like Fort Hare and Venda, you need massive rural reconstruction programmes.

Murray asserted that a “the university is only as good as the staff it can attract... We have this problem even at UPE... (but) as far as the brain drain... I don’t think we (UPE) lose a lot of academic staff... UPE has got a fairly low staff turn over.” Hence, although UPE cannot attract top researchers like the larger universities, it has not lost many staff to the brain drain.

#### **4.6.2 International Networking**

International networking was found to be valuable in building the research capacity of budding researchers like Ramdass, whose linkages with an American counterpart resulted in funds and materials being channeled in his direction (I: Ramdass). On the other hand, Xolile’s linkages were not as successful. An endeavour to engage in a joint project with an Indian university did not materialise. In the meantime, he was attempting to forge linkages with a Nigerian university. Perhaps, Murray’s perceptions that it is easier to forge North–South than South–South linkages, hold true for some academics (see further discussion below).

As noted, Pat participated in online international discussion groups, collaborated with researchers at the University of Bristol and jointly supervised a PhD student with a counterpart at the University of Essex (I: Pat). Beryl was part of an International Test

Commission, involving six South American countries that networked via the Internet (I: Beryl). Charmaine had ongoing links with colleagues at the university in Hungary where she had done her post doctorate and who have visited UPE since (I: Charmaine). Piet claimed that his department had exchange programmes and twinning arrangements with universities in Germany, Belgium and the U.S.

### *Africa*

Virtually none of the participants had formed linkages with African universities. While Murray believed that linkages with Africa would have been more relevant, he claimed that the lack of access to IT in Africa made telecommunications with African colleagues difficult, if not impossible (I: Murray). He claimed that African delegates at a recent conference on Science in Africa highlighted the difficulties they were experiencing with telecommunications (I: Murray). Exchange visits were costly and difficult to fund. He noted that North-South linkages often carried benefits such as funding and literature access, whereas South-South linkages offered few incentives for local researchers (I: Murray).

Librarian, Rita, claimed that she had developed linkages with Zambian and Zimbabwean counterparts through attendance at the annual conferences of the African Library Association. Celine belonged to an association of law teachers whose membership had been opened to scholars in Africa. She was enthusiastic about a recent conference of this association held in South Africa:

It is very useful, you would have the input of the other African scholars. (It) is really an eye-opener to see that they are grappling with exactly the same things. The next conference is in Namibia... most (countries) are sending representatives... researchers and scholars... basically from all over Africa... It (provides) also links for research opportunities and at least networking.

Celine asserted that links with Africa were still limited: "I really think it is a neglected part, the African connection."

#### 4.7 MERGERS

The merger of UPE with the Port Elizabeth Technikon and Vista University deserves some mention here because this is a major change for UPE as part of the government's plan to transform the institutional landscape of higher education and to rationalise the disparity existing between institutions in the higher education sector. There can be no doubt that these changes will affect all researchers in UPE.

As noted, only a few participants referred to the merger between UPE, the Port Elizabeth Technikon and Vista University in their discussions about change within their institution. This indicated that many academics were either uninvolved in the merger processes or that the insular environment of the academe had served to distance them from macro-institutional changes. A few, however, did refer to the mergers. Piet expressed concern that the government had not considered the costs involved in the merger of institutions across the country. According to him:

Just the joint (merger) between Bloemfontein University and the Bloemfontein Technikon is estimated at 190 million rands. That already just says that the whole policy just can't work. ... The basic estimates now done by Bloemfontein university. So... how much is it in fact going to cost the other ones.

Other academics were more positive about the merger believing that it offered new opportunities to enhance research --because of the high standard of research at the PE Technikon-- and, that it would contribute to the social and economic development of South Africa (I: Bonang; William). Ronelle believed that it would contribute to the greater good: "I love the process because it is going to make a lot more subject matter available to the students. I do believe it is going to be a fantastic process but in terms of academics, whether they will allow that to take place is another thing." Ronelle was aware that it might not be an easy process and could result in the loss of her job as a consequence of rationalization:

There are obviously a lot of challenges in terms of human resources and duplications... which is quite frightening. I mean I have been thinking, I don't think I would, but I might be sitting without a job but in terms of what will be

available (it) is a fantastic thing. It will just be so much more that the students can have available within one institution. And that should be allowed, that students should be able to choose... Currently, the electives are so limited that you (may) come out with a product and (ask)? Who wants to employ you? Is it relevant to what is needed out there? ... Also the resources, we could save in terms of resources.

Xolile was more staid in his response:

In the short term, certainly everyone is protecting their turf, so that then results in a great deal of mistrust... Also in that situation it may bring together those camps that probably may see things similarly without necessarily buying into the long-term, vision of the whole merger or project.

He believed that a merger would improve institutions in the long-term but that there would be problems in the short-term as people protected their 'turf' and felt insecure about their futures.

Like the academics, graduate students did not appear to have given much thought to the impending merger of institutions. Gertrude, for example, stated that she did not know much about the merger. Tracy said she expected minimal effect for her department because the merging partners did not have a Botany department. However, she expected that it would be "chaotic" initially and then things would "settle down" (I: Tracy). Vanita commented that there was no evidence of the impending merger in her department. She believed that one of the positive things for her was that the Technikon had a department of forestry so there might be more people coming in with knowledge in her area, namely, water quality and algae growth in estuaries.

The lack of knowledge or interest in the impending mergers may be indicative of several things 1) staff and students were disinterested believing that it was the responsibility of management, 2) management had not devoted adequate time and resources to consulting and providing feedback about the process to all staff; and 3) the insularity of the academe led to researchers prioritising their immediate work above the concerns of institutional change. The merger is a significant and complex transformation process, that eventually if not immediately, will affect every facet of the existing institution, from its ethos, culture,

reputation, infrastructure, management, administration, finances and resources, to its staff composition, student population, programmes, curricula and research. The three institutions, UPE, Port Elizabeth Technikon and Vista University officially merged at the beginning of 2004. However, the process of integration will continue into the future and more attention should be paid to how different departments and individuals within the institution will be affected because any upheaval will influence the research capacity and productivity of UPE staff. Management should intensify its information campaign throughout all campuses to ensure that the integration proceeds smoothly over the coming period.

#### **4.8 ROLES AND VISIONS**

“I want to make a difference,” said Celine of her role as a researcher. In this section, I examine the participants’ perceptions of their roles as researchers or librarians and their visions of the future in order to gain an impression of what issues might affect research at these institutions in the future. Celine, for example, believed firmly in the importance of her research focusing on women’s issues even though some colleagues have charged that it is not commercially viable (see also chapter ten). Ironically, Celine frequently receives calls from city lawyers for advice on customary law issues, which they had not studied at university because it had in the past been considered an ‘inferior’ part of law:

They felt that it is an inferior part of law, but clients today need it... In the past customary law was never really part of lawyers or professionals (work)... It is custom and (the) way people live. People are now more aware so they go to attorneys and they often cannot help them... So I see myself as not wanting to profit from it but contributing to things that are more topical and facing hundreds or even thousands of people.

In South Africa, law is still very much a male dominated field. What Celine, as a female legal researcher is experiencing, is the devaluing of her work by these colleagues on two levels, namely because 1) her focus is on women’s issues, and 2) her area of research was not an economically viable one. Celine’s aspirations, however, are very different. She is less interested in personal gain than in the social relevance of her research. She wants to

make a difference and for her that means focusing on areas of social relevance that the legal system, both academically and in practice, have neglected. Celine has the firmness of commitment to set aside the undermining of the importance of her work. This is indicated perhaps by the number of calls she receives from professionals for advice on matters related to customary law.

Despite these strong views and social commitment, Celine points out that she does not see herself as a feminist or revolutionary. Although women's issues have always intrigued her, she claims that she has chosen to focus on this area because it had been neglected and deserved greater attention. That it is gender based is "incidental perhaps," said Celine:

I remember with PMS specifically I had such a wonderful quote from a book which says, "Do we now recognise it or not, or do we sweep it back under the carpet, where it has only recently been retrieved, there to be swamped in the layers of shame and myth, historically associated with it." In that respect I like (making) those types of efforts. If it is gender-based, it is actually incidental perhaps... It is neglected areas of law probably and unfortunately, it affects many gender and children's issues or the disadvantaged or the underprivileged.

Part of Celine's reluctance to admit that her views are feminist may lie in the stigma still attached to feminism within her male dominated institutions and profession. Another academic Ronelle also believed that her role as researcher was to "Enhance the upliftment of your fellow people."

The transformation processes in South Africa have been accompanied by extensive policy development across all government sectors and have provided opportunities for some academics to contribute to significant policy development. Goodall was pleased with his contribution to policy and legislation development in his field of research. He stated that changes over the past five years make him more relevant than five or 10 years ago.

Charmaine found it difficult to articulate her role as a researcher or her vision for the future because of the trauma she had encountered in her appointment the previous year when she had to declare a labour dispute after a less qualified white female academic was appointed to

the permanent position for which she had applied. There had been much unpleasantness and, on several occasions, she had felt like resigning from her position. At the time of the interview, she claimed that she still felt ostracized. Her inability to focus on her future revealed that these issues of racism have negatively affected her identity as a researcher, leading her to state that blacks are not well received within the university.

The librarians were clear about their role and visions for the future. They claimed that, contrary to popular opinion that the new technologies and boundless access to information had diminished the role of librarians, their role had in fact been enhanced by the Internet (I: Helga; Rita; Verster). As Helga stated, "They think the librarian doesn't have a role because of the Internet but... we see our role as intermediaries to access to information... I see my role as managing this information" (I: Helga).

For most academics, their future visions centred on their research careers and on finding ways to enhance their research profile. No doubt their experiences with research at this university helped to shape these visions, for example, some simply wanted more time for research or to complete their doctorates or post doctorates because their teaching and administration responsibilities schedules left them with little time for research (I: Goodall; Ronelle; Xolile). Others, like Ramdass, wanted to improve their research ratings with the NRF, while others yet wanted to become engaged in more challenging research projects (I: Annelise; Beryl; Celine; Pat) or consultancy research (I: Bonang). Pat hoped to become more involved in international collaboration, for example, with Australian counterparts. She asserted that she preferred the academe and interaction with her students to the corporate world or private consulting, which, she claimed, some of her fellow academics were considering. However, she iterated that she would consider consultancy work only if the work pressure at UPE became unbearable. Evidently, universities will have to create more supportive environments so that they do not lose researchers of Pat's calibre, who would only leave the institution as a last resort.

Celine's future aspiration was to become involved in large relevant research projects, involving academics from around the country in partnership with the government, in the field of conservation and environmental law. She explained that there had been an attempt in this direction earlier between UPE and the University of Potchefstroom, but that the project had not materialised.

Ronelle's main aspiration was to complete her PhD so that she could assume a future position "within the management structure" where she could play "a constructive role in the development of education... at the tertiary level." It may be that, in this position, she envisages implementing the institution's policies that she found were "good on paper only." Goodall expressed his wish to focus on research and supervision only, and to relinquish his teaching and administration responsibilities, which he believed led to "actually marginalizing" research. He would like a position in a commercial research organization, "Where I just do research and where I lead, what I call, high impact research teams." (I: Goodall).

Graduate students' visions of the future ranged from completing future studies to securing employment in the private sector. Vanita and Emma wanted to work before attempting further studies towards PhDs whereas two black male academics wanted to complete post doctorates before seeking positions in the marketplace or the private sector (I: Brent; Gumede). Macy wanted to continue with research work, but not as an academic because she was concerned about access to journals, given the problems she has experienced in this area at UPE. Winters wanted go into a consulting or a research organization. He found that a scholarship to study overseas for a year had been a "wonderful opportunity," giving direction to his research and building his confidence (I: Winters).

As noted, librarians had visions of enhanced roles in the future. Rita, senior librarian, contended that people confused information technology with information science. She explained the difference thus:

Technology puts the platform of the medium there so that the information can be created and that is a science. And the way we are going to organise the information is where the information people come in... this is the whole information management... the tacit knowledge must become explicit and there is a big learning curve, I think, for the South African community there... It makes its way out in various arenas like for instance the library world, and the computer ... world. I wonder when we are going to meet... At the moment we are not there.

Rita found her role as a librarian in a knowledge based society "very exciting" (I: Rita) claiming that librarians must organise and facilitate the flow of information: "The organizing will still be there but there's a bigger facilitation role and 'ons moet die goed nog steeds aanmekaar maak'. We have to sift it but we also have to facilitate the flow of it because the flow is so huge that people can't handle it."

In terms of her visions for the library, Rita hoped that the consortia would develop the system of resource sharing where all services such as databases, interlibrary loan, information, retrieval, delivery and holdings could be "Link(ed)... together in one seamless way for the access and delivery to the user... I don't think there is any other way to handle this." Rita explained that she had developed a new web page with a button, a gateway, which will link subject journals, electronic books and scholarly communities:

On this web page we have a button which will lead them to information about scholarly communities... what we call (a) subject gateway and where we will bring their journals together, it will bring their electronic books together, it will bring their links together for this scholarly community because... you cannot research in isolation.

This section shows that some of the participants at UPE perceive their roles as researchers and librarians and their future visions as being closely linked to their research or work interests. Researchers were committed to their research and its role in contributing to a transforming society.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

The University of Port Elizabeth does not have a strong research tradition because it was established in the 1950s and 1960s as part of the apartheid government's plan to provide

opportunities for 'working class' Afrikaners whose progress at the time lagged behind that of their English speaking counterparts. It comes as no surprise that the focus has been on teaching, and that past administrations had not heeded the need for research. Like other HWU-A's established during that period, UPE was less collegial and more oriented towards the corporate model (see Bolsmann & Uys, 2001, p. 174).

Recent changes on the global and local fronts have brought about increased managerialism as the university responds to neoliberal fiscal policies. This financial austerity has placed additional pressures on researchers, whose teaching loads have swelled in response to increased student enrolment, allowing little time for their research activities. Democratization in the form of new governance structures and equity policies are in place. However, there are problems in their implementation at the departmental level. Black academics in particular find that these policies exist in name only. The shift to Mode 2 type research, referred to as "socially relevant" research by the participants, has been welcomed widely. Of note is the contention among some researchers that the funding policies of the NRF were steering them towards socially relevant research.

Whereas the researchers have good access to infrastructure, IT and facilities, their access to library holdings was severely limited. Journal holdings have decreased significantly. Librarians lay the blame squarely on management and their inability to appreciate the role of the library in research. The Internet has made significant contributions to the work of researchers that extend beyond access to scholarly journals and incorporate access to scholarly networks, online discussion forums, teaching and other forms of practice such as online testing for psychology. Access to African journals and literature was virtually non-existent, leaving some academics to contend that UPE was still Eurocentric in its focus and that literature from developing countries may be more relevant in some fields such as law. Aside from the lack of resources, participants found that there was no staff orientation

or mentoring programmes in place and students found the information literacy programmes inadequate for their needs.

Networking internally, locally and internationally appeared to be limited although there have been new developments in this area as a result of the NRF programmes such as THRIP. There were no significant linkages with neighbouring universities such as those featured in this study, except through the regional library consortia discussed in chapter eight. Negative perceptions of HBU like Fort Hare abide, despite Fort Hare's reversal over the past three years.

There is an apparent lack of knowledge of or interest in the merger process, which may lead to problems as the process unfolds over the next few years, especially since all three institutions will be affected, and at all levels. UPE management may have to make concerted efforts to ensure that staff remains informed and engaged so that the process flows as smoothly as possible, and to avoid any unnecessary upheaval that such processes of change could easily invite.

The participants saw their roles and visions for the future as being closely linked to their research. For many, especially the younger white female academics like Celine, Annelise and Beryl, their sense of identity as researchers was linked to a sense of social responsibility, which augurs well for the potential contribution that UPE can make to the Eastern Cape through its knowledge producing processes.

## CHAPTER FIVE

*“IF IT AIN’T BROKE, DON’T FIX IT!”<sup>31</sup> –*

### RHODES UNIVERSITY



#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Rhodes University, a historically white English university (HWU-E), was established in 1904 and is the oldest of the three universities in my case study. Its residential campus consists of historic stone buildings, designed by renowned architect, Herbert Baker, and is spread across the rural town of Grahamstown (population: 64,300). The campus boasts beautiful gardens and is well maintained.

On the global front, this small university (7,425 students in 2003) has made great strides in positioning itself as an internationally recognized university (Annual Review, 2003). It boasts a healthy research culture despite having had to contend with cuts to spending in response to global and national economic trends. Surveys conducted since 1998 show that Rhodes has had the highest per capita research output in South Africa over a four-year period, ahead of the larger universities like UCT, Wits and Pretoria who produce most of the research in South Africa (Research Chronicle, 2001; RU Annual Research Report, 2003).

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<sup>31</sup> The participants widely attributed this phrase, which has become a catchphrase at RU, to the former Vice Chancellor, Derrick Henderson (I: Dianna, Greg).

Rhodes' success, according to the participants in this study, is due to its history, strong leadership and highly efficient administration systems, and, more recently, the adoption of the marketisation model (I: Dianna; DoR; Greg).<sup>32</sup>

As noted earlier, universities are by their very nature, international institutions. Due to historical and cultural factors, Rhodes University has developed along the lines of a traditional collegial British university. Through discussions with senior managers, academics, students and the perusal of various policies, notably the university's values, objectives, vision and mission, it is clear that the emphasis is on international recognition for its teaching and research excellence, which makes it much like universities in other parts of the Western world.<sup>33</sup> Not surprisingly, Rhodes sees itself as part of a larger academic community of international Western universities and has an ethos which may be described as English, referred to by some participants as a Eurocentric ethos (I: Asante; Dianna; Greg; Kabiru; Ngoma).

Notwithstanding its international orientation, the vision and mission statements make reference to Rhodes' "African identity" and its commitment to contribute to "the development of international scholarship and the advancement of the Eastern Cape and Southern Africa" (Rhodes University Vision and Mission Statement). Hence, these policy documents espouse Rhodes' awareness of the need to balance its global aspirations with its need to make local contributions. As a local higher education institution, Rhodes enjoys the reputation of a successful university with sound management and administrative systems (I: Andrew; Audrey; Greg; Annual Review 2003).

According to senior managers/ academics, Andrew and Greg, there are numerous factors that illustrate Rhodes' success as an institution. Despite financial constraints globally and nationally, Rhodes has managed to maintain its own financial stability through strong

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<sup>32</sup> DoR refers to Dean of Research in this chapter.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.ru.ac.za/general/dedication.html>

administration, financial policies and well-established systems (I: Audrey; DoR; Annual Reviews 2000-2003). Research resources are readily available, for example, good access to IT and library holdings. An example of Rhodes being proactive and optimizing strategic opportunities has been the campaign to raise 100 million rands as part of the Centenary Celebration planned for 2004. Between late 2001 and 2003, Rhodes exceeded its target by six million rands (Annual Review, 2003). This fund includes a grant of over eight million rands set aside for the support of female and black academic development.

As noted, Rhodes has a good research record boasting the highest per capita research output in the country and generates funds from research activities. According to the Dean of Research and other participants, high caliber staff is attracted to Rhodes and only those with good research track records is appointed (see also Asante; Dianna; Greg). Staff promotions are linked to research output and sabbatical leave is no longer automatic but linked to research output instead (I: Greg; Martha). Academic, Donna, explained that her conditions of appointment stipulate the need for research output (I: Donna).

The Dean of Research pointed out that students are attracted to Rhodes because its graduates are sought after in the job market. "Rhodes builds leadership", he said, and students prefer the safe environment and unique campus life Rhodes has to offer.<sup>34</sup> In his Annual Review, the Vice Chancellor cited correspondence received from an honours graduate, among many others, who attested that he was tutoring masters students at London University and was of the opinion that he was better prepared for the programme than his British counterparts were. The Vice Chancellor claims in the report that "our graduates do very well at top overseas institutions... Rhodes graduates are highly employable and sought after" (Annual Review, 2003). Drawing on a national statistical report, the Vice Chancellor asserted that Rhodes had the highest undergraduate success rate among universities in

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<sup>34</sup> Rhodes is situated in a small town.

2001 (Annual Review, 2003).<sup>35</sup> The average for Rhodes was 87 % compared with the national average of 74 % (op cit). In the sections below I present the findings related to research culture, change, access to research resources, such as infrastructure, equipment and finance, IT and library holdings and services, Mode 2 and networking and linkages.

## 5.2 RESEARCH CULTURE

The participants at Rhodes and even at the other two universities in my study concur that there is a strong emphasis on research at Rhodes. As noted above, Rhodes' reputation as a research institution is well known and documented. In addition to producing the highest per capita research in the country, the NRF reports indicate that Rhodes university was among the top 10 "takers" of the NRF's THRIP programme in which some 30 national higher education institutions participate (Top 10 "takers", November, 2001). The emphasis on research is related to Rhodes' historical development as a traditional, collegial university over the century that it has been in existence.

Several participants pointed out that Rhodes has a good research record because research is supported at the highest level by a Vice Chancellor who is an acclaimed researcher in his own right having recently been awarded the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, *honoris causa*, by Oxford University (I: Elizabeth; Gibbs; Hodges; Annual Review, 2003). The Dean of Research is involved in policy making and budgeting at the highest management level of the institution and can thus ensure that research receives the necessary priority (I: Gibbs; Greg; Hodges). Not only is he a policy-maker but he also leads by example engaging actively in research projects, the supervision of postgraduate students and publishing widely (I: Gibbs). Among the three universities in this study Rhodes allocates a greater proportion of its internal budget to research, namely, 12 % (approximately 18million rands to 20 million rands) (I: DoR).

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<sup>35</sup> *Educational Statistics in South Africa at a glance in 2001* (Annual Review, 2003)

The Vice Chancellor and the Dean of Research are engaged actively in fundraising for research (I: Gibbs). Academics also generate income through their research activities. About 70 % of research funds are generated through external funding and entrepreneurialism (I: DoR). This funding ensures that participants have good access to research resources such as IT, library holdings and start up funds for new research projects. In some cases, department heads are supportive and motivate academics to conduct research: "You are encouraged to apply for grants... you are able to communicate with him, he is open and helpful and has given me a lot of pointers and even literature sources" (I: Donna). As a newcomer, Donna found that this encouragement made her academic work much easier. To assist in this process of prioritizing research, the head librarian sits on the central budget committee to ensure that the library has decision-making powers in terms of funding allocations to research resources such as journal holdings. This illustrates that senior management is aware of the central role the library fulfills in knowledge production and dissemination. To maintain and foster the strong research culture of the institution, only academics with good research records are appointed (I: Asante; Gibbs; Greg; Naresh).

The Dean of Research contended that a spirit of "camaraderie" or collegiality exists, whereby the funds generated from publishing subsidies by the senior researchers are placed into a central coffer to support the development of novice researchers (I: DoR). This is unlike the practice at Fort Hare where part of the subsidy is allocated directly to the researcher responsible for the publication. This culture of cross-subsidisation for research is based on the belief that the senior researchers are in a position to raise funds for their own research activities. The Dean claimed that mentoring and staff development programmes targeting younger, black women academics are in place. According to the Dean, Rhodes' success in research is well known and other universities in the region often approach Rhodes for ideas on improving the research profiles of their institutions. In the following section, I discuss researchers' response to global and local changes.

### 5.3 CHANGE

According to participants, the main changes at Rhodes have been marketization and digitization (I: Anderson; Audrey; DoR; Elizabeth; Hugh; Sara). In response to my question on the impact of socio-political changes on their research, most participants claimed that they had not experienced any major changes at the institution in response to the new democratic order. Some pointed to greater representivity of women and blacks on the governing council, the increased enrolment of black students and the mobility of women academics into senior positions (I: Asante; Dianna; Greg; Hodges; Naresh). In addition, there have been disciplinary changes, which some participants attribute to the new policies and the shift to Mode 2 type of research (I: Asante; Rens). In the following sections, I discuss how the participants at Rhodes have experienced these global and local changes.

#### 5.3.1 Response to global change: entrepreneurialism

Rhodes has responded to neoliberal economic constraints--such as the dwindling access to resources and the high costs of journal subscriptions globally --through adopting the entrepreneurial route, most notably through the commercialization of its research activities. My assessment is that Rhodes has embarked on this marketization route without necessarily transforming its traditional collegial character. In other words, Rhodes has adopted the entrepreneurial model, but not the managerial model. It is for this reason that I have chosen to draw a distinction between managerialism and entrepreneurialism (see chapter one). According to Bolsmann and Uys (2001), managerialism implies a move away from a "collegial style" of governance to a form of centralised management (p. 174).

Whereas Rhodes has felt the pressures of financial constraints, it does not appear to have undergone drastic cuts to spending, such as a severe reduction in journal holdings or constrained access to IT resources associated with the financial austerity brought on by neoliberal policies nationally in response to globalization (see further discussion chapter seven). Although a market discourse of efficiency and profit-making exists, a managerial

ethos similar to the one at UPE is not evident at Rhodes. On the other hand, Rhodes has always been characterized by a strong administration, a sound financial management system and a collegial ethos (I: Audrey; Greg; Kenyon). Rhodes has undergone significant changes in response to new technologies, for example, the digitization of the library, the installation of computer laboratories in virtually all departments, including good IT support staff and the wiring of all student residences by 2004 (I: DoR; Duane; Elizabeth).

The adoption of the marketization model in conjunction with maintaining strong traditional academic excellence has ensured that the institution has not only survived funding cuts over the years but has managed existing funds optimally and has been strategic in prioritizing its needs (I: DoR; Elizabeth; Serfontein). The commercialization of research activities and, decentralized decision-making and budgeting have led to new sources of funding that have placed the institution on a sound financial basis, providing exciting opportunities for innovative research endeavours (I: Anderson; DoR; Kathy). Rhodes' numerous research institutes are engaged in partnerships with industrial and private sector partners (I: Anderson; DoR; Sara; see also Annual Review, 2003). To name a few examples: Rhodes has established a Centre for Entrepreneurialism; it has formed a company to acquire a local newspaper business in Grahamstown, The Grocott Mail, and; is in the process of establishing a Business unit to "exploit the university's intellectual activities" (I: DoR; Annual Review, 2003). The unit will be linked to the Centre for Entrepreneurialism and the Office of the Dean of Research (op cit). Furthermore, Rhodes has granted autonomy to its Academic Development Centre (ADC) by enabling it to become a closed corporation in exchange for a percentage of the ADC's income (I: DoR; Kathy). The Director of Finance, for example, worked directly with the ADC to aid this process (I: Kathy).

A senior manager, Gibbs stated that the management "very consciously" monitored the growing marketization in an attempt to ensure that Rhodes does not lose its "collegial atmosphere". According to him, there were monthly meetings of the Vice Chancellor, the

Vice Principal and all the Deans of Faculties at which Deans were encouraged to express concerns about increased marketization in certain areas and to identify ways of curbing this trend. This conscious effort on the part of management, as expressed by Gibbs, may explain Rhodes' ability to contain managerialism and severe fiscal austerity and to balance marketization with the needs of a traditional collegial university instead. Furthermore, Gibbs points out that students prefer Rhodes because of its collegial atmosphere. Postgraduate students, especially foreign graduate students, attested that Rhodes was their institution of first choice above other South African or British universities because it has a reputation similar to the best British universities (I: Kabiru; Simon).

### **5.3.2 Response to local change – democratization and equity**

The participants did not believe there were significant changes in response to democratization for two differing reasons, which appeared to polarize their views. Some interpreted Rhodes' success of being a well managed, efficiently run institution with healthy research productivity and international recognition, to signify that change was not necessary. Enshrined in their view is the idea, widely prevalent at Rhodes, that as long as "something is working well", it should not be interfered with (I: DoR; Greg; Mandla). This approach is based on a phrase used in 1990 by the former Vice Chancellor to depict Rhodes' stance towards the transformation of universities in a new South Africa: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" (I: Donna; Greg; Mandla). According to Gibbs, part of the reason that Rhodes was not included in the institutional restructuring process, (mergers) may have been the fact that it "works" so well.

The other group of participants concur that Rhodes has not transformed, but view this lack of change as Rhodes' resistance to transformation. Their view is that while Rhodes works well in most academic and institutional respects, it does not cater for the needs of a transforming democratic society (I: Dianna; Greg; Kabiru; Mandla; Toni). Coupled with this is a concern that Rhodes will increasingly alienate itself from society, leading government or social forces to step in later to bring about the desired change (I: Greg; Mandla).

The changes at Rhodes are evident mainly in the greater representation of previously disenfranchised people on the university Council, in compliance with the new Higher Education Act of 1997, and the increased enrolment of black students at the university. According to some academics, these changes have had minimal effect on Rhodes University, especially in terms of staff demographics, the participation of black staff in decision-making at all levels of the institution and the Eurocentric focus which some blacks find alienating (I: Dianna; Greg; Mandla). Greg and Dianna posited the view that Rhodes has not changed much over the last 20 years.

Although staff acknowledges that equity policies, as required by national policies, are in place, some believe that their implementation is too slow (I: Dianna; Greg; Naresh). There is also a view that equity has been applied to white women mainly (I: Dianna; Greg; Mandla). According to Greg, the black academic staff contingent has grown only “marginally” over the years and the Senate is still approximately 90 % white. Greg claimed that Senate reports show that the majority of new staff appointments at Rhodes continue to be white (I: Greg).

Table 1. RU student racial profile

Year	SA blacks	Foreign blacks	SA whites
2002	30.9 %	16.4 %	45.8 %
2003	32.5 %	16.5 %	44.4 %

Source: Registrar Rhodes University

Table 2. RU staff racial profile

Year	SA blacks	Total blacks (incl. Foreign blacks)	SA whites	Total whites (incl. Foreign whites)
2002	6.8 %	10.7 %	64 %	89.3 %
2003	7.1 %	11.7 %	66.4 %	88.1 %

Source: Registrar Rhodes University

Table 3. RU staff female gender profile

Year	Total % women	SA black women	SA white women	Total black women (incl. foreign blacks)	Total white women (incl. foreign whites)
2002	32 %	4.5 %	20.3 %	5.5 %	26.5 %
2003	33.2 %	4.1 %	23 %	5.4 %	27.8 %

Source: Registrar Rhodes University

Table 4. RU staff male gender profile

Year	Total % men	SA black men	SA white men	Total black men (incl. foreign blacks)	Total white men (incl. foreign whites)
2002	67.9 %	2.4 %	43.8 %	5.1 %	62.7 %
2003	66.8 %	3 %	43.3 %	6.4 %	60.3 %

Source: Registrar Rhodes University

A foreign black student stated that he had expected to encounter more blacks than whites in his class, but instead had found Rhodes to be “more Eurocentric” in terms of demographics:

I came obviously in the knowledge of a bit of the demographics of South Africa, so I was maybe expecting to find a larger percentage of blacks in my class, but it looks more Eurocentric than African in the fact that probably 70 to 80 % of the class is white. So that was ... something that I had not really thought I would get. (I: Greg)

One academic was of the view that the institutional forum, intended by national government to be a structure for implementing and monitoring transformation within the institutions, was ineffective. (I: Greg). There was a sense that Rhodes was maintaining the status quo and that the notion of merit was in fact being applied to the exclusion of certain categories of black staff and students (I: Greg; Naresh). Naresh noted, for example, that 50 % of the students in his department were Indian, while the African students were mainly foreign Africans. Of the few SA African students, not a single one was from a black state school, i.e.

they had a private school background (I: Naresh, see also Greg). He noted that a rigorous merit based student selection system was not fair and that it needed to be "addressed" because it excluded many of the underprivileged black students from the local community (I: Naresh).

Naresh explained that staff appointments were merit based as well but that black academics were difficult to find in South Africa because they preferred to work in other sectors. Greg's experience on a selection committee reveals that departmental heads and selection committee chairpersons may not be adhering to the equity policies (discussed further in chapter ten). Greg is hopeful that the new African Staff Forum will assume this role of monitoring the transformation because the institutional forum has failed in this role (I: Greg). A senior white academic, Duane, claimed that he believed equity in terms of race and gender was important. He thus tried to ensure that research teams were composed accordingly. He noted, however, that ensuring equity, for example, assisting an underprivileged students with their writing skills and revisiting ways of working with communities require time, and that academics need to realize that this is part of the backlog that needs to be dealt with (I: Duane).

It appears that it is not only difficult to recruit black staff, but to retain them as well. Dianna stated that a black female academic left the institution after only one year because of the uncomfortable racial climate. She claimed that racism was prevalent, observing that informal discussions among white staff in her faculty -- especially among the long time staff members-- during tea time included racial undertones on topics such as HIV/AIDS and academic standards dropping because of increased black student intake (I: Dianna). Postgraduate students Mandla and Simon informed me of the racial comments and disrespect leveled at some black lecturers in class by their fellow white students. As an academic, Dianna explained that she had not experienced any "adverse racism" because, having studied at Rhodes, she knew which academics to avoid because of their racist attitudes. She believed

that the older staff, in contrast to the newer staff, found it difficult to embrace change. She presumed that the newcomers were more predisposed to change because they had worked elsewhere, travelled widely and held broader worldviews (I: Dianna).

In addition, some administrative staff apparently treated black students and even academics with disrespect (I: Dianna; Greg). According to Dianna, administrative staff speaks openly of black students expecting “handouts”, i.e. not having to pay for things other students pay for. Students were reluctant to confront these attitudes for fear of victimization (I: Dianna). According to Dianna, Kabiru and Simon, there are categories for grading black people, even among students: foreign blacks were believed to be superior to local blacks, and Coloureds were considered superior to Africans.

In the Rhodes Annual Review (2003), Rhodes commits R8.2m of the R106m raised as part of the Centenary Campaign to “grow its own timber,” referring to the development of female and black academics (Annual Review, 2003). One academic, who agreed with the concept of “growing your own timber”, expressed concern that it might be a way to affirm not only its graduates and young staff, but to ensure that black graduates employed by the institution have imbibed the norms and cultural ethos of the institution (I: Dianna). It is also a way of ensuring that the contender will not “rattle the system”, as one student put it (I: Kabiru). When I pointed out to Dianna that only a few black academics among the small number interviewed expressed views similar to hers, she responded that people respond to racism in different ways depending upon how they have internalized their racial experiences in an apartheid society (I: Dianna).

Black academics, despite their sense of loyalty to the institution, purportedly feel alienated by the pervading Eurocentric ethos because it does not take into account their identities as black people or their particular histories and cultural backgrounds (I: Asante; Greg; Kabiru; Mandla; Ngoma). Ngoma claimed that, whereas colleagues were supportive and collegial, he found being the only black lecturer in his department a lonely experience:

“To be the only black lecturer in the department is frustrating at times... sometimes you want to communicate with someone from your own culture.” According to Greg, black academics felt “alienated by the colonial and white ethos of the institution” which has led to the establishment of an African Staff Forum. This forum is aimed at giving black staff a greater sense of cohesion and belonging; “a sense of ownership over the place,” as Greg puts it. This forum would monitor the implementation of the transformation policies. Greg notes that “Rhodes has been very successful in individualising black staff members and this association is an attempt to overcome that atomization, to create a collective sense.”

Foreign student Kabiru also found that the approach to education and research was Eurocentric:

This university thinks ‘euro’, it is a Eurocentric university even when you are doing theories about things... I mean I remember when we were doing education leadership and management; the whole issue of the *Ubuntu* came up. It was quite controversial.

*Ubuntu* is an indigenous African philosophy, an African worldview, which emphasizes a sense of community and service to others above one’s self. It posits the view that one’s identity is formed through links with the community, underpinned by a sense of humanity. It is a wider concept of community that includes respect, sharing, compassion, participation and democracy. During the apartheid era, many whites misinterpreted the link with communalism to mean communism, and consequently rejected *Ubuntu* on those grounds. Kabiru’s statement indicates that these outdated misconceptions about the term are still prevalent, even within the corridors of higher learning within Africa’s newest democratic society. It would appear that Rhodes has not gone a long way towards establishing the African identity referred to in its mission statement.

As an economics student, Simon found that the curriculum was focused largely on Europe, with very little focus on Africa and the developing world contexts, which he believed

was a good idea since South Africa is more developed than the rest of Africa and may not have much to learn from Africa:

South Africa, as much as it is in Africa is much more developed, quite ahead of the rest of the African countries... So most of the curriculum is either based on the European perspective... The South African economy... needs to move into the higher brackets rather than see to the lower bracket. The only way you can do that is to do a comparison with people who are ahead of you and if the rest of the African economies are lagging behind, there is no way you can use that as your yardstick.

Some foreign African students, like Simon, have chosen to study at Rhodes University precisely because it is not "African" and because it allows them to experience higher education in a traditional British higher education style.

A further reason for the apparent lack of transformation at Rhodes, according to Greg and Mandla, is that, except for the loss of the satellite campus in East London, Rhodes has not been a part of the restructuring of the higher education landscape, in the way that Fort Hare or UPE have been involved in institutional mergers (I: Greg). Unlike the other Eastern Cape universities, Rhodes University has been "spared the merger axe", as one participant put it, having lost only its distant East London satellite campus to the University of Fort Hare in Alice. This campus has been described as small and fragile by the East London Campus Director, (I: Gibbs; Massey). According to Gibbs, this loss has been "minimal" for Rhodes having caused only a greater imbalance in terms of Rhodes' equity targets because the East London campus had a larger proportion of black students (I: Gibbs). Gibbs maintained however that this imbalance would have to be corrected in the future. For all intents and purposes, then, Rhodes University has remained largely untouched by the current restructuring of higher education. Greg, Dianna and Mandla believe that the national government has dealt Rhodes a disservice by having neglected to include it in the restructuring process, as this might have resulted in new institutional arrangements that may have served as an impetus for democratization within the institution.

This may also be the reason why the discourse of transformation and equity was largely absent in interviews and in documents such as the Annual Review, which does not refer to the university's role in a transforming society. Nor does the Annual Review (2003) report on progress in terms of Rhodes' equity goals. This is a significant oversight on the part of management since there is little indication in the report of the institution's progress in furthering the aims of democratization and redress in the higher education sector.

### **5.3.3 Mode 2 research**

According to the Dean of Research, the Mode 1 versus Mode 2 debate, which has been raging among higher education scholars in South Africa, has not been an issue at Rhodes: "It is not really a big issue. People are aware of it. Some people feel quite strongly about it, but it is not an issue quite frankly." Given that Rhodes has numerous industrial and private sector partners and corners a significant proportion of international patents, as noted, one would have expected a predominant shift towards applied research. However, the Dean contends that academics ensure that a balance is achieved between the two types of research based on the belief that Mode 1 type research, basic, fundamental research, "is the solid building block of research." Kathy, for example, claimed that while academics within the Academic Development Center were engaged in entrepreneurial academic activities and Mode 2 type of research was being promoted, they were aware that Mode 1 is the foundation base of research.

The Dean claimed that he assumes responsibility for ensuring that the entrepreneurial research activities do not lead to Mode 2 type of research subsuming Mode 1 type of research at Rhodes. He holds regular meetings with the Deans to discuss these kinds of issues and to seek ways of correcting imbalances. He states,

(T)hey (academics) are managing the balance. We are very careful about it. That is one of my prime responsibilities, is ensuring that there is a balance. We definitely are moving towards applied research because that is where the finance is coming from, that is where a lot of opportunities are coming from. The students are attracted towards it, but at the same time there is an

acknowledgement and an understanding that the fundamental, solid, old style, if I can put it that way, is essential. It is the building block to be applied. Indeed that is one of the things that I am really tasked with, is ensuring that we don't over-balance in one-way or the other. So, as a result of that, for example I chair most of the boards and executive committees of research institutes where they largely do applied research. The reason for that is that I need to keep an eye on the fact that that doesn't get out of control. That is why I don't think it is a problem at Rhodes. We have somehow managed to keep a balance.

Academics at Rhodes supported this approach. An academic in the faculty of pharmacy was concerned about the recent national government policy related to pharmacy and how it would impact on the discipline (I: Martin). He stated that despite the emphasis on community-oriented applied research, the discipline still required a fundamental research foundation. A senior academic expressed considerable concern that his discipline was disappearing as a result of the new modes of knowledge production (I: Asante). Asante believed that the shift to programme based Mode 2 type research, focusing narrowly on the need to prepare graduates for the market, will erode the disciplinary base of sociology and will in turn undermine the foundation of the university, turning it into a technikon. He asserted that sociology has been overtaken by industrial sociology at most of the larger South African universities. Asante expressed concern that only one theoretical paper was presented at a recent South African Sociology Association conference. He pointed out, for example, that mathematics and physics are fundamental even within the applied field of computer science and information science. Asante claimed that he chose to work at Rhodes because it is one of the few universities that provides a base for fundamental research in his field and which manages to attain a balance between Mode 1 and Mode 2.

One the other hand, Massey, an academic in the education faculty posited the need for more action research, "empowering teachers to research their own environments." He claimed that the legislation and policies are in place but that action research might help us to understand how to implement the policies more effectively (I: Massey). Dianna believed research should be socially relevant and linked to the local context because information on its

own was of little value. She moreover asserted that some academics view this government "involvement" in redirecting research foci as "interference".

#### **5.4 ACCESS TO RESEARCH RESOURCES**

Most participants were of the view that Rhodes has a well-established infrastructure with good access to IT and library resources. They attribute the lack of resource constraints, despite declining access to funds globally and nationally, to Rhodes' sound and efficient financial management. By and large, academics at Rhodes find management very supportive of their research activities (I: Donna; Sidi). A foreign student was impressed with the "humongous" investment Rhodes had made into infrastructure. He seemed pleased that, as a master's student, he and two other postgraduates shared an office equipped with two PC's, a printer and a telephone (I: Simon).

##### **5.4.1 IT**

According to the Dean of Computer Science, "Rhodes has a reputation for being good in IT" (I: Duane). He pointed out, however, that even with the wiring of residences, the gap in access will continue because many underprivileged students do not own PCs. Another senior academic, Haines, claimed that an emphasis on IT is elitist because not everyone has access.

##### **5.4.2 Library**

The Rhodes University library has grown considerably over the past five years (I: Audrey; Elizabeth; Martha; Sandra; Serfontein). Martha, a senior academic in linguistics, describes the change in access in her field. Whereas seven years ago the library's holdings in linguistic journals were poor, currently the holdings are excellent and the library has become very efficient in responding to users' needs. Anderson also points out that in the mid 1990s the library was in the "doldrums" with a huge decline in journal subscriptions.

According to the librarians and several participants, although print subscriptions have declined, access to online journals has increased markedly over the past two years (I: Duane; Elizabeth; Serfontein). This success, some claimed, was due to the innovative and visionary

leadership of the head librarian who not only instituted the digitization of the library but also participates in budgetary deliberations at a central committee level (I: Anderson; De Vos; Elizabeth; Gibbs). Participants praised the librarians for strides taken to move from print to electronic access (I: Anderson; De Vos; Dianna; Kathy). Generally, academics and students found that the librarians were professional and helpful in supporting academics and students (I: Kabiru; Kathy; Simon). As one foreign student noted, the departmental librarian had acquired books she has requested for her particular study.

### *African journals*

There was hardly any access to African journals at the Rhodes library. This was surprising for two reasons: 1) Rhodes has a well-resourced library in other respects, and 2) Rhodes has a large contingent of foreign black students (16.5 % of student population), who may want to access African literature that is relevant to their studies. Foreign students expressed their frustration in trying to access scholarship produced in Africa. One student, for example, stated that he had brought along literature from his country (I: Simon). The Rhodes library does not have any arrangements with the libraries of African universities, thus making interlibrary loans between them difficult. The experiences of a foreign PhD student illustrate this point:

When it comes to real research from Africa, I find it very difficult to access. You find little booklets of small case studies that have been done in Nigeria, studies that have been done in Malawi, studies done by the DfID ... but landing on a thesis that has been done by somebody from the African continent is so difficult, unless of course you go to the libraries... but trying to borrow (through) interlibrary loans outside of South Africa is impossible. (I: Kabiru)

And,

I went along to the main library and I asked whether they have an arrangement with other universities in Africa, in 1998/1999... They told me, no they don't have any connections or anything with other African libraries, and I would have to go to the library itself or write the library or something like that. (I: Kabiru)

When asked about whether she had suggested that they subscribe to African Journals Online, her response was: "I haven't... I suppose I just sort of gave up" (I: Kabiru). One of the reasons for this paucity of African journals may have been that some African universities do not have Internet connections, which would make it difficult for them to have arrangements with Rhodes, given that the Rhodes library is largely digitized (I: Kabiru).

It thus seems that researchers at Rhodes have adequate access to research resources and support from both management and library staff. There are areas that require improvement, though, such as journal access for specific fields of study, for example psychology, medicine, chemistry, research capacity, and in transdisciplinary areas. Formal, structured information literacy and management courses, integrated with course work, may contribute to building research capacity at Rhodes.

#### **5.4.3 Research constraints**

According to the participants, one of the main research constraints facing academics was the heavy teaching load and other administrative duties, which consumed the time they would otherwise have devoted to research. One academic shared her view that senior researchers were "dumping" teaching responsibilities on newcomers (I: Dianna). Furthermore, there is little collegiality when it comes to research within departments because everyone is competing for the same funds (ibid.). Yet, as noted, the senior academics do support newcomers through the subsidy funds they generate. More recently, though, some academics have been questioning this system because they believe that they should be entitled to the subsidies they raise from their publications (I: Martha). However, there has been no change to the policy as yet, to accommodate these views.

An academic in the sciences expressed concern about the exorbitant costs of textbooks which make them unaffordable for most students (I: Sidi) According to Sidi, the cost of these books ranged from 600 rands to 1,000 rands. She stated that this was a big issue

for teaching and research in any African country. She suggested that pharmaceutical and other related companies be approached to make grants available for the purchasing of books.

### **5.5 PUBLISHING**

Publishing is given a high priority at Rhodes, and academics at all levels are expected to publish widely. In some departments, like linguistics and sociology, more than two to three articles per annum are required to qualify an academic for promotion. A few academics have found the pressure to maintain their NRF research rating onerous (see chapter two), especially since they have had to raise funds by themselves and cope with heavy teaching loads at the same time. A senior academic in linguistics, who published six to seven articles per annum on average, explained that she was content to remain a B-rated researcher on the NRF rating system because the criteria to meet the A-rating were exacting. A newcomer stated that she published four papers per annum (I: Donna). Publishing is not only a matter of prestige and award, but a source of direct funding through subsidies and a criterion for promotions, sabbatical leave and the allocation of library budgets to individual departments (I: De Vos).

Despite the university's emphasis on publishing, there appears to be little structured guidance and support for postgraduate students or novice researchers to publish their research. It is "quite a lonely experience," as one young academic put it (I: Dianna).

### **5.6 NETWORKING AND LINKAGES**

As noted in the previous chapter, the networking and linkages have been forged as a result of the initiatives of individual academics rather than by departments or the university. As an old and established university, Rhodes has forged linkages that are consonant with its history and traditions. Accordingly, most of its linkages are with British or other European universities. In more recent years, some linkages have been formed with American universities as well. There are very few linkages with universities in the developing world and, in particular, with African universities on this continent or in the SADC (Southern African Development

Community) region. Dianna's view is that faculty seemed to prefer the international linkages to local ones.

Foreign African students and academics maintained ongoing linkages with colleagues in their home country. They found this to be necessary so that they could remain in contact with the context in which they intended to use their research later (I: Kabiru). One master's student, for example, explained that he communicated regularly with his mentor and colleagues in Kenya and often sent them progress reports (I: Simon).

### **5.6.1 Perceptions of foreign African students**

The researcher experienced great difficulty in finding local African academic and student participants for this study. The black students suggested by other participants turned out to be mainly foreign students. Rhodes' international reputation may account for its success in recruiting large numbers of students from other African countries. Many African students from Anglophone African countries, who usually prefer to study in Britain, have found South African universities to be a feasible alternative. Foreign students at Rhodes claim that they have chosen to study at Rhodes because it has a reputation equal to most British universities (I: Kabiru). Simon explains that he wanted to do his postgraduate studies outside of Kenya and that he only applied to a UK university and Rhodes on the advice of his mentor, an Oxford postgraduate, who had learned of Rhodes' reputation through friends at Oxford. Simon is happy with his choice of university: "My eyes were focused on Rhodes. ... I never looked back. I still believe for me it is the best university. I feel quite at home here" (I: Simon). This student was so keen to attend Rhodes that he was quite willing to read for a second honours degree before being admitted to the master's programme. A further drawing card for foreigners may be the unique small-town campus setting and safe environment a small university can offer (I: Duncan). Hence, Rhodes appears to have tremendous potential for cornering the African graduate student market.

Foreign students perceived that they were more acceptable to the institution than local African students (I: Kabiru). According to them, South African students of different races were uncomfortable with each other, and some did not appear comfortable in classes that were largely white (I: Simon). Simon estimates that in one of his classes of 35 students, 28 were white, four were foreign blacks and three were black South Africans.

Furthermore, foreign blacks claim they adapted more easily and were more receptive to different race groups than local black South Africans (I: Simon). Foreign black students found they received better treatment from the university in general because, as noted, they were seen as not wanting to “rattle the system” and because it was expected generally that they would return to their countries once they had completed their degrees (I: Kabiru, Mugo, Simon). Kabiru, for example, claimed:

I learned so many things... being slightly more acceptable because I am a foreigner... You get kind of a feeling that you are perceived as more competent as compared to ordinary black South Africans, you are more switched on, you are more aware... You know sometimes when I think of the Mellon fellowship, we've had a number of black foreigners with Mellon scholarships. I can cite at least three and it is almost as if you are filling in where South Africans didn't fill in, so it is like, you know, when they talk about black you have all these blacks. You know, that... they would rather have foreign blacks because they think foreign blacks are of better quality than the black South Africans... You don't have a stake here... I am not going to embarrass them because I am going to complete it, so they are sure that they are not going to risk their money and things like that. I suppose you know... we don't rattle the system. We must work at home.

It would seem that foreign students were benefiting, too, from scholarships and grants intended for developing research capacity among black South Africans. A foreign student confirmed that he had chosen Rhodes instead of Wits University because Rhodes had granted him a scholarship, whereas Wits had not offered him any funding (I: Mugo). Another foreign student, who found that he could not secure any funding, found a way to earn extra money by obtaining a tutoring position (I: Simon). As can be seen from the citation above, it was expected generally that foreign students would return to their countries once they had completed their degrees (I: Kabiru).

Aside from the lack of an Africa-focus at Rhodes, referred to earlier by some participants as Eurocentricism, a foreign black professor had observed that Africa was often painted as a “sad case scenario,” a basket case out of which nothing much can emerge (I: Simon). It is not surprising then that little value is placed on the need to forge links with Africa even as Rhodes actively recruits students from there.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

Rhodes University is a foremost research institution not just among the three universities in my study, but amongst all South African universities, and it is internationally recognized. It has produced the highest per capita research output consistently over a four-year period. Research receives high priority at Rhodes as indicated by management’s orientation towards research and budgetary allocations to research and the library. The university also boasts strong leadership, efficient administration, sound financial systems and good access to resources, both financial and human, together with a traditional collegial ethos.

Most researchers are satisfied with their access to resources and the support they receive from management and the library. Despite its strong position, however, the university is failing to contribute meaningfully to democratization and the transformation process. The new governance structures and equity policies are not being implemented as indicated by the student and staff profile and the alienation experienced by some black staff and students. Hence, while Rhodes is making great strides on the global front, through its efficient management, entrepreneurialism and high academic standards, on the local front it has failed to respond to a changing society. Furthermore, the strict merit based approach applied by Rhodes serves to exclude a new generation of students from access to higher education. This is not to dismiss the importance of standards, but to caution against standards being used as a device that privileges certain groups and classes of people.

There is evidence that Rhodes is cornering the African market, as 16.5 % of its students are international students from Africa, some of whom seem to have chosen Rhodes

because it resembles closely the British institutions at which they had hoped to study. Other foreign African students, however, were surprised to find that Rhodes was Eurocentric in its focus, based on the curriculum, journal holdings, the absence of networking with African universities and the way Africa is positioned in the discourse – ‘ a basket case’. It seems, as some participants have observed, that Rhodes has been done a disservice by not having been included a merger with other Eastern Cape institutions. This appears to have sent a message to the institution that the existing status quo is acceptable, and that it may proceed with business as usual. This pervading discourse at Rhodes – “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” – is reflected in a myopic approach which may be detrimental to the institution in the future. There is no institution in any sector in this former colonial and apartheid state that does not require transformation from the old order. Rhodes has much to contribute to the higher education sector and to the development of the poor rural province in which it is located through its rich knowledge producing processes. In order to do so, it will have to make a concerted effort to engage more meaningfully in the democratization process and develop more of an Africa-focus.

## CHAPTER SIX

### *“PULLED UP BY THE BOOTSTRAPS” –* **THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**



#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The University of Fort Hare has an illustrious history of struggle against the apartheid regime and was the seat of learning of famous world leaders and Nobel Laureates, like former President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, amongst others. Nestled in the rural town of Alice in the Eastern Cape, near the foothills of the Amatola Mountains, Fort Hare, as it is commonly known, is the oldest black university in South Africa, having been established in 1916. The campus consist of old, historic stone buildings having been designed by renowned architect Sir Herbert Baker, who designed many important national buildings and monuments during the period. Throughout the decades, Fort Hare has been the incubator for resistance and dissent against the repressive apartheid regime, gave rise to a black intellectualism that led the struggle for the freedom the country now enjoys. The university currently houses the archives of the liberation movements, including structures such as the African National Congress, the Pan African Congress, Azanian People's Organization and the Black Conscious movement of Steve Biko (I: Thandi).

Notwithstanding its illustrious history, Fort Hare has had its share of the adversity that characterised most HBUs in the 1980s and 1990s, namely, mismanagement, huge debt, student unrest and allegations of corruption. In 1999, a damning report commissioned by the Minister of Education claimed that Fort Hare was “very dysfunctional” and recommended that the university be “shut down if its budget is not balanced within three years” (Vergani, 1999, p. 1). In March, 2000, a charismatic and visionary Vice Chancellor was appointed who, together with his team, performed what appeared to be nearly impossible in 1999. Within a mere two years, Fort Hare was “Pulled back from the brink by the boot straps,” to use the phrase commonly attributed to the Vice Chancellor, Derrick Swartz (I: Thandi). The 90 million rands overdraft has been reduced to approximately 43 million rands over a three-year period (DoF). Student debt recovery, which was at 16 % when the new administration took over in 2000, rose to 92 % in 2004 (I: DoF). A concerted effort has been made to appoint staff of high caliber who has contributed to raising the research profile of the university (I: Fatuh; Gumbi; Nyazi). In early 2004, the East London campus of Rhodes University was incorporated into Fort Hare as part of the restructuring of the higher education sector in the Eastern Cape.

## **6.2 RESEARCH CULTURE**

Given the apartheid history of Fort Hare, it comes as no surprise that nearly all participants in the study opined that research was never a strong point for the university, citing historical factors as the reason (I: Fatuh; Henry; Otto; Siphon; Thandi). As noted, the apartheid regime never intended the HBUs to become generators of knowledge, and thus they functioned mainly as undergraduate universities (I: Thandi). Their focus was on teaching limited to areas such as theology, agriculture and education amongst others. The participants painted a dismal picture of the university prior to the change in management in early 2000. According to the participants, there have been serious attempts to build the research profile of Fort Hare since 2000. When Fatuh, a foreign academic came to Fort Hare in 1997, the institution was

undergoing major administrative and managerial challenges. The two main constraints in respect of research that he encountered were: 1) the absence of a research culture and, 2) a lack of funding for research (I: Fatuh). All other constraints related to research, appear to have emanated from these two, he claimed.

Dirk, a senior academic who has been with the institution for 25 years, contended that while a few academics in his faculty of agricultural and environmental sciences engaged in research over the years, Fort Hare has “never been a research university” and its “research profile was anything but healthy.” Others like Miso, Gumbi, Nyazi and Thembi expressed similar views. Gumbi, for example, stated that there was an absence of a research culture, no equipment or chemicals in the laboratories and no money to purchase these or to conduct research (I: Gumbi). In order to understand this historical absence of a research culture at Fort Hare, it is necessary to take a sojourn into history.

According to Thandi, the librarian, Fort Hare never had a good library to support research because of its predominantly teaching focus with little academic engagement in research. She observed that after the promulgation of the Separate Universities Act in 1959, there had been a huge exodus of academics from Fort Hare.<sup>36</sup> This recurred when the town of Alice and its university, Fort Hare, were incorporated into the Ciskei homeland in 1976, and again after the 1994 democratic elections, when academics left the institution to serve in the new democratic government (I: Thandi).<sup>37</sup> Thandi asserted that Fort Hare was “deliberately run down during the apartheid years” and by the Ciskei government thereafter, who did not tolerate research that infringed on their policies. She described an incident where the homeland government expelled a professor of agriculture because he had published research

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<sup>36</sup> This Act prohibited white universities from admitting black students and established separate universities for each ethnic and language group through an inequitable system.

<sup>37</sup> Separate so-called independent homelands were established for different African ethnic groups under the policy of separate development.

that contradicted the homeland's capacity to honour its agricultural policy of providing "two meals a day" for the people.

Furthermore, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, after Alice became part of the Ciskei homeland, white academics left the town to settle in neighbouring Fort Beaufort, a mere 20 km outside Alice but within the borders of South Africa. This led to the demise of Alice as a small university town, which, in turn, affected its ability to attract business and development. As a result, Alice today is a spectre of a town with little infrastructure, as well as a lack of good schools and shopping facilities. The majority of academic and other staff commute to Fort Hare from King Williams Town (60 km), East London (120 km) and Grahamstown (120 km). Thandi explained that it was not by choice that she resided in King Williams Town where her children could attend school. She contended that a lack of appropriate accommodation and infrastructure was part of the reason why Fort Hare had such difficulty in attracting the calibre of academics that would develop research at the institution (I: Thandi). Academic Zukov, for example, explained that it was difficult to find the time for research not only because of the heavy teaching load but also because three hours a day was spent commuting from East London to Alice and back.

Senior manager, Henry, indicated that the Vice Chancellor had made several appeals to the local government to upgrade the town's facilities, in particular, the road infrastructure leading to the university. Reference to this problem by the Vice Chancellor, in a public speech in March 2004, reveals not only that these appeals have not yet been heeded by the local government, but that it has become a matter of serious concern to the university as it carves out its new role as an institution of higher learning in a democratic South Africa.

The views of academics and postgraduates confirmed Thandi's contention that the academic environment during the apartheid years was not conducive to research. Academic Miso explained that when he arrived at the institution in 1997, "the university faced it's own institutional challenges... most of the time has been used, for the last four years... (to)

respond to all the internal challenges... (and) serious financial problems that threatened its existence.” He evinced that the uncertainty that existing at the time prevented him from engaging in research projects and his “research productivity was compromised... the work was difficult to do because even the support system was not there... the library, the research laboratories, funds.” Miso claimed, however, that things improved with the change in management:

Things started looking up actually some time in 2001... they were stabilized and there were controls put in place... So, I’ll say it is only now that Fort Hare is coming up to meet its internal challenges and it’s now, I think, in a better position to join the mainstream of other South African institutions – to respond to national challenges.

Zukov, who came to the university in 1994, claimed that in 1995 the university was in serious trouble and “decay”. He stated that “there was no funding at all” and the NRF had turned down funding requests stating that Fort Hare did not have the infrastructure to undertake research. Zukov contended, “There are some changes now... the situation is slightly improved. This year the budget is decent.” He is supervising two masters and two doctoral students. From a student perspective, Mbuyo, a newly appointed junior academic who had been a student at the university during its troubled times in the 90s, claimed that the recent changes have been drastic. According to Mbuyo, whereas there was much student unrest then, students were more work focussed and accountable now, and there has been a change in student-staff relationships from confrontational to professional. All the participants indicated that, despite the historical problems, the efforts of the new management since 2000 have improved the research culture at Fort Hare. Thandi noted that there was a backlog of attention to physical infrastructure across the university, which made it difficult for management to focus solely on prioritizing research. The funding arrangements, discussed further below, make it difficult for Fort Hare to honour its commitment to research. It is difficult to establish what funds are allocated to research because a special foundation, the Fort Hare Foundation, has been established for the channelling of external funding for

teaching, research and capacity building and the administration and operation of the funded projects (I: Otto). Otto explained that Fort Hare generates funds from consultancy practices such as training and capacity building projects, for example, the project to build capacity among public servants through the Public Finance Service agency, a 100 million rands project run by the Fort Hare Institute. However, not much income was generated from patents or commercial research activities (I: Otto).

## **6.3 CHANGE**

### **6.3.1 New management and research**

According to several participants, the new management, responsible for Fort Hare's recovery from near collapse some five years ago has recognized the importance of research and accordingly, has established a new Faculty of Research at Fort Hare (I: Bertrand; Dirk; Fatuh; Gumbi; Henry; Nyazi; Thandi). An extensive review and audit was conducted of all facets of the university's operations and programmes. A comprehensive strategic plan, including a new vision and mission, was developed as the blueprint for restructuring the institution to enable it to excel in research and teaching, which Thandi believed was the main function of a university. Loodts contended that there has been a significant difference in management in terms of a more corporate style of running the institution since 2000. In addition, there has been no student unrest since 1999 and the institution has made an almost miraculous about turn. Participants contended that although a monetary deficit remains, the university has become a stable, well- functioning institution (I: Henry; Otto; Thandi). Despite the inherent difficulties arising from historical factors mentioned above, together with Fort Hare's lack of resources, the new management has persisted in appointing academics with good research track records.

The Director of Finance claimed that financial austerity between 2001 and 2004 assisted in reducing Fort Hare's debt by half: "A little bit of cut here and there. I mean, we just had to tighten up everything" (I: DoF). When I enquired about expenses with regard to

the maintenance of grounds and gardens, which have improved remarkably since my previous visits to the campus in the mid 1990s, the director explained that such “efficiencies” were necessary and in turn led to an increase in student numbers. The recovery of student debt also increased, as noted above (I: DoF). The director noted that obtaining extra funds for student bursaries from the National Student Financial Aid and other sources such as the provincial Premier’s Office and some external donors, also contributed to their success.

In the late 1990s, there was no administrative and management orientation towards research support. Fatuh found that there was no one he could collaborate with to establish a research culture:

When I came here, there was no research culture, so I started more or less from scratch. There was nobody to collaborate with so it took a long time, about two or three years before I could get recognized by the NRF and they started giving me money (based) on my recognition for research.

This lack of orientation towards research changed as the new administration of Professor Swartz made a clean sweep of the institution, paying greater attention to the importance of research (I: Fatuh; Gumbi; Henry; Loodts; Nyazi). According to Fatuh, the new management recognized the need for quality staff and provided incentives such as promotions and cash benefits for publishing (I: Fatuh; see also Nyazi). However, severe financial constraints have prevented management from giving research the kind of attention and funding it requires.

The Fort Hare management has found that government funding promised for institutional redress of HBUs, such as recapitalization, and for institutions engaged in the mergers, has not been forthcoming (I: Henry; Otto; Vice Chancellor; public speech, 2004). As noted in chapter two, the budgetary system based on the apartheid SAPSE formula continued to be used until 1 January 2004 and has been detrimental to the well-being of HBUs. Otto noted the contradiction of the SAPSE formula:

The new process is going to look quite different to that process. The new process would probably look at a costing exercise throughout every section and division first... we will probably establish budget committees.... The complaint at the moment on the budget issue is that we are using historical

data to create a budget and you are not necessarily aligning it to your core... You are using historical data. So if somebody got a million rands last year, he is going to get a million and a bit this year, whereas you should be investing in different fields.

Up until the beginning of 2004, Fort Hare still had no information on what amount of funding might be allocated by the DNE (I: Otto). Besides, as Otto explained, "the recapitalization was meant for the old Fort Hare, not for the East London campus as well," which by itself, required an investment in infrastructure. Very little of the original merger budget, developed by the joint task team of Fort Hare and Rhodes, was actually approved by the Department (I: Otto). Whereas there was money for the direct merger costs, it was limited and did not cover, for example, travel to joint meetings, the two campuses being 140 km apart. Although the East London FTE subsidies had now become part of the Fort Hare budget, there was no additional funding allocated to staff salaries, and services such as electricity and water. Moreover, the funding procedure is that universities must first pay for expenses and then claim against these expenses. As noted in chapter two, HWUs have generated significant income through long-term investments over decades as well as generating income from contracts with commercial and industrial partners (I: Bunting). It has been almost impossible for an institution like Fort Hare that does not have reserve funds and still has a debt of 43 million rands, to follow these procedures.

Furthermore, it appears that the national department does not have the capacity to process funding allocations in a timely and efficient manner. Consequently, it becomes incumbent upon the institution's senior managers to constantly expend their time and energies in communicating with the department for the roll out of these funds (I: Henry; Otto). In a recent public speech, the Vice Chancellor expressed his concern about the way this lack of provision of promised funding from government is compromising the institution and preventing it from training the next generation of South Africans, conducting research

and attending to the repair of buildings and facilities that are in a poor state (see further chapter eight).

### **6.3.2 New academics and research**

The majority of long-time staff at Fort Hare, except for a few like Fox and Dirk, has concentrated predominantly on teaching (I: Henry; Nyazi; Thandi; Thembi). A newer academic, whose work inspires hope for the future of the institution was Fatuh, a Nigerian expatriate, who explains that when he arrived at Fort Hare in 1997, he avoided the often-inescapable local politics of an HBU that was just emerging from troubled times. Instead, he committed himself to “developing a research culture” in his department. Although it has been an arduous road, he managed within the short space of two to three years to establish a vibrant research culture in his department, which in 2003 boasted not only honours and masters students but also three doctoral candidates and two post doctoral fellows. During 2003, he and his postgraduate students published a total of 10 articles. To build research capacity, Fatuh encourages and coaches his students to publish as widely as possible. His PhD students who are graduating this year have published five articles (I: Fatuh). In 2002, Fatuh’s students won a prestigious award for the presentation of their research at an international conference held in South Africa (I: Fatuh).

Academic Gumbi related a similar experience. She too arrived at the university in 1997 to find that no research was being conducted in her Department of Biochemistry, nor was there any equipment or chemicals in the laboratories (I: Gumbi). She spent three years “raising the level” of the department with funds received from the Water Research Commission and SANPAD (I: Gumbi).<sup>38</sup> She proudly related that two of her honours students were admitted to medical school and she currently supervises five master’s and two PhD students. Gumbi explained that the department has its own website which has been instrumental in helping them to attract international students from the African continent. The

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<sup>38</sup> South Africa – Netherlands Programme on Alternatives to Development

new Vice Chancellor, she claimed has been very supportive of research and approved funding for a molecular diagnostic laboratory, the first in the Eastern Cape. She has been building capacity within her department: for example, a former honours student is now employed as a laboratory assistant and is studying towards a master's degree.

### *Staff as martyrs*

The most striking feature about several participants at this university was their zealous dedication to the institution (I: Bertrand; Fatuh; Gumbi; Henry; Otto; Thandi; Walter). At least five staff members spoke about the institution and their work with great fervour and glistening eyes (I: Bertrand; Fatuh; Henry; Thandi; Walter). Henry, for example, was prepared to be called out to the institution at any hour, weekends included, without expressing the slightest consternation. Gumbi pointed out that her department was short staffed with only three staff members. As a result, she had a heavy teaching load and had to work until 9 or 10 p.m. during the weekdays and only found time over the weekend to write articles for publication. Yet, she had turned down a job offer from one of the top four universities in South Africa that offered highly competitive salaries because she found working closely with communities, an opportunity afforded by Fort Hare, more gratifying.

One of the consequences of the limited funds was not only the inability of the university to recruit larger numbers of staff or pay competitive salaries, but to honour the annual salary increments of existing staff (I: Henry; Miso; Thandi). Hence, most staff members, including the Vice Chancellor, were on lower salary scales compared to their counterparts at other universities (I: Henry; Otto). Thandi's devotion to the institution was evident. She accepted that the university could not honour these payments, nor afford to appoint her to the permanent position in which she was currently acting (I: Thandi). However, as committed and devoted as she was, the prolonged acting position has affected her morale and dented her self-esteem:

In as much as I do understand, you know, from the university's perspective, but as an individual I think it dented my... compromised me in a way... As far as other professional bodies are concerned because... people act for three or six months at other institutions. "Are you still acting?" [they ask], its like ... you're not good enough in as much as I understand but I cannot convince everybody that is the case. You see my dilemma?

This acting position was especially embarrassing when she encountered colleagues from other institutions who enquired about her position and status. Despite the reputation he had built, Fatuh, like Gumbi, was not attracted by higher salaries elsewhere because of the satisfaction he had derived from the success attained amidst the challenges at Fort Hare. When asked why researchers of his caliber have remained at Fort Hare despite the low salaries, Fatuh responded:

Some of us believe in challenges. Some of us believe that salary is not everything. For example on two occasions I (was offered) employment elsewhere and then the university says, "No, you are one of the people who has (done well) – we don't mind giving you more money, you are promoted," then I stayed. I was offered... more in another place where I was going... The question is still why... Personally, I have my family. My children are at university or school age. Moving from here to a new environment, it would take me another few years to set myself up and then my children, they have to orientate... As a professor, I am known from Fort Hare... It takes a long time to establish and then to remove your self one-day is not really easy. So I told myself, no let me wait a bit and allow my students to become committed. Salary is not a reason for me to move.

Given the effort to get to where he was at Fort Hare, Fatuh was not prepared to begin again at another institution. There were personal family reasons for his decision as well, as can be gleaned from the quote above. Part of his struggle to establish himself was linked to his identity as a foreign black academic in South Africa:

So I am known now... most of the meetings I go to they respect me now. ... Like the research advisory committee, the National Botanical Institute, I am the only black person there. When I get there I will not only be representing myself, I will be representing the black race and Nigeria. It is exciting and it's interesting. The comments I hear from some of them now, I am very happy that they have finally accepted me... One of the top researchers in (my field)... I met him when we went to a conference in Mauritius two or three weeks ago... he had heard everything that is happening in this department... He said, 'We know what you are doing; we are very proud and happy.' (I: Fatuh)

It seems that Fatuh has had to put in triple effort as a black Nigerian academic working in South Africa.

### **6.3.3 Indigenous knowledge systems**

Fort Hare has used its strategic location close to poor rural communities to engage in research involving indigenous communities. The approach to this kind of research varied. Some academics, like Fatuh, adopted approaches and methodologies consistent with their conventional Western training that sometimes may not suit working with local communities. Academic, Sobahle, was specifically committed to indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and expressed his views related to IKS. All the students interviewed seemed to engage communities in some way in their research activities and most appeared to have adopted respectful approaches, even though they have found this kind of research challenging at times (I: Mbuyo; Siphon; Vusi; Wandile). IKS is discussed at length in chapter eleven below.

## **6.4 ACCESS TO RESOURCES**

Fort Hare has encountered tremendous resource constraints on several levels; financial resources as noted, physical resources such as computers, laboratory equipment and chemicals, infrastructure such as student residences and laboratories, human resources, such as academic and library staff, and scholarly resources such as library facilities, serial holdings and books. It is of some interest that the majority of participants understood that the paucity of funds and resources was due to circumstances beyond management's control and thus did not express any negative attitudes towards management for their severely constrained access to resources (I: Fatuh; Gumbi; Miso; Siphon; Zukov and others). Postgraduate student Siphon, for example, attributed the limited access he has to print material and online journals to his limited funding received from the State and the unfavourable exchange rates, given that these journals are published overseas. Nevertheless, the participants claimed that the lack of access to resources seriously compromised their research. Siphon poignantly claimed: "It holds me back. It keeps me less than mediocre, sub-mediocre." He pointed out that supervisors

expected students at masters level to work independently, yet the resources for this were not available. Moreover, students often had limited research skills, having not received a proper grounding in research methodology at the honours level (op cit.). According to Siphon, the first year of the two-year masters programme comprised course work, while the second year consisted of research and the thesis. He found the course work, i.e., teaching, generally of a good standard, but that the supervision of and support for research is lacking.

To exacerbate the problem, there were insufficient student bursaries to support postgraduate students. Siphon acknowledged that the lack of funds for students could not be attributed to the university, but to an inimical part of its heritage as an HBU. The Government, he contended, continued to use formulae that benefited the already advantaged universities in the Eastern Cape, whereas Fort Hare, on the other hand, had a huge debt. The Director of Finance explained that the National Student Financial Aid (NSFA) programme only applied to undergraduate students. Postgraduate students have to access funds through other sources such as the NRF. These views are consistent with the findings of a comprehensive research study conducted by Bunting (2002b) discussed in chapter two. As noted in chapter two, the SAPSE funding formula, explicitly designed for the HWUs, laid the foundation for the financial crises experienced by HBUs and exacerbated the gap between them and the HWUs. In addition, the new funding plan for institutional redress, referred to in the White Paper (1997), had not yet been implemented by the end of 2003. Otto alluded to the difficulties Fort Hare encounters in obtaining government funding, as discussed above.

#### **6.4.1 Research equipment**

When Fatuh, Gumbi and Miso arrived at Fort Hare, they found little or no laboratory equipment and no funds to purchase the equipment required or to effect repairs to the existing equipment (I: Miso). Their perseverance led to success and they currently receive funding from the NRF and other sources. Miso, for example, claimed that he had had postgraduate students from the beginning, even though there were no research support systems in place: "I

had graduate students all along... although the work was difficult to do because the support systems were not there, even to get books from the library... the laboratory was not there. Everybody was uncertain and there was a low morale you know, so it affected our productivity.”

Students claimed that the laboratory equipment and chemicals were scarce (I: Mbuyo; Wandile). Mbuyo claimed that using the facilities of neighbouring HWU to test compounds was expensive as they charged per hour. Fortunately, the university has recently acquired its own machine to conduct these tests.

#### **6.4.2 IT**

Whereas all staff members had access to their own computers and the Internet, students had difficulty in accessing computers and the Internet. Staff and students complained about poor connections and that the lines “were often down.” The IT manager however, claimed that users did not have the basic skills to utilize their PCs effectively. He demonstrated to me how easy it was to log on and access various links through the computer. He iterated that he had often been called out to problems where the computer cords were not properly plugged in or where staff had not been careful about viruses. It would appear that staff and students need extra training in computer literacy and in how to take precautions against viruses infecting the network. Academics Miso and Fatuh claimed that, although connections had been poor in the earlier years, there have been marked improvements since 2001. Henry and Thandi attributed this improvement to the wider bandwidth installed during that year. Fatuh circumvented problems around connectivity, when they occurred, by using his own connections at home. Student Miso noted with concern, however, that most students at Fort Hare would not have had access to computers prior to being enrolled at Fort Hare. He was hopeful that the computer literacy programme would provide them with adequate skills to make better use of available resources.

### 6.4.3 Library resources

Participants, especially postgraduate students, were most dissatisfied with the limited access to library resources. The librarians were aware of this and attributed this paucity of resources to the unavailability of funds at Fort Hare. Head librarian, Thandi, contended that the new management has realized the importance of a good library for supporting research, but their main constraint has been the lack of funding. According to Thandi, the library building was defective, having been built as an inferior structure for black people during the apartheid regime. The central area of the library was a fire hazard as it was shaped like a chimney and the acoustics were poor, making it "a very noisy place" (I: Thandi).

Since 1997, the library had not acquired any new books because the entire budgetary allocation has been set aside for maintaining subscriptions to a few periodicals, which, by themselves, did not form a core collection of periodicals:

I think management is very supportive, especially the Vice Chancellor... he is a prolific writer ... so he knows the importance of research but, as I say, the greatest problem is money at Fort Hare. For instance, ... for the last five years we have not bought a new book using Fort Hare money because our entire allocation goes to maintain the few periodicals that we have which... does not even form a core collection. (I: Thandi)

This trend, Thandi claimed, dated back to the apartheid years. She pointed out that UPE, for example, which was only established in 1964 compared to Fort Hare's establishment in 1916, had double the collection of periodicals. She estimated that UPE has in the region of 264,000 bound issues of periodicals compared to Fort Hare's approximate 150,000. The scarcity of resources has also resulted in the loss of three "top" librarians who have relocated to Singapore.

Thandi believed that the library receives a fair proportion of the university budget but with the current exchange rates this does not go far. Nevertheless, in comparison to UPE and Rhodes, Fort Hare's budgetary allocation to the library is the lowest (see chapter eight). Whereas, as a librarian, she believes that the library is the nucleus of the university, she is

painfully aware that other areas requiring funding may deserve higher priority, for example, student residences or equipment for the laboratories. Academics and students, however, were not as understanding of the lack of library resources, possibly because it directly affected their research capacity and output (I: Fatuh; Mbuyo; Siphon; Vusi). It may also be that Thandi's role in management has obscured, to some extent, her loyalty to the library in that she now sees the 'big picture.' Either way, this illustrates that while it may be advantageous for librarians to sit on decision-making structures of the institution, because this provides the platform for them to lobby for better budgetary allocations to their sections, it can also co-opt them into perceiving issues and making decisions in ways that are more consistent with management. Senior academic Fatuh posited that the library was "in shambles" when he first came to Fort Hare and he admitted that he had not visited the library for a long while. Mbuyo pointed out that books were not available and the journals were outdated. The additional frustration, Vusi claimed, is that there is not even a bookstore on campus or in town, leading to a "culture of photocopying," even among the academics. This, he said, was due to Fort Hare's location in a poor province. He also found that librarians were not helpful, preferring to concentrate on administrative duties instead (I: Vusi). Student Wandile, however, admitted that the library was ill-equipped, but noted that in his discipline, agriculture, he encountered "no frustration with the library." This seems to indicate that access may vary according to discipline.

#### ***Electronic resources and information literacy***

According to the librarian, the increasing access to electronic resources has made it necessary for the library to provide training for students to use computers and search engines effectively: "We are starting in a very modest way to train students" (I: Thandi). Thandi has found that students were more comfortable with electronic rather than card catalogues, which, she claimed, made them feel intimidated:

A person would open a drawer and not even know whether this is a title or an author or a subject entry, and close the drawer and open another and everyone sees that you don't know what you are looking for and how to look for information. But with computers, they're really taking like ducks to water.

Thandi explained that most students are from rural areas and have never visited a library before coming to Fort Hare: "With the card catalogue there was a lot of resistance because everybody sees that you do not know how to use the library. Perhaps I need to add that most of our students when they come to Fort Hare, they have never used a library before." As a result, students feel embarrassed about conducting searches in the card catalogue in full view of everyone else in library. She recounted an incident where a student ripped the card out of the catalogue to go and look for the book, and everyone stared at the student in amazement (I: Thandi). Based on her experiences with library users, Thandi asserted, "I feel with computers there is more keenness and people ask questions."

### *African journals*

Like the other libraries at the other two universities in this study, Fort Hare had little to no access to African journals (I: Mbuyo). Thandi explained that since 2001, librarians have been looking at alternatives such as electronic journals and subscribing to African and South African journals, only to find that several African journals are published in the US or the UK. She noted, for example, that the African History Journal, which she regarded as important for the library to acquire, especially since the university began teaching African history in 1994, is published in the UK despite having mainly African contributors:

With some African journals you will not believe that they are published in the UK and the US. I mean you take African History Journal – where is it published? It is published in the UK, the greatest African History Journal and the greatest number of contributors are African but we paid (for it) in pounds you know. (I: Thandi)

This made African journals unaffordable for African universities.

#### **6.4.4 Research supervision**

Students complained about the lack of adequate supervision received from academics, maintaining that they had to struggle through their postgraduate studies. According to Siphon and Mbuyo, “students were weak in proposal writing” making it difficult for them to obtain funds. They claimed that the Govan Mbeki Research Institute, responsible for promoting research at Fort Hare, did not appear to have the capacity to coach students on proposal writing. Mbuyo proposed that a course (not built into any other course) be developed specifically for proposal writing, research methods and time management, commencing at the honours level (I: Mbuyo).

Although Siphon was aware that funding was a major constraint in terms of attracting quality research staff and acquiring updated library holdings, he believed that management was “not serious” about the research. Mbuyo also claimed that there was a lack of institutional support for students (I: Mbuyo). Management should ensure that greater priority be given to research during decision-making regarding budgeting and the allocation of funds. Furthermore, Mbuyo and Siphon claimed that students were disgruntled with the Govan Mbeki Research Institute and its lack of capacity to reinvigorate the research climate at Fort Hare.<sup>39</sup> He believed that the institute should be staffed by academics who have the “interests of research at heart.” In addition, he contended that he and other students were of the view that funds intended for research were redirected to other areas.

#### **6.4.5 Creative responses**

The severe resource constraints have led certain participants to develop their own creative responses. Fatuh’s main response to the lack of access to library journals has been to depend mainly on the Internet for access to both subscribed and free journals. In addition, Fatuh has developed his own library. He has established “collaboration” with colleagues at several

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<sup>39</sup> A new acting Dean of Research was appointed shortly after my interview with Siphon.

other universities so that when he visits these institutions, he also uses the opportunity to visit their libraries and acquire copies of the journal articles he needs. He also writes directly to authors to retrieve copies of their articles.

Fatuh explained that he had succeeded in building the research capacity of his department by learning not to depend on the institution for funds and other support: "I have been here for about five or six years, I have been able to learn not to depend on Fort Hare for anything, apart from my accommodation and electricity... As long as my office is there and my pay slip is there ... I do all (the rest) on my own." Fatuh overcame the numerous challenges he encountered through various creative responses. With NRF funding he arranged for two overseas post-doctoral fellows (a Nigerian and a Bangladeshi, who had completed her PhD in England) for his department. These fellows have enabled his department to overcome the shortage of human resources in terms of generation of research, supervision of postgraduates, supervision of the laboratory and the publishing of research. Through their research experience, they are able to make significant contributions to the research culture of the university. In fact, the knowledge and capacity of one of his post doctoral fellows enabled his department to have personal access to highly sophisticated and expensive equipment at Rhodes University. Fatuh used his own telephone and Internet facilities at home when needed or when connections were not operational at Fort Hare.

According to Thandi, the "Friends of Fort Hare" (FOF) is a formal organization operating in the US and the UK that donates books to Fort Hare (I: Thandi). FOF is linked to an Education Trust in the UK that provides approximately \$5,000 for books and a scholarship for a librarian to read for an honours or masters degree at a South African university (I: Thandi). Whereas some HWUs stockpiled banned books during the apartheid years, Fort Hare, like other HBUs, did not have the funds or liberty to acquire such books, which FOF was now helping them to retrieve. Since there was no other library in the area, not even a

municipal library, they also collected a range of fiction from donors for the leisure reading of students (I: Thandi).

Students appeared to rely heavily on supervisors as an alternative supply of literature (I: Vusi). Academics like Fatuh, Gumbi and Ruth have developed their own small office libraries, which they share with their students. Although postgraduate students make do with the little that is available, they felt severely constrained: "We make do with the little that is available... It is a major hurdle because we want to keep abreast with the topic... (we) don't want to be mediocre" (I: Fatuh; Gumbi; Ruth). Siphon explained that the lack of access to resources constrains his capacity to conduct cutting edge research because the information is outdated: "I have to make do with outdated, if not predated information. As much as I know there are (current) journals that are available, even South African printed journals, but our institution, our library is not having enough resources to buy those." It seemed that Fort Hare could not afford to update its international or South African journal subscriptions.

In order to familiarize school children (prospective students) with the library, the librarians invited school children to visit the library for various projects, for example, a recent exhibition on the history of South Africa from 1948 to 1976 was presented by a staff member who has lived through and has played a special role in that history: "Its hearing history from the horse's mouth" (I: Thandi). During their visit, the children are shown how to use the library and taught the importance of preserving books. Thandi claimed that she firmly supported digitization because it is the direction of the future. She is concerned, however, that technology always requires updates until we develop a form of technology that will "automatically update itself" (I: Thandi).

## **6.5 PERCEPTIONS**

### **6.5.1 Student Views**

Whereas the students at the other two universities in this study talked mainly about their research and problems in access to resources or securing funding, the students at Fort Hare

engaged in a discussion about broader issues such as macro-economics, politics, institutional change and community service. Siphso, for example, posited that the lack of access to government funding would further prejudice HBUs: "It is a remnant of a predetermined system of affairs in the old apartheid system to ensure that the black institutions remain producers of students who will be subservient to white colonial masters." Another matter of concern, according to Siphso, is the apparent lack of a vibrant academic climate at Fort Hare which, he believed was due to the exodus of staff during the troubled times of the 1980's and early 1990's, which "lowered the morale across the institution." He felt that academic "debate is dead to Fort Hare."

According to Siphso, the core purpose of the mergers was to improve conditions at the HBUs: "The merger was a very progressive concept... to ensure that the status quo is done away with, with a frank objective of lifting the standards of the formally disadvantaged institutions." However, Siphso believed that the merger would only succeed if appropriate resources are allocated for this purpose by the national government. Nonetheless, Siphso like others at his institution did not advocate a merger between Fort Hare and the resource-rich HWU, Rhodes, because of the differing historical legacies, ethos and institutional cultures of the two universities:

I would not advocate for a merger between Rhodes and Fort Hare... because of the two distinctly different educational cultures and philosophies... Fort Hare has got its legacy, its history; regionally, continentally and worldwide. It is such a heritage that has defined what Fort Hare is and which has made it to refuse the merger (with Rhodes).

He believed that mergers should not be imposed by government and that a union with Rhodes would have been negative in the long term because it would have been based on economic factors alone, while turning a "blind eye" to the other aspirations of these institutions (I: Siphso).

### 6.5.2 Perceptions of HBUs

As a consequence of the low emphasis placed on research in the past, Fort Hare does not have postgraduate students in most faculties. While it is still difficult to attract postgraduate students to Fort Hare, this situation has changed quite dramatically over the past few years. Larger numbers of postgraduate students can now be found in several faculties.

Nevertheless, Fatuh explains that retention of postgraduate students is a challenge: "It is very difficult. South Africans generally do not want to come here for postgraduate study but (students)... from rural areas that are not well prepared for the university... It takes us a lot of effort to bring these people up... to honours level." Apparently, the problem does not end there; once these students have received an education at Fort Hare and have acquired research skills, they leave to pursue further studies at the master's or PhD level at the HWUs:

They become trainable and very aware... they are able to read journals ... and say 'now I am going to Cape Town (UCT) for my masters, I am going to Pretoria (UP) for my masters'. So they go and we have to go back again and recruit another... So for me it was a really big effort to get two or three PhD students. It is difficult to get prospective (postgraduate) students to come here. (I: Fatuh)

Fatuh cited the following as reasons for Fort Hare's inability to retain these students:

First of all most of our students here are from the neighbourhood, from rural areas. Now once you train them a little bit they want to go to bigger cities. 2) Our sister universities, the so-called historically advantaged, in order to set up their own research teams, they need some blacks. They normally snatch them up at the master's or PhD level.

He claimed that HWUs do not deliberately "recruit" these students, but that the funding and facilities these institutions offer "entice" these students, making it very difficult for poor universities like Fort Hare to retain them:

Not deliberately, I would not say (recruit them) but then, they entice them. They have money, they have facilities and the students are very willing to go. It is very difficult, very difficult. It is so much impossible to find someone who has had a masters (degree) at the University of Cape Town, who then says, 'I am going to Fort Hare for my PhD'. It is not common. It is very rare, so it is a very big constraint because our FTE funding depends on the number of students we have, that is, the national department (subsidies). We are unable to retain our students. They go to other universities.

Better funding and facilities per se are not the only reasons that students prefer to attend HWUs. Fatuh believed that Fort Hare was at a disadvantage academically and historically: "Historically, location of the place, it is a bit rural... People believe that HBUs are not quality oriented enough and then that is it."

Fatuh stated that this abiding perception of HBUs is to some extent, a "well-founded assumption." He pointed out that many lecturers are teaching oriented rather than research oriented, comprising what Henry refers to as the "significant residue" of staff from the apartheid era (I: Fatuh; Henry). Fatuh explained that it is difficult too for Fort Hare to attract or retain quality researchers because their salary scales are not competitive with those of other universities:

To some extent they (student perceptions about HBU) are well-founded assumptions because many ... lecturers are not research oriented. Another unfortunate thing is that the university has not retained good quality lecturers. Good quality lecturers who are interested in research are not well paid. I hate to say this for them, Fort Hare pays the least salary and therefore most lecturers might want to leave, so the departments are not well staffed. The assumptions of the students are, to some extent, well founded.

According to graduate student Sipho, there is no factual basis for the negative perceptions of Fort Hare: "It is widely known although not accepted reality that a stereotype has prejudice, an understanding that the programmes, and the quality thereof, provided by HBUs are of an inferior standard compared to white counterparts." Sipho contended that this perception was ill-founded since graduates from Fort Hare have "shown their mettle to the outside world" not least of all, the former President Mandela and Bishop Tutu. Sipho believed that HBUs should be given extra support by the government so that they may have equal opportunities to produce students of a high calibre. For Sipho, the difference between these universities and HWUs is that HBUs focus on a national ethos whereas HWUs still have an ethos related to their founders, i.e. white colonials.

### 6.5.3 Perceptions of HWUs

Students at HBUs were aware that their counterparts at HWUs have better and greater access to resources (I: Mbuyo; Siphon; Vusi). Siphon, for example, liaised with friends at UPE and Rhodes. He was aware that the fee structure at Rhodes was higher which, he believed, precluded disadvantaged students from attending the institutions: "Those who do afford to pay the Rhodes fees are actually coming from outside South Africa" (i.e., foreign African students). He suggested that Rhodes should "open up to the formerly disadvantaged students" and provide more bursaries for them to attend Rhodes (I: Siphon).

### 6.6 PARTICIPANTS' VISIONS

Nearly all the participants' future aspirations were closely tied either to the development of the institution or to developmental research with their communities. Wandile, a graduate student in agriculture, for example, hoped to work as a researcher for a "developmental" institution so that he could use "Agriculture as a tool for poverty alleviation" whereas Mbuyo "wished" his research into phytomedicine would help to develop medicines to help fight the AIDS/HIV epidemic. Siphon's personal aspirations were linked to the future of HBUs. With a position at one of the national research institutes, he would seek to address the existing inequities between HBUs and HWUs through the allocation of funds for research:

Major emphasis or ... contribution would be to ensure that the HBUs ... are actually at par with their white counterparts through the availability of resources, be it financial or human, to such institutions, that the present status quo ... comes to an end because I strongly believe that all the institutions in this country should be given an equal opportunity.

It comes as no surprise that Thandi could not talk about her aspirations for the future without referring to what she desires for Fort Hare, namely, a new library. For herself, however, she would like to be more involved in archives and records management, the area she specialized in for her master's degree:

Archives are slightly different from libraries... In my view it is a continuum, libraries, archives and museums – they are all centres providing information and I think we need to demystify this ivory tower status ... (and) respond to

the needs out there. Talk to Joe Average... archives should be telling people stories and people would feel comfortable in donating their papers, and ... artifacts.

Notwithstanding the significant role he has played in building research culture and capacity within his department, Fatuh did not believe that he could play a broader mentoring role in research capacity across the university because of certain obstacles: "I would like to help, however, there are obstacles. People like to remain in a comfort zone. They don't want you to teach them, in inverted commas – 'anything.' It not easy to play such a role." However, he would like to secure a huge amount of research funding for a team project that would put Fort Hare on the map. The team would consist of master's and PhD scholars and international scholars from Europe and Africa. He pointed out that there was a wide perception that nothing good can come from Fort Hare and he wants this project to "turn it around" so that Fort Hare can be internationally recognized for its botany, "a place of choice for botany." He believed this was possible given that his students have won awards for their research, as noted above.

#### **6.7 VISIONS FOR FORT HARE**

The students at Fort Hare ventured opinions about the role of the university. According to Siphon, one of the roles of the university, especially in our post-apartheid society, is to educate the public about their democratic role: The university should "alleviate the bad phenomenon of civic apathy ... (and)... ensure the development and entrenchment of democratic values in society." But, he added that this would only be possible if adequate funding was allocated for conducting and publishing research.

The absence of the Africanization of South African higher education institutions has been recognised by African scholars, Mamdani (1998, in Makgoba, 1999) and Dr Makgoba, former Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand (see Clery, 1995). At a continental conference on the African Renaissance held in South Africa in 1998, reputed African scholar Mahmood Mamdani, noting the resistance of South African universities to

Africanization, stated that there could be no renaissance without an “Africa-focused intelligensia” (Mamdani, 1999, pp.125-134). Among the three institutions in my study, Fort Hare stands out as an institution with a definite “African-focus.” Some researchers, in botany, agriculture, public administration and English for example, were engaged in developmental research. There were endeavours in the area of indigenous knowledge systems as well, with plans to establish a centre of excellence for IKS (I: Sizwe). Moreover, an African culture and ethos are evident visibly, judging from the style and prevailing atmosphere of academic functions, such as inaugural lectures and graduations.<sup>40</sup> Unlike the solemnity typical of such events at most universities, including the HWUs in this study, at Fort Hare these events are characterised by African paraphernalia, music, dance and mirth. As noted, Siphso contended that Fort Hare plays a major role in the unfolding of the African Renaissance: “(Fort Hare) has a national ethos rather than an ethos that is subject to its founders... Rhodes still has an ethos based in Oxford. UPE is serving an Afrikaans ethos ... (whereas) this university plays a major role in the process of an African Renaissance.” Most participants at Fort Hare, including some from the newly acquired East London campus of Rhodes, declared the university’s role as a development institution and believed that its niche area was development related research (I: Bertrand; Henry; Massey; Walter). This view of Fort Hare appeared to articulate well with those who recognised the potential of the university, given its close affiliations with local communities and strategic location, to engage in indigenous research (I: Sizwe).

Scholar Subotsky (1999) argues that HBUs in South Africa are well positioned geographically and historically to engage in socially relevant research through “community service partnerships” (p. 509). In this way, he believes, they “potentially hold a comparative advantage in contributing towards basic reconstruction and development,” one of the thrusts of the higher education policies (p. 509). He is aware that there is the risk of perpetuating

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<sup>40</sup> Based on observations of the researcher and discussions with faculty members Henry and Lauren.

existing disparities when adopting this approach and emphasizes that he is not advocating that HBUs follow the path of reconstruction and development while HWUs follow the global path (op cit.). Instead, he argues that “both functions should be strategically addressed at all institutions” but that some HBUs already have close ties with surrounding communities and long-standing commitments to community development (op cit). While I agree that Fort Hare, for example, seems well-positioned to assume the role of a developmental research institution with potential for conducting rich indigenous research in close partnership with communities, I think the university should also engage in entrepreneurial research to ensure diversity in its research programmes, especially with regard to obtaining diverse sources of income for its research activities (see further discussion and recommendations below).

## **6.8 CONCLUSION**

Traditionally, research has not been a part of Fort Hare’s functions as an HBU. Not unlike other HBUs, Fort Hare underwent major upheaval in the 1980s and 1990s and even faced closure. A clean sweep of the management, who instituted a programme of financial austerity, resulted in the unexpected turn around of this university within a short period of two to three years. In adopting the managerial model, this university has become a stable and well functioning institution.

Over the past few years, there have been significant efforts on the part of the new management to build the research culture and capacity of the university through the appointment of new staff with good research track records, the establishment of a faculty of research headed by a dean of research, and the provision of incentives such as promotions and cash benefits for publishing. One of the most striking features of Fort Hare is its dedicated staff, who appears to be committed to the university’s successful transition to an institution of good standing in the restructured higher education sector. Some academics have made significant contributions to developing a research culture at Fort Hare despite the resource constraints they encounter. They have, for example, achieved NRF ratings as a result

of their publications and attracted postgraduate students, including post-doctoral fellows in some cases. These accomplishments have not been easy when one considers the negative stereotypes that continue to plague this HBU. These stereotypes have led to a brain drain as trained undergraduates choose to further their studies at HWUs.

Moreover, Fort Hare continues to encounter debilitating resource constraints on all fronts from infrastructure and facilities to library holdings. Between 1997 and 2003 the library, which does not even have a 'core collection' of journals, could not purchase a single new book (I: Thandi). These constraints have made students feel 'mediocre' and unable to conduct cutting edge research. In this instance the Internet has provided amazing opportunities that have improved researchers' access to scholarly resources. The DNE's application of the SAPSE funding formulae to HBUs until as recently as 2004 and the problems encountered in the processing of claims according to the new funding arrangements, nonetheless continue to hamper Fort Hare's progress and development.

However, through optimising its opportunities in ways that augur well for its future development, Fort Hare seems to be finding its niche as a developmental university, working closely with surrounding communities to help alleviate their social problems through research. Some researchers have understood the need for new methodologies when conducting research of this nature. In addition, Fort Hare has made advances into IKS, a significant new area of research for universities in South Africa. Plans are in place to establish a centre for IKS at Fort Hare. Thus, Fort Hare has positioned itself as developmental research institution with an Africa-focus, committed not only to the national transformation process, but to the African Renaissance as well.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### NEOLIBERAL REFORMS AND RESEARCH

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the chapters that follow, seven to eleven, I compare and contrast how the forces of globalization and democratization have affected researchers and their research productivity and capacity at the three universities in this study. According to the participants in the study, the changes in response to globalization have been indicated by the shift towards managerialism (UPE and Fort Hare) and entrepreneurialism (Rhodes), whereas the changes in response to democratization have been indicated by the formulation and implementation of new policies such as representative governance, equity plans and a shift to 'socially relevant' or applied research. In chapters seven to eleven, I examine how these changes have affected these institutions as they have a bearing on the institutions' access to research resources and their capacity to develop research productivity.

In this chapter, I compare and contrast how the changes brought about by the forces of globalization, such as neoliberal reforms, have affected researchers and their research capacity and productivity within the institutions. The changes brought about by globalization have affected the universities directly in their capacity as international institutions and through the neoliberal imperatives that inform the local higher education new policies, as noted in chapter two. While there are similarities among the universities, my findings show that the institutions have responded to the forces of globalization and democratization in different ways, based on their differing histories and organizational cultures.

For this reason, I begin this chapter with an overview of the individual institutions' orientation towards research, what I shall term their respective research cultures. This section considers what priority the different institutions have given to research and examines their current research output. This is based on the belief that the differing research cultures have a bearing on what the changes mean for knowledge production at these universities. Thereafter,

I examine changes in terms of managerialism and entrepreneurialism (globalization) with a view to understanding how these affect the research capacity of these three universities. The questions I pose in this chapter are: (1) How do the prevailing research cultures at the three universities differ and how might this affect their orientation toward research in a transforming society? (2) How have the universities responded to neoliberal reforms and how have these affected their research programmes and knowledge producing processes?

## 7.2 RESEARCH CULTURE

The three universities in this study are amongst the smallest universities in the country with respective contact student populations of under ten thousand. These universities are not in the league of the larger universities such as the University of Cape Town, Witwatersrand, Stellenbosch and Pretoria that have student populations in excess of twenty thousand and are responsible for most of the academic research output in South Africa.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, a survey conducted by Claasen (November, 2001), a professor at Stellenbosch, shows that in 1998 and 1999 Rhodes University, despite its small size, had the highest per capita research output in the country, and it has managed to maintain its ranking over a four-year period (Research Chronicle, 2001; Rhodes University Annual Research Report, 2003). It is followed by the 'big league' universities, Wits, UCT, Stellenbosch and Pretoria (Research@Stellenbosch, 2004).<sup>42</sup> Rhodes research output for article publications alone was 206.64 units in 2002 and 180.56 in 2003 (Rhodes University Annual Research Reports, 2002, 2003). The average output from 1991-2001 was 205.35 units. Additional output points for books, chapters, patents and proceedings (11.85) and non-subsidy publications (16 units) for 2002 totalled 27.85 units.<sup>43</sup> At Fort Hare, the research output for subsidy publications for

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<sup>41</sup> UCT (19,978 students); Wits (25,681 students); Stellenbosch (21,879 students); Pretoria (30,212 students) in 2004.

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.sun.ac.za/Research/research@SU.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> Units are allocated for research output which is rated according to categories that range from unrefereed reports through conference proceedings to articles in refereed journals. For example, research published in refereed journals receives a heavier weighting than publications in conference proceedings.

2000, 2001 and 2002 was 36.71, 32.55 and 26.23 respectively.<sup>44</sup> It is a concern that despite new incentives at Fort Hare, the output has steadily decreased rather than increased over the three-year period.<sup>45</sup>

In 2002 and 2003, UPE allocated approximately 1.16 % and 1.27 % of its budget to research (I: DoF) whereas Fort Hare allocated less than 1 % of its budget to research (I: Executive Dean). Rhodes, on the other hand, allocated 12 % of its budget to research (I: Dean of Research). Whereas the total budgets of these universities may differ, these percentages give an idea of the priority given to research within these different institutions. In terms of library allocations, UPE allocated 4.91 % in 2002 and 4.68 % in 2003 (I: DoF). In 2003, UPE raised R3.05 million from subsidies and allocated R 3.2 million “to research and related activities (research grants and seed funding to staff, overseas research bursaries to staff, postdoctoral fellows to UPE, visiting researchers to UPE, etc.)” (Murray, personal communication, September, 2004).

Of the 30 higher education and research institutions that received THRIP funding from the NRF in 2000, Rhodes was among the top 10 “takers” (Top 10 “takers”, 2001). Figures that are more current are not available, but suffice to say that Rhodes is the most productive of the three universities in this study and boasts a strong research culture and tradition. As noted, the lack of a research culture at UPE and Fort Hare may be attributed to historical and context related factors mentioned in chapters one and two. These universities were established as teaching institutions mainly.

To summarise the earlier points made in the opening chapters, the former government of South Africa established racially segregated universities to implement and consolidate its apartheid policies. Generally, the HWU-Es produced skills for the mining and manufacturing industries (Ashley, 1971; Bolsmann and Uys, 2001; Mabokela, 2000; Nordkvelle, 1990).

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<sup>44</sup> UFH SAPSE claim reports.

<sup>45</sup> Figures for 2003 were not available.

HWU-As produced an Afrikaner elite to assume key positions in politics, government, and public administration, while HBUs were intended to legitimate the policy of separate development and to reproduce the subordinate social and economic position of black people (Mabokela, 2000; see also Subotsky, 1999). Furthermore, as noted, HBUs received an inequitable resource allocation from the apartheid state. The new policies, aimed at transforming higher education in South Africa, emphasize the importance of research and individual institutions are beginning to institute significant incentives and rewards for research output by academics (South Africa, 1997). At Fort Hare, for example, the university may receive 30,000 rands from the government for articles published in rated journals, 12,000 rands of which is allocated to authors (I: Henry). At UPE researchers receive 3,000 rands directly (I: Director of Research), whereas at the Rhodes the subsidy funds are placed in a central coffer to fund novice researchers (I: Dean of Research; see chapter four to six).

Fort Hare, given its history, does not have a strong research tradition because it was never the intention of the apartheid regime that the HBUs become producers of knowledge. Instead, they were mainly conceived as teaching universities. Furthermore, the government carefully monitored and restricted the production of research, as was evident in the Ciskei Government's dismissal of a Fort Hare professor of agriculture in the 1980s, because his research contradicted government policy at the time. Even though Fort Hare has made certain gains in building its research capacity over the last three years, the task remains formidable, as these historical factors, like the SAPSE formula, continue to work against this development. Furthermore, Fort Hare's rural location is both advantageous and disadvantageous. It is a boon when considering the university's role as a development university and its need to work closely with local underprivileged communities, and the opportunities this geographical proximity to local communities holds for the university to engage in indigenous research. On the other hand, the rural location is a major disadvantage when it comes to attracting academic staff with good research track records. Academics, who

are committed to research productivity, are essential for contributing to the development of a research culture at the university. As a result of the geopolitical history of South Africa, the town lacks infrastructure and facilities, such as schools and supermarkets, making relocation to the town unattractive for academics (I: Henry; Thandi). This impacts negatively on its capacity to build the necessary research culture that is desired.

The Vice Chancellor of Fort Hare has apparently made several appeals to local government about the need to upgrade the town's basic infrastructure and services but these appeals appear to have been ignored. No attempt has been made to repair signboards and roads leading to the university, which has been a bane for the Vice Chancellor, who alluded to these problems in his concluding remarks at a public lecture held at Fort Hare in March 2004. Perhaps these appeals need to be made at levels other than local government alone. At the civic level, for instance, the matter could be raised among parents of students who attend the institution, local civic organizations and branches of the political parties and, at the provincial and national levels, government, political parties and civic organizations should be consulted to investigate how these issues may be overcome. A forum consisting of all concerned parties, including student organizations, needs to be established to consider ways and means of ensuring closer, meaningful engagement between the university and the town.

UPE also does not have sufficient funding to attract what the Director of Research has referred to as "top notch" academics who prefer the larger institutions situated in big cities, like Cape Town and Pretoria (I: Murray). Rhodes, however, despite its country setting, is able to attract academics because of the lucrative salaries it can afford and because of its esteem as an academic institution. The lack of a research culture at UPE may also be attributed to historical factors. As the smallest Afrikaner university established in the 1960's, its main function was that of a teaching university, developing skills among Afrikaners so that they could assume key political and bureaucratic positions within the country. As noted, unlike Rhodes, for example, this university does not have a Faculty of Research and only

recently in 1999 appointed a Director of Research, who is not part of the executive management. Nor does the Director participate in the budget committees of management. The historical neglect of research is further indicated by the low status accorded to the library. In terms of the university's organizational structure, the library is located under the department of maintenance and support services, along with gardening, printing and postal services. The head librarian claimed that he was not consulted about cuts to the library budget: "We weren't consulted, we were just informed" (I: Verster). However, Verster believed that this would change with the new management structure because the library now falls directly under the Deputy Vice Chancellor and will receive greater priority. Verster emphasised the pivotal role of the library in a university whose main function should be the production of knowledge: "As a knowledge institution, I think we (the library) form a big part of that institution or, we should." According to librarians, Verster and Rita, the new management at UPE appears to be cognisant of the fundamental role the library can play in knowledge production and has recently, in 2003, provided for a direct links between the library and the newly appointed Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

The strong research culture at Rhodes, in comparison to UPE and Fort Hare, is also based on historical factors. As an old English HWU, Rhodes has enjoyed relative autonomy over the years and was able to develop along the lines of traditional British universities, having adopted the tutorial system of the Oxbridge model early on in its history. It has enjoyed the generous support of mining magnate, Cecil John Rhodes, after whom it was named, having received funding since its inception from the Rhodes Trustees, De Beers and later, the Anglo Gold mining house. Over the decades, Rhodes, despite trying financial times at certain points in its history, has been successful in attracting funding from mining houses and other sources, enabling the institution to establish significant trust funds. In this sense, Rhodes has a sound financial standing compared to UPE and Fort Hare, and can pursue its

research activities without the severe financial constraints encountered by the other two institutions, especially Fort Hare.

Quite aside from these historical factors, Rhodes has nurtured its research culture over the decades. Policy makers and senior managers at Rhodes have placed a strong emphasis on research in their planning and budgeting. The Dean of Research is not only a member of senior management but is part of a core decision-making committee that includes the Vice Chancellor and the Director of Finance. Despite these exacting management roles, he continues to be an active researcher responsible for supervising postgraduate students. Rhodes, unlike UPE and Fort Hare, has long recognised the central role played by the library and accordingly, ensures that the head librarian is a member of the central budget committee, a high-ranking decision making committee. Rhodes has a system whereby older researchers support the development of younger researchers through a mentoring programme to build capacity among young and black women researchers. Funds generated from publishing output are placed in a central coffer to support budding researchers. This is based on the understanding that senior researchers, who generate significant amounts of funding through their publishing endeavours, are capable of raising their own funds for research projects.

Participants at both UPE and Fort Hare believe the newly appointed management at these institutions is more conscious of and committed to the need to build a vibrant research culture. They also believe that management will pay greater attention to utilising the talents and contributions of a new generation of scholars and ultimately, make possible the rich contribution of these universities to knowledge production and social justice. At UPE, the new management has given an undertaking to build the research culture of the institution (see chapter four). The Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), the latter being responsible for research, have visited departments and discussed the importance of research output and issues encountered by staff. A positive step towards building the research culture at UPE has been the Top 20 programme, which recognises prolific researchers by publishing

their names on the Top 20 list and honouring them through various ceremonies and functions (see chapter four). In addition, researchers receive 10,500 rands for articles they publish in rated journals over a five-year period (see chapter four). As Murray explains, "Our system basically provides for support to new researchers, thereafter it pays to established researchers what they actually earn through their outputs - in proportion to what they produced" (Murray, personal communication, September, 2004). Another method employed to develop the research culture at UPE is to recruit larger number of postgraduate students to the university.

The library has been given a higher profile by its being placed under the wing of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). The engagement of UPE researchers in socially relevant research with industrial, government and community partners also serves to raise the research profile of UPE and build its research culture. UPE is also involved in a number of exchange programmes with overseas universities, which enable UPE researchers to undertake stints at universities abroad and for academics from around the world to spend time at UPE. This serves to keep UPE in the loop of global scholarly networks.

According to several participants, the new management at Fort Hare has recognised the importance of research. Consequently, it has established a Faculty of Research (which houses the Govan Mbeki Research Institute), appointed new academics with good research track records and provided incentives for research output such as promotions and cash benefits for publishing. The failure of the institute to "reinvigorate" the research culture at Fort Hare by 2003 resulted in a change in leadership for the institute in early 2004 (I: Siphon). This signals, perhaps, that management is monitoring delivery and taking cognisance of students' views. The management and Dean of Research have placed greater priority on budgetary allocations to research. As an incentive to researchers, 12, 000 rands of the 30, 000 rands are allocated back to the researcher for research activities. A significant step taken in 2004, signaling clearly this commitment to building research capacity at Fort Hare has been the waiving of partial and full fees for certain categories of postgraduate students (I: Henry;

Otto). The university provides a 100 % waiver for students registered for thesis based masters and doctoral degrees; 50 % for coursework masters and doctoral degrees and 100 % waiver for honours students who received a 70 % pass in their final major subject (“Be part,” 2005). In addition, many of the staff members at Fort Hare demonstrate an overwhelming commitment and dedication to developing the university as an institution of research excellence. As academic Fatuh attested in an interview, he is focused on building the research culture in his department because there was none when he arrived at Fort Hare:

The culture of research was not here. We were into teaching and other minor politics, so it was quite challenging. Then, being a foreigner, I was not interested in any local politics, as a result, I concentrated on developing my research culture.

In addition, Fort Hare is the proud custodian of the liberation movement’s archives, which are currently being digitized. Notwithstanding the gains discussed above, the severe financial constraints prevent management from giving research the kind of attention and funding it requires. For example, there was a backlog on attention to physical infrastructure across the university and without residences there will be no students. The management hopes that government funding promised, as a result of their merger with the East London campus of Rhodes University, will be forthcoming to relieve the deficit (see further discussion below). In the next section, I discuss how neoliberal policies have affected researchers at the three universities.

### **7.3 MANAGERIALISM/ENTREPRENEURIALISM**

In response to the macro-economic neoliberal policies globally that have resulted in cuts to spending nationally and the White Paper’s call for increased “effectiveness”, “efficiency” and “quality” as noted above, universities in South Africa have increasingly adopted the marketization model (see chapter one). The adoption of a managerial or entrepreneurial approach has had differing impacts on the three universities in the study. As demonstrated in chapter four, managerialism at UPE led to financial austerity, increased administration and

heavier teaching loads for researchers. The ethos of the institution changed with a new emphasis on corporate style of management and the adoption of a market discourse. The Vice Chancellor is referred to as the “CEO” whereas Council, in their meetings to deliberate decision-making policies, are driven by the logic of business and have increasingly used the rhetoric of “running the university like a business” (Pretorius, personal communication, June, 2003; UPE Newsletter, January 2003). As a result of the pressures which, typically of neoliberalism, called upon staff to do more with less, many UPE participants in my study were not well disposed to the new managerial ethos; becoming more like “a corporate environment,” as one academic put it (I: Ronelle). Ronelle, an academic at UPE, was disconcerted by the move to managerialism stating:

The university (is) driving an economical frame(work)... It is *becoming more like a business*... like a corporate environment... In order to become more economical (they) are placing staff at a disadvantage. You cannot expect more and give less, and that is what is really taking place. (my emphasis)

For academics, who already have heavy teaching loads, the increased student intake without additional resources has meant that there is even less time available for research. For the librarians, it has meant a drastic reduction in journal subscriptions. For senior academics, usually the most prolific researchers at the institution, it has meant greater involvement in policy development, management meetings and administrative responsibilities, leaving little or no time for the support or supervision of academics within their departments.

Furthermore, UPE has not been as successful as Rhodes University in adopting the entrepreneurial model and generating significant income from its research activities. As yet, it does not appear to have compensated for fiscal constraints brought on by managerialism through commercialising its research activities, a trend followed by universities worldwide that have adopted the marketization model (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997, p. 8; see also DeAngelis 1998, p. 124; Newson, 1998, p. 296, 297; Stromquist, 2002, p.108).

For Rhodes University on the other hand, as pointed out in chapter five, the adoption of the marketization model has not been accompanied by the severe financial austerity evident at UPE. None of the academics or senior managers interviewed mentioned severe financial constraints. Nor did they talk in terms of a managerial ethos within the institution. The ethos of the traditional, collegial university still prevails. As discussed in chapter five, Rhodes has always had strong administration and sound fiscal policies and there appears to have been little change in these systems because the institution has functioned well through the years. As one participant put it, "let's not interfere with something that is working so well" (I: DoR). Academics have found that they were well supported in research activities by the sound administration and financial standing of the institution. It would appear from this evidence, and the discussion on democratization and equity in chapter ten below, that Rhodes has not undergone any significant changes since 1994, except for the increased commercialization of its research activities, not unlike the trend in higher education internationally. The impact of globalization has led to increased entrepreneurialism in the teaching and research activities at Rhodes, ensuring that this already, well-resourced university continues with 'business as usual.'

Whereas managerialism does not appear to have had a positive impact at UPE, for reasons I shall discuss further below, financial austerity in recent years has had the effect of wresting Fort Hare from its imminent demise; "pulled up by the bootstraps" as the Vice Chancellor has put it. When the Director of Finance was asked how he had reduced the institution's financial debt by almost 50 % and increased student debt recovery by 76 %, he responded that the key strategy has been to tighten the financial reins at the institution and that, as things began to turn around, external funding increased: "A little bit of cut here and there. I mean you just had to tighten up everything... Of course we then generated a tremendous amount of external funding" (I: DoF).

Managerialism has been implemented in different ways and has had differing impacts on the three universities in the study. For UPE, it has placed further constraints upon the capacity of the academics and the librarians to contribute towards improving the research productivity at the institution. Given the previous lack of a research culture at the institution, the managerial approach may mitigate and dissipate the new emphasis placed on research by the new Vice Chancellor and his team. It is arguable whether such austerity can contribute to effectiveness and efficiency if it exacerbates budgetary constraints on time and resource provision for developing research at UPE. It is certainly an area that has to be carefully monitored by senior management to ensure that it does not negate the gains that have been made in terms of change in other areas, for example, increased NRF support for research and the dramatic change in student demographics. Furthermore, the marketization model might work better for UPE and Fort Hare if managerialism were accompanied by entrepreneurialism. Although there are good examples of commercial research activities at UPE, for example, physics research in conjunction with industrial partners such as Telkom and Aberdare cables, there is great potential for UPE, given its location in the industrial hub of the province, to increase its commercial research activities manifold. This needs to be done in a way that is not inimical to the university's commitment to social development and democratization.

For Fort Hare, on the other hand, managerialism and its accompanying financial austerity have enabled the institution to survive the threat of closure in the late 1990s. Not only has it survived, but there is evidence of renewal and stability as management have focussed on building the research culture of the institution by supporting research and hiring new academics with sound research track records. In addition, there has been no student unrest since 1999, student debt recovery has increased from 16 % in 2000 to 92 % in 2004 and the monetary deficit has halved within a three year period. To avoid resorting to reductionism, it is important to note that Fort Hare still faces severe financial constraints

which have led to serious challenges for the university, one of these being the poor condition of its infrastructure. Fort Hare will also need to venture into entrepreneurial research in the future, which may be difficult given its rural location and commitment to development and indigenous research (discussed below).

Rhodes, on the other hand, has “managed” its foray into the marketization mode well, maintaining its traditional collegial ethos while adopting the entrepreneurial model to generate income from its commercialised research activities. This has been possible because Rhodes has always been a traditional research university with a long-standing research culture, recognised internationally for its research and academic excellence and endowed with resources to cover its outlay and expansion into new entrepreneurial research projects. As noted, Rhodes has engaged successfully with industrial and private sector partners (I: Anderson; Murray; Sara; see also Annual Review, 2003). It has established a Centre for Entrepreneurialism and a business unit to ‘exploit’ its knowledge producing capacities.

It can hardly be claimed that the newer Afrikaner universities established in the 1960s, like RAU and UPE, were traditional, collegial universities. As demonstrated earlier, they were established to serve the educational needs of working class Afrikaner students (see also Bolsmann & Uys, 2001). From their inception, they were more oriented towards the managerial ethos than the older traditional HWU-A university like Stellenbosch. At Rhodes, the Dean of Research explained that one of his “prime” responsibilities was to ensure, through monthly meetings with the deans of faculties, the Vice Chancellor and the Vice Principal, that a balance is maintained between marketization and collegiality. As a result of the different ways in which these three universities have adopted and adapted the marketization model, I have seen fit to draw a distinction between the terms managerialism and entrepreneurialism earlier in this dissertation (see chapter one).

#### 7.4 CONCLUSION

Although only one of the three universities in this study, Rhodes, has a strong research tradition, there are indications that the new leadership at UPE and Fort Hare is committed to building the research profiles of these two institutions. At UPE, these changes were still in the early stages, and the existing evidence of this new commitment was based mainly on the expressed intentions of the newly appointed Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and the commissioning of situational analysis of institutional research commissioned by the latter. These officials had assumed their positions only three to nine months prior to the interviews. At Fort Hare, where new management had been in office since 2000, there were clearer indications of a new commitment to research, such as the establishment of a research institute, the appointment of a new Dean of Research, cash incentives for research productivity, the appointment of staff with good research track records and the waiving of fees for postgraduate students. This is not to imply that the two institutions can be accurately compared in this way. Rather, this is an exploration of what additional steps these institutions have been prepared to take to build their research capacities. It may be assumed that the increased value given to research generation in the national policy will steer these universities in the direction of enhancing their respective research profiles.

One of the factors affecting the institutions' capacity to develop their research profiles is the neoliberal emphasis in the new higher education policies. Throughout the world, the economic pressures on universities resulting from globalization, have led to the adoption of the marketization university model in varying degrees (see chapter one). Different institutions have responded differently to globalization, as have the universities in my study. A market discourse is evident at UPE, where cuts to spending, massification and a litany of administrative functions have encroached on the little time that academics have available for both teaching and research activities. Furthermore, the university does not appear to be

making optimal use of the opportunities available to engage in research with industrial partners as a way of generating income. Rhodes, on the other hand, appears to have retained its traditional collegial ethos, having averted the route of managerialism and financial austerity, opting instead for entrepreneurialism and the profitable commercialization of its already successful research programme. This has enabled Rhodes to increase its research productivity and build its research capacity so that it produces the highest research per capita in the country. However, these sterling accomplishments on the part of Rhodes may be in jeopardy, if it fails to make similar strides in democratization and the adherence to equity goals to be discussed further in chapter ten.

Fort Hare, ironically, a university that had no historical research culture and nearly faced closure only years ago, has used managerialism to overcome its demise and instead, develop its research orientation from nothing to one that holds promise for the future. The adoption of managerialism and the new focus on financial austerity based on the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and growth, (White Paper), together with Fort Hare's developmental research stance, which is underpinned by the philosophy of *Ubuntu* (as noted in chapter six and later in this dissertation), will allow the institution to balance the goals of managerialism with social development. Despite all its other faults and challenges, Fort Hare appears to be well positioned in terms of its location, commitment to community development and African ethos, to follow the 'third way,' but this can only be achieved with visionary leadership, effective management and equitable funding from the state.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY AND ACCESS TO SCHOLARLY RESOURCES

#### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I examine the current state of resource access at the three universities in my study and how this affects their capacity to respond to the new higher education policy call for increased research productivity, as an important way of contributing to the new social order. As noted, some of the factors that affect research access and capacity include the historical shaping of these institutions through the apartheid policies, inequitable funding arrangements, and the global neoliberal reforms discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I analyse access to research resources such as IT and library holdings, as well as funding, facilities, equipment and support. I consider existing constraints and any innovative practices, adopted by the different universities, to overcome these constraints. I examine how the gains experienced at some universities may be further enhanced and extended to all universities, and how the challenges experienced may be dealt with in ways that contribute to building research capacity at these institutions.

In this chapter, I pose the following questions: (1) Given global economic trends, the low value of South African currency in the exchange market and the local neoliberal reforms, what access do these universities have to scholarly resources and technology? (2) How do the participants in this study perceive current levels of access affecting their research programmes at these institutions? (3) How do the experiences of these universities differ? (4) What have been some creative responses of researchers and librarians to the resource constraints they have confronted? In posing these questions, I examine how outdated and unduly discriminatory ideas about knowledge and 'quality' linger in ways that work against developing a more vital research culture throughout these universities which in turn, fails to utilize the talents and contributions of scholars and ultimately, frustrates the rich contribution these universities can make to knowledge production and social justice.

## 8.2 ACCESS TO SCHOLARLY RESOURCES

When comparing the three institutions in my study, the evidence indicates that Rhodes University is better endowed in the area of scholarly resources. Fort Hare occupies the other end of the spectrum, with UPE being located somewhere midway, although closer to Rhodes. Rhodes has a well-established infrastructure with good access to IT, library holdings and other research resources. Residences are in good condition and construction was completed on the 3.5 million rands Mandela Hall, consisting of four new student residences, a warden's residence, dining hall and kitchen in 2003 (Annual Review, 2003). Students found the laboratory managers in the science faculties supportive in ensuring adequate supplies of equipment, materials and chemicals. Generally, academic and graduate student participants at Rhodes claimed they were happy with their access to scholarly resources which, they found, supported their research activities. Graduate students often had access to shared office space, equipped with computers, printers and telephones.

In contrast and as described in chapter six, Fort Hare faced tremendous resource constraints in all areas: financial resources; human resources such as inadequate supervision of graduate students; physical resources such as computers and laboratory equipment; infrastructure such as student residences and laboratories that are in a state of disrepair; and scholarly resources such as library facilities, serial holdings and books. At Fort Hare, students had no access to their own office space or equipment, and they had inadequate access to computers and the Internet. While UPE had good infrastructure, facilities, laboratories and IT such as computers and Internet --the latter not being up to the standard of Rhodes-- their access to library resources, particularly serial holdings, was dismal. According to some participants at UPE and Fort Hare, access to resources such as printers, laboratory equipment and supplies, administrative support and student supervision, was not adequate. In the sections that follow, I contrast and compare the universities' access to IT, library resources -- print and electronic journals and staff -- interlibrary loan systems, library

orientation and information literacy programmes. I consider, too, the creative responses of researchers to circumvent their limited access and I examine other research resource constraints encountered by researchers.

### **8.2.1 Access to IT**

At Rhodes, all academics had their own computers and all students had access to computers because most faculties had computer laboratories. Smaller faculties usually shared computer laboratories with other related faculties. In addition, the IT department provided the necessary human and technical expertise to support the use of computers across the campus. Student rooms in all residences were wired in 2003. Whereas academics at Fort Hare had access to their own computers, there were only a few computers available for student use (see Table 5 below). A further problem encountered by most academics and student participants was poor Internet connections and frequent incidents when the “lines were down.” The IT manager, however, refuted the claim amongst some academics and students that the connections were bad. He charged that the users need to improve their computer literacy skills and be more careful about computer viruses.

At UPE, similarly, all academics had access to computers, but only a limited number of computers was available to students, since only a few departments housed their own computer laboratories. Some students complained that Internet connections were slow. On the positive side, though, whereas previously students had to pay for Internet access, students were given free access to the Internet in late 2002. Rhodes, on the other hand, places a levy on student fees that contributes towards the cost of providing extensive computer access.

The Fort Hare Library had 73 computers with Internet connections, yet only the librarians used these computers (see Table 5). Librarians conducted searches on behalf of academics and students, who had little direct access to these computers. Effectively this meant that these computers were hardly used because the library was so short-staffed. The UPE library, similarly, had 94 computers with Internet connections but only 8 of these were

available for use by the students. Academics usually conducted their searches in their offices or requested the librarians to do so on their behalf. The Rhodes library had approximately 102 computers with Internet connections used by librarians and academics, 49 of these being available for public use, including students. Whereas academics at the HWUs have long had their own computers with World Wide Web access, it was only in 2002 that all academics at Fort Hare received computers with World Wide Web access as one of the projects of the new management at Fort Hare. Initially, the quality of the connections remained problematic resulting in slow and/or aborted connections. The bandwidth was increased significantly in 2002, a reason for the IT manager's refuting staff claims about faulty or slow connections.

Table 5. Library computers with Internet connections

<b>University</b>	<b>FORT HARE</b>	<b>UPE</b>	<b>RHODES</b>
Computers with Internet connections, 2002	73	94	102
Student use	0	8	49 (including public)
Faculty use	0	0	nil

For researchers and librarians, developments in IT and access to the Internet have been among the most profound changes they have experienced. Academics and graduate students have found these changes liberating and empowering. Individuals across the universities shared how rewarding this access has been for their research activities and their lives in general. For Miso, it meant 24-hour access to research literature, which allowed him to remain in touch with the latest developments in his field, while Massey pointed out that for e-journals, unlike print journals, several users can have access simultaneously. The following remarks made by academics demonstrate the effect Internet has had on the academe: "I don't know what I would do if I don't have access, it is just unreal how dependent I have become on a computer and the Internet" (I: Ronelle), and "Without the World Wide Web it would

also in fact be difficult to imagine undertaking research... the advent of ... e-mail has fundamentally changed research in that one is able to access information and literature, at a very, very rapid pace and that is an understatement" (I: Goodall). IT access appeared to be a major boon for researchers at Fort Hare, allowing them to use the Internet to circumvent the very limited access to library resources (I: Zukov).

Not only has the Internet provided amazing opportunities for researchers to conduct searches and access research materials online, but it has also provided the opportunity for online publishing, participation in global scholarly networks, and other teaching and research activities, as well as communicating and corresponding with colleagues, students and professional bodies, locally, nationally and internationally (I: Anna; Donna; Duane; Haines; Sara). Zukov found that the Internet made it easier for him to publish in an online open access chemistry journal, *Arkivoc*, which publication once reviewed, is immediately available online. Pat enjoyed online discussion forums with colleagues in Australia, while Beryl collaborated with South American counterparts (see chapter four).

Sara, for example, found that it was "fabulous" that she could use the Internet not only to access policy and journals but for her teaching purposes as well, such as receiving assignments as attachments. With the Internet she can download and send articles to her students who, because of their distance from the university, are unable to access the library on a regular basis. Sara was involved in a new project with the provincial education department that looked at the role that could be played by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) across the curriculum for teachers.

The Internet also enabled disadvantaged researchers within the institutions to overcome their sense of marginalization. The head librarian at Fort Hare explains that rural students arriving at Fort Hare, have most likely never visited a library in their lives, often feel safer with electronic rather than card catalogues or with having to approach the librarian for assistance because they are not under the gaze of knowers: "With computers, whether the

response is wrong you'll get a response and its easier for you to... ask a person next to you or to ask a staff member... it puts you more or less on the same level as other people" (I: Thandi). A black academic and PhD student at Rhodes claimed that she felt intimidated and embarrassed to admit her lack of search skills to the white librarian, who she believed wielded much power because of her access to information. Toni explains that she avoided face-to-face contact with the librarian and resorted to communicating with her via email and conducting independent searches on the Internet. In this way, she did not need to reveal her lack of search skills. At the same time, as she proceeded independently, she found that she was improving her information literacy skills. Thus, it would seem that the Internet provides a safety net for marginalized individuals wishing to access knowledge away from the gaze of those who appear to be the guardians of that knowledge and whom they believe might judge their technical skills, or lack thereof, too harshly.

### **8.2.2 Library resources**

In this section, I discuss the serial holdings, print and electronic of the three university libraries because journals are of particular importance to the production of knowledge in most fields of study. Furthermore, updated holdings are crucial for the production of cutting edge research. I discuss as well interlibrary loans systems, library orientation and information literacy programmes and creative responses to the paucity of library resources.

#### ***Journals***

Two of the three universities have experienced a sharp decline in library serial holdings (see Table 6). Fort Hare was most severely affected with by journal subscriptions being cancelled across the disciplines due to financial constraints. As noted in chapter six, not a single new book had been acquired over a period of six years since 1997. At UPE, journal subscriptions had declined by 51 % over the last decade with the most significant decrease (24 %) taking place between 2002 and 2003 due to the unfavourable foreign exchange rates between 2001 and 2002.

Table 6. Serial holdings by university in print and online, 1997 and 2002

University	FORT HARE	UPE	RHODES
1997 - Number of print subscriptions	850	1559	1300 (approx)*
2002 - Number of print subscriptions	462	1057	1300
Percentage change for print subscriptions	45.6 % decrease	32.2 % decrease	Same
2002 Database subscriptions**	14	13	21

\*Accurate figures of print subscriptions over the five-year period were not available.

\*\* NB These databases, for example Ebscohost, allow for access to multiple journals.

The natural sciences bore the brunt of these decreases because science journals were more expensive than journals from other disciplines (I: Murray; Myburgh; Piet). The botany journal holding, for example, declined from 40 journals in 1997 to a mere 2 journals in 2003 (I: Myburgh). Computer science and information science journals had declined from 50 to approximately 10 (I: Piet), while mathematics journals had dropped from 10 to three (I: Jeevan). Although the academics and librarians at all three institutions place a premium on the value of research literature for teaching, supervising postgraduate students, conducting and publishing research, and providing counsel to public bodies, at Fort Hare and UPE they have had to contend with this lack of access to scholarly resources (Survey). By contrast, Rhodes, an institution traditionally recognized for its research output, has managed to increase its journal holdings because of a shift to electronic holdings.

Participants at Rhodes described their access to journals as adequate to good, at UPE as adequate to poor, and at Fort Hare as poor. The field with the highest journal subscriptions was social sciences for Fort Hare, life and physical sciences for the UPE, and the humanities for Rhodes. Science and technology were among the disciplines with the lowest percentage of journal subscriptions among all three universities.

Contrary to the common assumption of academics and graduate students, the decline in access to journals at Fort Hare and UPE did not result from decreased funding to the library but from the rising cost of subscriptions in conjunction with unfavourable exchange rates (I: Thandi, Verster). Unfortunately, the scarcity of funds and budgetary priorities at these universities did not allow for allocations that would remove the deficits created by the exorbitant costs of journals and the exchange rate. Reasons for the declining access to scholarly resources at UPE and Fort Hare went beyond the financial capacity of the individual universities. Librarians and academics at UPE and Fort Hare contended that decision-making around the allocation of resources seemed to indicate that management had placed a low priority on research output. While this might have been the case until recently, there are indications that this will change in the future, as discussed below.

Electronic access to journals has been well received by most participants. They cited the relative ease of wider access to scholarship and the saving of time as the main advantages of electronic journals. In addition, several users may access an e-journal simultaneously, whereas print journals can only be consulted by one user at a time. For those who have access to the Internet at home, research may be conducted outside of library hours. However, for UPE, electronic subscriptions were not a panacea to declining access. They were found to be more expensive than print packages and, despite the larger number of titles provided through online bundling of journals by the major publishers, the electronic packages often did not include specific journals preferred by the academics at UPE (I: librarians). Some academics at Rhodes were not too happy with using e-resources alone. De Vos, for example, was concerned that scholars might lose the art of browsing library shelves for books. Sara was concerned that ICT contributes to what she called the "butterfly brain syndrome" because one can follow hyperlinks without making the necessary mental associations or without synthesizing the information.

Participants also pointed to the anomaly that African journals are published in the West and sold back to African universities at exorbitant prices, making them unaffordable, a practice they described as the imperialisation of knowledge. Researchers at UPE and Fort Hare were dismayed with the declining access to journals, indicated in their expressions as follows: “a major headache”; “a big problem”; “inadequate”; “outdated, predated”; “a waste of time and money”; “a mess”; “I don’t even bother to go” (UPE); “shambles”; “outdated”; “books are not even there”; “like a school library”; “makes you feel inadequate, less than mediocre, sub-mediocre”; “I have not been to that library in many years now” (UFH).

Nevertheless, there are success stories, too, for these universities. Librarians pointed out that the historically low priority given to the library at UPE might soon change because the new Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), under whose portfolio the library now falls, recognize the importance of building the research profile at UPE and the crucial role of the library in contributing to research capacity. At Fort Hare, subscriptions to Ebscohost, which grants access to over 3,000 journals, and Science-Direct, with 1,700 Elsevier journals, have been a triumphant boost for access to scholarly resources. As a result of the increased bandwidth and the university being multi-licensed, researchers can now obtain access from anywhere on campus. As described in chapter five, there have been initiatives to train students to use computers and search engines more effectively and students are taking to electronic catalogues more readily (I: Thandi). It is necessary to note that, in some instances, access to resources also appears to be contingent on departments. For example, a graduate student in the department of agriculture at Fort Hare claimed that he had no complaints about library access, whereas postgraduate students from other departments claimed that access ranged from poor to non-existent.

Rhodes presents an interesting counterpoint to the experiences of UPE and Fort Hare, as its library holdings have grown in the five-year period since 1997. While better access to

funding and the long history over which they have been able to build a good library collection have contributed to Rhodes' excellent scholarly resources, there are other important factors too that need specifying since they may be extended to the other universities as well. The success of the library may also be attributed to the creative initiative of the head librarian and other staff. The library led the way for digitization at Rhodes and thus received the recognition and respect of senior management and faculty. In addition, the head librarian is a member of the central budgetary committee that consists of only the most senior managers at the institutions. In this capacity, she is able to lobby for library funding. Although the serials librarian works part-time only, one of her tasks is to explore ways of negotiating cheaper journal subscriptions, for example, by circumventing the agent to buy directly from publishers.

One way in which South African universities have overcome the limited access to scholarly resources is to form national and provincial consortia of university libraries. There were almost no endeavors, however, to form regional African library consortia, a method used by other jurisdictions for securing greater access to journals (DfID, 1999).

### *African journals*

Invariably, African journals were considered less important than international journals at the HWUs, but equally important at the HBU. The survey conducted showed that on average 80 percent of the holdings of these universities consisted of international (Western) journals, whereas only 20 percent comprised African journals, these being mainly South African journals.

Only two of the participants interviewed at UPE claimed that they used African journals (I: Grant; William). William accessed the African Digital Library which allowed him free access to African publications. Grant, an established researcher in the Geography department, pointed to the long-standing problems affecting access to African journals such as irregular publishing and unavailability in South Africa:

We still have the Zimbabwean (journal) coming down irregularly, but I am afraid the East African ones ceased publication in 1970. We never managed to get subscription going to Nigerian journals, which again is irregular and one tends to consult those when you go to London... I suspect it is probably along similar lines to the East African Geographer, that it comes out irregularly and how do you pay. At least the Zimbabwean one has been a regular publication... (I would) rather go to London to read a Nairobi journal. It is rather unfortunate that in actual fact the material which comes out in Africa is quite small and, as with people in South Africa, if you want to publish in British or America journals. They have the real monopoly in publication.

Hence, it seems easier for him to obtain African journals in London than in South Africa since British publishers have a monopoly over publishing in African journals. As noted in chapters four and five, however, participants associated the lack of access to African journals to a lack of an Africa-focus at the HWUs (see Celine, Bonang, Kabiru, Simon).

### *Human Resources*

The paucity of financial resources and neoliberal reforms resulted in staff shortages at all three universities, most acutely at Fort Hare. Globalization and the opening of South African markets and trade have resulted in greater mobility of skilled people. One of the phenomenons of globalization is what is commonly referred as the "brain drain." In South Africa academics and hence the research capacity from the higher education sector is often lost to the private sector, government and even other countries.

The Fort Hare library, for example had lost two librarians to Singapore whereas UPE had lost computer and information scientists. As senior academic Piet pointed out, this results in a permanent loss of academic expertise in certain areas, especially since no new staff has been appointed in their place:

If you look at what's happening in just our department, the number of top researchers that have left and gone overseas due to the brain drain is tremendous... good researchers have left the country. I'm sitting with three colleagues who are working for Microsoft in America... The point is those skills are gone; I don't have access to those skills anymore.

Inevitably, the libraries at all three universities were short-staffed resulting in existing staff having to bear heavy workloads. Vacancies could not be filled because of a lack of finances.

Existing staff was expected to fulfill a number of functions. For example, at Fort Hare the periodicals librarian was also a subject librarian and a cataloguer, while at UPE, Rita performed the job of three people - serials librarian, head of lending services and manager of IT systems. The periodicals section at Rhodes, on the other hand, had two part-time staff members and one fulltime (I: Serfontein). As Rita at UPE contended, "We've got a staff capacity problem". Rita expressed her frustration at not being able to achieve her aspirations for IT systems at UPE in her first language, Afrikaans:

'Ons kon dit lank al baie verder gewees het maar jy kan net so veel in jou dag doen'<sup>46</sup> – that is our problem. The willingness is there and the knowledge is there but we just do not have the people... There are six faculties... what can three and a half librarians do for six faculties?... We haven't got a programme, we haven't got a system. So we have to do the research, we have to try and run the departments, we have to come and train the staff, we have to try and introduce a new system... With more (staff) the information librarian has got more time to train, to assess, to organise the links to the journals and the information and put it on... for the users.

The librarians at this university were committed and eager to provide quality services for researchers, as can be gleaned from their understanding of their roles and aspirations for the future (see below). However, it will not be possible for them to realise these goals within the existing conditions under which they work. Unfortunately, there is a further loss to UPE in that their existing skills --for building research capacity through improved knowledge management-- are not being used optimally.

### *Interlibrary loan*

Given the constrained access to scholarly resources, academics and postgraduate students have to depend heavily on interlibrary loan systems. Whereas some researchers described the system as "working very well," "efficient," "excellent" and "very happy with," others complained about the costs of retrieving articles which, they claimed, was a further drain on their limited research funding. Academics Charmaine and Xolile, for instance, complained that almost all their meager research funds was spent on interlibrary loans (Is). Articles

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<sup>46</sup> In English: "We could have been much further along in this, but you can only do so much in a day."

retrieved internationally cost 110 rands while books cost 200 rands each (I: Charmaine, Grant, Stella, William, Xolile). Postgraduate students in particular found they could ill afford the costs, especially for articles from overseas. Vanita found that she had to “make do” without international papers which, she believed, compromised her research and was a constant source of concern for her.

Ronelle and Jeevan found that the turn around time was short, approximately two weeks, and that the librarians were very helpful, always willing to conduct searches on their behalf (I: Bonang; Feziwe; Gumede; Ronelle;). Others however, found the system “time-consuming,” taking anything from two weeks to one month, especially for overseas articles, to arrive. One student explained the frustrations she was experiencing with such a system.

Sometimes when I get that book, my study is not there. I have moved on and I am busy with other areas. Sometimes I feel I have wasted their [librarian's] time because I will refer maybe to a paragraph or two, but if I had made contact with that information from the beginning, I would have learned more. It posed [frustration] and it limits you and it makes you make wrong choices because the tendency is that you are driven by the text (that is available) to make decisions. By the time you get, maybe things that are brilliant . . . you have closed your mind and made your choice and that is how you are going to do your research. So in a way I would say ‘yes, it does limit one.’ (I: Toni)

Toni was from the EL campus of Rhodes where even the head librarian expressed dissatisfaction with this system because they had to wait for books routed via the main library in Grahamstown (I: Toni, head librarian).

The slow pace of and the administration involved in securing interlibrary loans placed additional stress on graduate students who have to keep track of the loans. Science students found it particularly difficult to find this time because they had to spend long hours in the laboratories (I: Macy; Muriel). As Muriel put it: “It is such a pain to try and get them, such a lot of administration. You don’t want to be spending so much time trying to get a journal. You spend enough time researching which articles to get”. Peliswa had similar experiences: “Like this term I started, it took me a month... I probably had 15 journals to get and I probably have received five”. These views, expressed by others like Mbuyo and Siphos as

well, show that while interlibrary loan systems have worked well over the years, they have shortcomings, which, according to the students cited above, may indeed have a significant effect on the final research product.

### ***Library orientation and information literacy***

Researchers and librarians believed that existing facilities and resources were not being used optimally because many academics and postgraduate students did not have sufficient computer and information literacy skills to conduct advanced searches for print or electronic resources. Many incoming students were not computer or information literate either. This, librarians claimed, was particularly acute among some black academics and the majority of black postgraduate students who had little or no access to libraries or technology outside of the university. Miso noted with concern that most students at Fort Hare would not have had access to computers prior to being enrolled at Fort Hare. He was hopeful that the computer literacy programme would provide them with adequate skills to make better use of available resources.

Whereas white academics and students reported having access to online connections both at the university and at home, most black academics and students had no access to these facilities at home. Some academics at Fort Hare had only recently acquired computers, whereas many white students have had access to computers at secondary school level, and were therefore more empowered to conduct their research. Black academics were sometimes reluctant to admit their lack of search skills to the mostly white librarians at the HWUs. As noted in chapter five, a black academic, who felt embarrassed about admitting her lack of search skills to the librarians, reiterated the empowering effect electronic access has had on her, enabling her to conduct searches in the privacy and comfort of her office, away from the intimidating gaze of the librarians. Whereas some students found the librarians very helpful in conducting searches on their behalf, Kabiru pointed out that this prevented them from being empowered to develop these search skills by themselves:

The one particular lady there was quite useful, but I think I found, perhaps because she was impatient with me, in fact she did it all for me, you know, instead of showing me. She sat across the desk and ... "what do you want?" - and did the printouts... I felt I was not learning the skills... I don't know whether that was racism or just impatience with me or that kind of thing. I think it is something to do with time. I don't know whether it was timesaving.

Library orientation programs, consisting of hour-long sessions, were found to be inadequate for equipping students with necessary information and skills to use the facilities efficiently. An academic noted with concern that whereas students are taught to write, little effort is put into teaching them how to retrieve information (I: Beryl).

Students at the universities found these library orientation sessions "too short" and "too rushed." Toni claimed:

That is your only orientation to the library . . . It is not an individual one hour slot, but it is the whole group. Then you are offered that if you want to come back you are welcome. Yes, it is good to say that but as a student it hinders you... [They may] show me this one journal... I want different options that say if you can't find it here you will find it there. It is like they are holding the information to themselves and they are using that information against you as a student. That is how you think because it threatens you and you as a graduate student don't want to look stupid. (I: Toni)

This student, Toni, found that she had to repeat the session to gain a better understanding.

Two science graduate students at UPE claimed that they had not received any orientation on how to conduct searches for their postgraduate studies: "You are basically on your own...

When I started with honours... there was nothing on how to find information. Basically you have to find it on your own" and "I learnt as I went along" (I: Muriel & Peliswa).

Postgraduate students expressed the need to have information literacy courses during their first year either as a regular course conducted fortnightly or, as an intensive course similar to the research methods course for postgraduates. They desired a programme that would be both general and specific for different disciplines. It should be a continuous course that postgraduate students could return to for to meet further needs, such as advanced search skills. However, the librarians do not appear to have conducted a needs analysis among students. On the contrary, they continue to design once-off information literacy programmes,

rather than incorporating these programmes into existing courses, such as the research methods courses, as suggested by the students (I: Gibbs, Verster, Thandi).

Librarians contended that they were painfully aware of the need for more structured and intensive information literacy programmes, but that the lack of resources, both human and financial, precluded them from delivering such programmes (I: Rita, Sasha, Stella, Thandi). The librarian at UPE observed that the library's incapacity to manage information literacy was due also to the rapid increase in information over the last few years. Librarians pointed out that some academics required information literacy programmes as much as students do. They believed that academics, especially older academics, felt threatened by IT and avoided its use. A significant portion of Rita's time on a daily basis was consumed by her conducting searches on behalf of some academics who did not "know how to work these (search engines)." Ironically, the information sessions conducted at the UPE library were not well attended by academics (I: Verster). Rita suggested that academics have to wake up to the reality that IT is the medium of the future: "These people (can't) say 'IT, not now, we're not ready'. Hulle moet wakker word [They must wake up!] – because that's the reality, because that's the medium." She asserted that academics also have a responsibility for introducing students to the information world. The librarians perceived their role as intermediaries of information management (I: Rita, Serfontein, Stella, Thandi).

### *Creative responses*

The researchers and librarians at the three universities have had to discover creative ways to circumvent their limited access to research resources. Where UPE lacked laboratory equipment, arrangements were made through the support of an NRF programme, for academics to visit overseas universities for three to six months to utilize sophisticated equipment needed for their research (I: Murray).

The libraries of South African universities have established national coalition of South African Library Consortia, (COSALC) and regional consortia to enable them to

network and negotiate more favourable licensing agreements with publishers, and to increase access to scholarly publications through group licenses (I: Hester).<sup>47</sup> The South African Site Licence Initiative (SASLI) is a substructure of COSALC and is a “mouthpiece” for negotiating favourable prices for electronic subscriptions from publishers (I: Thandi). Whereas in 2003, the head librarian at UPE claimed they could not afford the 700, 000 rands subscription for Science-Direct, in 2004 they managed to negotiate a more favourable price of 100, 000 rands through SASLI and reported that “The users are loving it and it is used extensively. We had to repeat the training course in Science-Direct four times already” (Verster, personal communication, September, 2004). As noted, the librarian at Rhodes spends considerable time trying to circumvent the major publishing agents such as SWETS by approaching publishers directly for more favourable prices (I: Serfontein). Serfontein finds that Rhodes is able to save up to 30-40 % in this way. The universities in the Eastern Cape belong to the regional consortia known as, South East African Libraries (SEALS), which does not appear to have been successful in creating a space for librarians to share the creative responses they have developed in overcoming constraints to scholarly resources. The librarians at UPE, for instance, were eager for additional information to overcome the tremendous constraints they experience, and stated that they would welcome information from Rhodes (I: Hester; Rita). Rhodes, on the other hand, claimed that they had tried to work with others to share, for example, their success in approaching publishers directly, but that the other libraries did not appear too keen on the prospect. Since they were short-staffed at Rhodes anyway, they believed they had to get on with their work. The consortia may thus have to ensure that they create a space for these kinds of discussions. If meetings of the SEALS consortia are bogged down with licences and other national matters, perhaps individual libraries should forge informal bilateral or trilateral arrangements in the meantime.

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<sup>47</sup> There are five regional consortia operational in South Africa.

The creative responses of individual researchers at the universities have included: ordering articles directly from publishers, subscribing to journals individually, acquiring literature overseas when attending conferences, and requesting colleagues studying abroad to retrieve literature on their behalf (I: Grant). The most common approach adopted was to request copies directly from the authors (I: Beryl; Pat; Ramdass). Unfortunately, not many students appeared to be aware of this approach, which they might have found useful as an alternative method of securing much needed literature. This indicates a need for more mentoring and support for students. Some students in the science and arts departments at UPE and Fort Hare relied on the private libraries of their supervisor or department heads (I: Fatuh; Gumbi; Myburgh; Ruth). Others asked friends at other universities to retrieve materials on their behalf (I: Emma; Muriel, Siphon).

A few academics, including those with better access to funding, subscribed to journals privately (I: Derek; Pat; Ramdass; William). William claimed he paid \$150 for his membership subscription to an international journal in his field. Another academic, Grant, used the opportunity when travelling overseas for conferences, to visit libraries there and gather materials:

One of the major headaches is our library. One of the great pleasures of going overseas is to get yourself into good research libraries... Interlibrary loan system works well, but it is very restricted to what is available in this country. Yes, it also costs. I must mention, I would maybe rather sit in Paris or in London reading in the library than trying desperately (to) organise interlibrary loans.

Academics and graduate students had found the free trial of the database, Science-Direct most useful (I: Brent; Muriel; Peliswa; Vanita; Xolile). According to the UPE librarian, the university was the second highest user of Science-Direct among the universities during the trial period that lasted an entire term towards the end of 2002 (I: Stella, Verster). During the trial period, academics and graduate students printed many articles off this database: "A lot of our staff utilized it. You just saw big printing, printing; the stuff was

very, very good” (I: Ronelle). One graduate student who had downloaded between 20 to 30 articles from Science Direct claimed that she would have “suffered big time” without it (I: Vanita). The librarians at UPE were hopeful that the merger between their institution, Vista University and Port Elizabeth Technikon would increase their library holdings and entitle them to a bigger allocation of funding in the future.

The initiatives taken by Fatuh, a professor at Fort Hare, to overcome resource constraints deserve mentioning again. Fatuh succeeded in building the research capacity of his department, as described in chapter six, without depending on the institution for funds and support. Except for his office, electricity and pay-slip, he attended to the rest on his own. Fatuh affected repairs to the laboratories --which were in a state of disrepair-- with snippets of funds from various sources; recruited masters, doctoral students and post doctoral students; published widely with students; built a private library in his office; encouraged his students to win research awards; developed arrangements with Rhodes and University of Pretoria to use sophisticated equipment that Fort Hare does not have and; used his home telephone and Internet facilities for work purposes. In addition, he has relied on the Internet and open access to overcome library constraints: “Because of Internet facilities, researchers don’t only rely on the library... I am very good at using the Internet for journals. If there are any free journals on the Internet, I get them” (I: Fatuh).

Fort Hare has also developed creative responses to some of its particular problems, for example, the book donations and scholarship funding received from ‘Friends of Fort Hare.’ for book donations, and a librarian scholarship fund for overseas travel for a postgraduate degree. As may be recalled, the Senate would approve new programmes and inform the library only a week prior to commencement of the new course. This severely compromised the library in being able to respond adequately and effectively to the literature needs for these courses. The librarian has since instituted a new agreement with departments whereby they cannot initiate new programmes without informing the library at least six months to a year

prior to commencement of the course. The institution has furthermore developed a proactive strategy to cope with the large number of rural students who are admitted to Fort Hare without having had prior access to a library: They have developed a programme to familiarize high school students with the library through holding various interesting historic and social exhibitions that include a session on how to use the library and care for books.

Notwithstanding these creative responses to library resources, there were further research constraints experienced by researchers at the three universities as discussed in the following section.

### **8.2.3 Further research constraints**

The main constraint facing researchers across the three institutions was time. Inevitably, the increased teaching load resulting from the increase in student numbers without any corresponding increase in academic staff, meant that researchers had less time for research. As Ronelle put it, staff was “under-resourced” (and) “overworked,” yet they were being “pushed” to do research by management because funding depended on research output. In one department at UPE, for example, the undergraduate student enrolment had increased by 15 % and the postgraduate enrolment had increased by 100 % in 2002. In some departments, like science, academics also had to supervise students in the laboratory or field (I: Charmaine; Pat). Other academic activities and conditions that placed further constraints on research time included: fundraising for research; increased administration duties arising from managerialism and entrepreneurialism; increased participation in senior management and Senate for senior academics; the admission of larger numbers of weaker students from disadvantaged communities who required more time and support and, community involvement as a result of socially relevant research.

Piet suggested that a system similar to that used by overseas universities be adopted, whereby academics taught for half the year and conducted research during the remaining half year. It seemed that a similar system was already operational in some departments at UPE.

Pat, a Top 20 researcher, who found that there was insufficient time available for conducting research and supervising her postgraduate students in the field, changed her schedule so that she only teaches three out of four terms a year, devoting one term to research.

Although Celine approved of the new teaching methodologies that were part of the new policies --such as continuous assessment-- believing that it was beneficial to her students, she also found them time-consuming:

I am very much in favour of the new teaching policy... especially continuous assessment. It takes up a lot of our time. In the past we would have one semester and then they write exams and that is it. So then you had more time to do bits of research here and there but now... and really it is for our students' well-being. I know it is to their benefit. They have research projects themselves, so in that sense at least it teaches them.... the basics of research but you have to mark. Funding for student assistance is limited and also you don't want to let student assistants loose on your students... They need proper attention.

Most academics found that aside from sabbatical leave and vacations, weekends afforded the only other time available for research (I: Charmaine; Ronelle; William).

The unavailability of funds was a major constraint, especially for younger academics and students. UPE appeared to allocate the largest portion of its research funds to the Top 20 researchers, a strategy that may work against building the research capacity among a new generation of researchers. Rhodes, on the other hand, has a mentoring programme for younger researchers, whereby senior researchers support budding researchers both by mentoring them and by generating publishing funds that support the mentoring programme. As will be demonstrated in chapter ten, black academics have missed funding opportunities (Thuthuka funding) as a result of existing practices or a lack of information at UPE, which they perceive as discrimination and marginalisation. Whereas senior academics believed that there was no shortage of funding for research, younger black academics believed that UPE did not have the funds to support research, especially not the research of both old and new academics. As Charmaine attested in an interview cited in chapter ten: "One of the main constraints... as a young researcher we do not have financial support yet... you might like to

start your own direction. How do you get funds from UPE? Funding is nowhere near enough to run a project at all”.

Universities like UPE will have to evaluate current research funding policies and devise ways of ensuring that unduly discriminatory ideas about research ‘quality’ do not continue to work against developing a more vital research culture. This, in turn, undermines the equity policies and fails to utilize the talents and contributions of a new generation of scholars (see chapter ten). A particular constraint faced by black academics was the time and energy individuals expend in dealing with embedded discriminatory practices and transformation issues. These issues, which are further addressed in a forthcoming chapter, ranged from quelling unfounded prejudices of colleagues, resisting being marginalised in terms of appointments or promotions, to acting as informal watchdogs of the transformation project.

As discussed earlier in this dissertation, some academics and many students at UPE and Fort Hare found that administration was not supportive. Graduate students shared their frustrations about the slow, inefficient processing of bursary payments. Not only did these problems consume their research time, but it also meant that they did not have money to support their research, for example, photocopying and other mundane needs, such as their rent. Students at Fort Hare complained about the overall lack of institutional support for graduate students such as a lack of bursaries, information on funding and supervision. One student pointed out the irony that despite many students not having easy access to computers and the Internet, the Govan Mbeki Research Institute publicized bursary and scholarship information electronically. One of the staff members at the institute pointed out that her workload did not allow her to provide further help to the students. It would appear that the institute is severely short-staffed and that additional staff may have to be recruited to make good the promise of building research capacity at the university.

As can be seen from the previous section, there are other constraints that researchers face aside from the paucity of access to scholarly resources such as IT, journals and books. Time appears to be the most severe constraint and is linked to the general lack of financial resources, particularly for UPE and Fort Hare. Employing larger numbers of academic and library staff would help to resolve the problem, but the resources for this are not readily available. This situation is exacerbated by the national department's apparent inability to roll out the funding allocations promised to these universities, efficiently and in accordance within the set time frames.

As noted in chapter six, Fort Hare, as a consequence of the huge debt inherited from previous administrations, does not have excess finance that allows for expenditure prior to claiming the funds back from the DNE. Yet, this is the process the DNE expects them to follow. Thus, Fort Hare finds itself in an unenviable 'catch 22' situation. It can only claim from the allocated budget based on expenses incurred and payments made, yet it does not have the funds to make such payments in the first place. Moreover, the DNE has a tedious, drawn-out process for rolling out these funds. Consequently, these delays in processing claims seriously hamper the efficient running of the universities. Senior managers, like the directors of finance and even Vice Chancellors in some cases, spend an inordinate amount of time trying to access these funds, time that would and should be put to better use within the administration and management of the institution itself. In this way, national government is in fact undermining its own policies.

The difficulties that this slow processing of university funds causes was made apparent in a public speech made by the Vice Chancellor, Derrick Swartz of Fort Hare noted above: "Bureaucrats who were put in place to implement government policy often throttle the process... The state has a responsibility to finance public institutions... Fort Hare is not a private university" (March, 2004). He stated that the next generation of South Africans could not be trained without higher education institutions receiving adequate funding from the state.

According to Swartz, “pushing universities into marketization contradicts and undermines” what Fort Hare stands for, namely, its social commitment. He asserts that the “plans for a renaissance of Fort Hare cannot be realised without state funding as promised” (Swartz, March, 2004). Under such circumstances, he continues, it is impossible to call upon students to do research, or for the university to find the funds to repair buildings. He agrees that the university must become entrepreneurial “but for other expenditure, not the basic funding of the university, since market funding cannot be a substitute for what is a core responsibility of the state” (Swartz, March, 2004). Universities have to coalesce to consider finding ways of making the department honour the funding policies in a way that does not hamper their functioning or prevent them from fulfilling their role and mission as institutions of higher learning. In addition, UPE and Fort Hare may want to follow Rhodes’ lead in building their research profile to attract committed and long-term funders, both private and industrial. They also need to examine ways to commercialise their research without compromising their commitment to community service and social development.

### **8.3 DISCUSSION**

Given the high expectations that South Africa has of its higher education sector in contributing to knowledge production as one important way of promoting the new social order, not all the universities in this study have the necessary resource access and capacity to fulfill their roles as agents of the transformation. As has been the case for most of Africa and the developing world, there is a lack of adequate resources for producing knowledge and making innovative interventions.

#### **8.3.1 Access to IT**

South Africa’s national policies emphasise the role of growth and development as a means to redress existing inequities. As noted in chapter one, technology and innovation are among four factors, the remaining two being knowledge and higher education, that are important for the growth and development of societies. As Jones (2000) points out communications and

information technologies drive globalization and render players more and more dominant and leaving those who “refuse to ‘play ball’ isolated and... at a comparative disadvantage” (p. 30).<sup>48</sup> The importance of technology and its relation to research is emphasised in the White Paper (1997) as discussed earlier in chapter two.

The question to be asked is: Are the participants in a position to ‘play ball’? In this study, all institutions had access to IT to varying degrees. The problem is not merely access to, but also the effective and optimum use of IT. At Fort Hare, for example, students were not allowed to use the available computers. Furthermore, many students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds and older academics appeared to lack the necessary computer and information literacy skills to use the resources efficiently. This demonstrated that training in computer and information literacy was essential for improving the research productivity of both students and staff, so that students, in particular, can learn how to use computers independently of the librarians. It is no surprise that at Rhodes, the university with the highest research output among the three universities, the computers were being used not only by students, but by the public as well. Perhaps the remaining two universities should also make such facilities more readily available to users so that they may develop the skills to use them independently of the librarians who are already stretched to capacity.

Notwithstanding these problems, the participants were exhilarated about the role IT played in their research activities. They claimed it was amongst the most liberating changes they had experienced, serving to extend their horizons and allowing them not only to overcome constrained access to scholarly journals, but also to participate in online publishing, global scholarly networks, and other teaching and research activities. Previously disadvantaged students found the Internet empowering, because it allowed them to overcome

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<sup>48</sup> This is a play on the term ‘comparative advantage’, which in economics parlance means a country should produce more of the goods they are efficient in producing for exportation, and, import those goods that they can produce only at a higher cost (see Eswara & Kotwal, 1999, p. 82, 85, also Rodrik, 1997). This allows for gains from trade (Rodrik, 1999a, p.26).

feelings of marginalisation and alienation within the academy so that they could continue with their research activities.

As was discussed earlier, the Internet can be empowering for marginalized groups and individuals. Although Toni expressed concern that technological innovations would increase the digital divide in South Africa, between the advantaged (white) and disadvantaged (black) people, as a black woman academic at an HWU, she found the Internet to be a tool of empowerment. For Toni, the advantages of technology were not merely a matter of the speed and reach provided by the Internet (Willinsky, 2000, p. 196). As noted above, the Internet allowed Toni to distance herself from what she perceived as the hegemony and hostility of the librarians. Through the Internet, she was empowered by the multiple identities she desired; an academic of the university, a professional black person, a master's graduate from Stellenbosch University and a PhD candidate, identities that the librarians either did not or refused to recognise. Whereas the librarians made her feel excluded and marginalized, the Internet gave her a sense of belonging and connectedness to the world of academia (see also Lam, 2000, as cited in Canagarajah, 2004). Through her imagination, she was able to transcend her immediate environment and expand her identities to include "other meanings, other possibilities and other perspectives" (Wenger, 1998, p. 178).

The kind of dilemma that the digital divide posed for Toni, has been well noted by scholar Willinsky (2000, p. 2). Willinsky argues that while technology may have made things easier and faster for faculty, it may have also exacerbated the knowledge gap between the developed and developing world in ways that affect the developing nations' ability to participate in the knowledge economy and undermines the very sustainability of their development (2000, p. 2). He warns that too little attention has been paid to this problem. Despite her dilemma, Toni recognizes that technology is here to stay and that it would be in the interests of developing nations, like South Africa, to focus on increasing technological

access and know-how, especially for the younger generation.<sup>49</sup> These views are consistent with those of the librarians at UPE and Fort Hare who claimed that technology is here to stay, that it is an integral part of the future and that the younger generation, including those from the most disadvantaged rural areas who may not have had prior access to a microwave oven or escalator, do in fact take to technology “like ducks to water”, as noted before.

Notably, for the younger generation to benefit from technology, they need to be empowered with the necessary computer and information literacy skills. Toni believed that capacity building programmes can teach people not only how to use technology but also how to value, maintain and manage it. She suggested, like many other postgraduate students in this study, that this training be included in postgraduate course work, like the research methods course, because advanced search methods for successful retrieval of pertinent information are important for conducting research. Given the complaints registered by academics and students at Fort Hare and the IT manager’s perspective, discussed above, it is essential that he and the librarians design programmes to build capacity among staff and students to become more competent users of technology. The resource constraint currently being experienced to implement such programmes might be overcome by approaching the private telecommunications or technology sector for funds to institute such programmes.

Toni points out that people will be more interested in technology and in funding technology (e.g., government), if we inculcate a culture of valuing technology amongst policy makers, practitioners and the public. Her rationale is that if people value technology, they will attend to its maintenance, management and security. While this was not a problem at her university, it has been a problem at HBUs in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa.

Another concern about Internet access was the possibility of information overload, the difficulty of consulting references while reading online, and issues of plagiarism. Willinsky aptly terms the condition of having too much information and little sense of where to go with

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<sup>49</sup> See example of the “e-village” discussed below.

it as “our current epistemological malaise” (2000, p. 16). A possible answer to this might be participants’ suggestion that users receive capacity building in advanced search skills and that friendlier web pathways and links are developed. New approaches for organizing knowledge through metadata classification systems are being designed even as I write. These innovations will allow for the automatic referencing and indexing of documents posted on the web (Willinsky, 2000, p. 226). XML (Extensible Markup Language) tags, for example, will enable the retrieval of documents anywhere according to research topic, method, location of study (op cit.). Willinsky cites the example of a search engine that will assist in dealing with unreliable and un-refereed publications. The Clever Project search engine is designed to identify recognized works (2000, p. 189).

With regard to plagiarism, electronic publishing may well change the way we view ownership and plagiarism in the future. Pennycook argues that plagiarism is a complex issue and that “the clearly defined lines between the borrowed and the original (are) starting to fade in a new era of electronic intertextuality” (1996, p. 212). Furthermore, the Internet also makes it easier to detect plagiarism. Despite these concerns, participants generally have found Internet access to be empowering; “It gives you an open door to learning”, says Toni..

### **8.3.2 Library holdings**

Access to the latest international research through updated serial holdings and other research literature is the key to producing cutting edge research and finding innovative solutions to the range of social and development problems facing South Africa. Universities cannot be expected to produce cutting edge research when academics and students do not have access to the latest research in their respective disciplines. Of the three universities studied herein, only Rhodes had adequate access to journal holdings, with access at UPE and Fort Hare having declined sharply in recent years. Journals in discipline areas that are crucial for innovation and development --science and technology-- have suffered the most. The costs of electronic journal subscriptions have also been prohibitive. Fort Hare, in particular, had not

acquired a new book in six years. The interlibrary loan system, although an essential resource facility in higher education over the years, is not without its problems. The process can be slow and this might impact negatively on the quality of research produced, as noted in the findings above.

Another consequence of inadequate resources has been understaffing, both of librarians and academics. Librarians cannot find the time to train academics and students on how to use existing scholarly resources and facilities optimally. This creates a double jeopardy; not only are the libraries limited in scholarly resources, but existing materials are not being used efficiently and optimally. As some participants wisely observed, information literacy programs should be integrated with the coursework, but additional human resources will be required to conduct the training. UPE needs to find ways to ensure that academics and students attend the information literacy programmes they currently run. A survey should be conducted to determine reasons for non-attendance and to determine the users' training needs. This might help the librarians to design courses that are needs based and hence, might be better attended. The university may need to run a publicity campaign emphasizing the importance of information literacy as a way of improving access and empowering researchers.

It seems that, when there were cuts to spending, the libraries at all three institutions were always targeted (I: librarians; policy makers). However, one of the untapped resources of these universities, and one that holds much promise for the future, is the quality of the library staff. At all three institutions, the librarians struck me as being highly committed, and as having a sound grasp of their roles and the future of libraries in the age of information. The librarians were a reservoir of innovative ideas for improving access and the empowerment of users. I find that their skills are not being used optimally at all three universities because the financial constraints that have resulted in understaffing and severely decreased holdings, effectively prevent the librarians from realizing their goals. This, in turn,

deprived the universities of the rich contributions they can make towards developing research capacity as well as in taking the university into the digital age. Management has to pay serious attention to the role of the library in knowledge production, and seek ways of enabling librarians to play a more meaningful role, one that they want and have the capacity to play. The continued low priority given to libraries will lead to continued mediocrity of the university as a knowledge producer. The head librarians of Fort Hare and UPE, for instance should be allowed to participate in the central budget committee as the librarian at Rhodes does.

Ways of finding additional funds to appoint staff is crucial as this will enable the library to mount the necessary orientation and training programmes to ensure better and more efficient use of existing resources. Digitization is the future, as we have seen above, and new partnerships should be formed with respective government departments and the private sector in areas of telecommunications, ICTs, and Science and Technology to further these aims. For example, South Africa is involved in numerous relations with Asian countries that have advanced ICT sectors. The Department of Foreign Affairs, for example, assumes a role for developing relations among South African sectors and international counterparts in all fields, including higher education. These linkages may help as a two-way process. Universities need to investigate ways to determine the locus of such interventions, so that they may enhance and develop their research capacity. At the local level, librarians need to determine whether current consortia provide the kinds of linkages they need to assist them in overcoming the constraints they encounter at all levels. They may have to make suggestions for working groups or subgroups within SEALS where they may build networks for sharing ideas, concerns and creative responses. These networks could be extended nationally, regionally in Africa and internationally easily through the use of the Internet.

For academics, teaching has been prioritized, so that the time afforded to research is viewed as a luxury or privilege for a few only. As noted, the quality of teaching depends on

the research being generated and vice versa. Heavy teaching loads mean that these institutions are generating little research. Since most academics expressed a strong desire to have more time for research and publishing, one wonders how this constraint may affect their sense of job satisfaction, self-worth, and their identities as researchers. Already South Africa, like many African countries, is experiencing a 'brain drain.' Over the five-month initial phase of this research, two academic participants from different institutions, both in computer and information sciences, emigrated. The consequence of the 'brain drain' is that it further erodes the research and skills base of a country like South Africa. This has become a complex issue, as increasing numbers of South Africans exercise their democratic right to emigrate, a global trend for many years, as Goodall noted earlier.

#### **8.4 CONCLUSION**

The historic inequitable funding arrangements to universities, global economic trends and neoliberal reforms as a result of new policies have all affected the current access the three universities have to research resources and the ways in which this access varies for the different institutions. Constrained access, especially at UPE and Fort Hare, has seriously impinged on the research capacity of these institutions. The participants have developed a number of innovative practices to cope with these constraints, but other measures are required by both the institutions and national government, if these institutions are to play the role expected of them in producing knowledge that will contribute to growth and social redress nationally.

While all institutions had good access to IT in varying degrees, not all are using their IT equipment efficiently and optimally because many staff and students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, lacked computer and information literacy. Libraries were short-staffed and unable to conduct this much needed training that would contribute to the participants' research capacity and productivity. Existing information literacy and library

orientation programmes are insufficient and inadequate to meet the needs of researchers and a needs survey may assist the librarians in designing more pertinent and successful courses.

IT was well-acclaimed by the participants because it had enhanced their research capacity manifold and had become a tool of empowerment for many, especially those feeling marginalised or alienated within the academy. Concerns that IT will increase the gap between the rich and poor are not a crucial issue when discussed in the context of this study. The idea is to improve opportunities to scholarship and scholarly networks for those who do have access. In this study it means all participants, to varying degrees, at the three universities in this study. Toni's suggestions about teaching people to value and manage technology are pertinent to future development of knowledge producing processes and the universities' contribution to society at large because as another participant proclaimed, IT is the future.

Access to IT has also helped researchers to overcome the severe lack of access to library holdings at UPE and Fort Hare. Fort Hare's lack of access is of particular concern as students who also have limited access to IT cannot readily use the Internet to overcome their constrained access. Rhodes has made tremendous strides in digitization led by the library. No doubt Rhodes' access to better funding, when compared to the other two universities, has made this feat possible. Nevertheless, Fort Hare and UPE should place more emphasis on the digitization, using the library as a focal point for this intervention.

One of the reasons for Rhodes' acclaim as a research university is the attention to and recognition of the library's role in knowledge production and dissemination, an understanding that UPE and Fort Hare still need to realise. This is not an issue that revolves around funding alone, although that is always a factor, but a vital part of the institutions' research cultures; their orientation towards research is demonstrated by the priority they are prepared to give to building research capacity and developing their knowledge producing processes.

Human resource constraints caused by cuts to spending have affected research capacity in two ways. Researchers were losing time to teaching and administration and the innovative and creative skills of librarians in the area of information literacy training and digitization were being dissipated, as librarians were obliged to attend to other run-of-the-mill library duties. This could turn into double jeopardy as their sense of job satisfaction is reduced, and might ultimately result in greater loss to the institutions if such skilled professionals leave the profession or the relevant institution.

Nevertheless, the participants had developed innovative ways to overcome the resource constraints they encountered. Their creative responses include the establishment of regional and national library consortia that are better able to negotiate favourable licensing agreements and subscription rates for electronic subscriptions; approaching publishers directly for subscriptions rather than working through an agent; approaching authors directly for articles; making optimal use of free access to certain journals; retrieving literature during overseas trips to conferences; requesting colleagues who are traveling or studying abroad to obtain information on their behalf; and developing networks with philanthropic groups that donate literature to their library.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION**

#### **9.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the last chapter, I examined the universities' access to research resources and the effect this has on the capacity of these institutions to engage in knowledge making processes, as an important way of contributing to the new social order. I analysed access to research resources such as IT and library holdings in the main, as well as funding, facilities, equipment and support. In this chapter I examine knowledge dissemination processes and how new technologies, such as open access, may play a role in the dissemination and democratization of knowledge as a way of building research capacity and contributing to social justice.

The questions I pose are: What supports, rewards and constraints do the participants experience in publishing of their research? How does this affect their research capacity? How may new technologies such as open access journals, increase the access to and the dissemination of knowledge? What are the participants' views about extending the public domain of knowledge? I examine how discriminatory ideas about knowledge dissemination and 'quality', for instance publishing subsidies, linger in ways that work against developing a more vital research culture throughout these universities, which in turn fail to utilize the talents and contributions of scholars and ultimately frustrate the rich contribution of these universities to knowledge production and social justice.

#### **9.2 RESEARCH PUBLISHING**

Higher education in South Africa collectively constitutes a mix of teaching and research universities. Traditionally, the HBUs have been mainly teaching universities with only smatterings of research productivity being more prevalent at the two urban HBUs, namely, the University of the Western Cape and to a lesser extent, the University of Durban Westville (Cloete et al., 2002). The larger HWUs, such as UCT, Pretoria, Wits, Stellenbosch and Natal have produced the lion's share of research in South Africa over the years. As noted earlier,

Rhodes has been a significant producer of research, despite its size. Among the universities in my study, Rhodes is undoubtedly a research university as opposed to UPE and Fort Hare, which are more predominantly teaching universities.

Notwithstanding Rhodes' reputation as a research institution, almost all academics at the three universities claimed that they devoted a greater percentage of their time to teaching than research. The general paucity of financial resources for recruiting more staff has resulted in all three universities increasing the teaching loads of academics. On examining the allocation of time spent by academics on research, teaching, and administration and policy, the lowest ratio for research was 10:50:40, whereas the highest ratio was 60:20:20 (survey). On average, academics devoted only 20 to 30 % of their time to research. When asked about their visions for the future, almost all academics expressed a strong desire to have more time for conducting and publishing research.

In South Africa, as is the case globally, publishing is highly valued within the academy. Hiring, promotions, access to grants, sabbatical leave, status and power are all dependent on research output indicated by the publishing records of individual academics. Whereas research output was a criterion for additional government funding in the past, the current system has placed increased emphasis on research output, resulting in the three universities demanding greater research productivity from academics. At Rhodes, for example, sabbatical leave is contingent upon academics providing an academic plan of how they intend to utilize their sabbatical towards research productivity. On their return, they are encouraged to report on whether they have adhered to their plan. Senior academics explained that while this is not applied in a mechanical way to deprive academics of their sabbatical leave, it is an attempt to encourage them to be more productive during their sabbatical. In this sense, sabbaticals can no longer be seen as 'beach leave', i.e. vacation.

Universities receive significant government subsidies for publications in rated journals listed in the national department's list of approved journals, commonly referred to as

'nated' articles. These are mainly international journals, although many South African journals are rated as well. Universities are required to submit an annual report to the DNE recording their research output for the year as a basis for their subsidy claims. Despite new policies and the commitment to building research capacity, the old ideas about quality remain by setting, as one of the criteria for funding, publications in rated journals on the ISI Web of Science list. Not only have these standards for excellence remained, but their importance has been enhanced, and they have become the norms for a merit-based set of criteria for publishing. The challenge it presents is in the realm of research capacity for a new generation of scholars.

These criteria have led most researchers to seek to publish mainly in international journals. At the same time, some researchers experience a certain dilemma around the need to publish locally as well, where their research might be of greater interest and relevance. As one academic responded to my question about whether she preferred to publish locally or internationally: "Obviously internationally because the impact factor and the rating is just so much higher, so it's good for you" (I: Ronelle). There are four reasons for their preference for publishing in international journals: 1) To ensure that the university receives a subsidy from the DNE, 2) To improve their research ratings with the NRF, 3) To increase their job prospects such as promotions, hiring, access to grants and leave, and 4) To enhance their personal academic status and prestige. Among those I interviewed, established academics preferred to publish in international journals mainly, whereas newer academics, both black and white, claimed it was important to publish in South Africa or Africa, where their research might hold more relevance and thus serve a social purpose.

The national government's stipulation that academics publish in 'nated' journals, i.e. journal on the national education department's list of approved journals, in order to qualify for subsidies, may serve to prejudice research capacity at these universities. Firstly, it places pressures on academics to aspire towards one set of standards alone, namely, Western-based

international standards denying other sets of standards that may encourage the development of knowledge that might include local and indigenous knowledge systems and traditions. Secondly, it focuses on the development of the 'top' researchers mainly, encouraging all researchers to aspire towards one set of standards as being the 'best,' ignoring that there may be steps towards the attainment of such standards. Thirdly, it creates a dilemma for some researchers who want to publish for local consumption and perhaps in the public domain, but are forced to publish internationally as a result of these criteria. Lastly, it has made academics eschew new forms of publishing such as in open access (free to read) online journals. Other issues related to publishing include the politics of academic and commercial publishing, the cost of publishing and the time and support for publishing.

The experiences of two older and more established academics, as demonstrated earlier in this dissertation, allude to what is assumed to be a "politics" of publishing in South Africa. These academics attested that it was easier to publish internationally than locally because of "academic rivalry" amongst reviewers:

It is strange but in many ways it is easier to publish in international journals than in South African journals... South African reviewers review the articles that get published in South African journals and there is a bit of academic rivalry. Whereas the overseas articles, they get reviewed by people who might not know you at all and they basically then review the article on its merits.... As I have said we submitted articles to those (SA) journals and have been turned down. We submit exactly the same article to international journals and they accepted (them), which either says something about the international journals, but it is a well-known fact. (I: Myburgh)

Another academic claimed that "local politics" got in the way and it all depended on whom the editor was or "who was running the whole (publishing) set up." He pointed out that in some cases, if the editors/reviewers did not concur with the research approach adopted, they would not publish the article. As one can well imagine, he claimed that this was very problematic during the apartheid era, where if one adopted a Marxist approach, many South African journals refused to publish the article. He claimed that the situation in the 1980s had been "horrendous", although in retrospect it had been beneficial for him because it forced

him to publish internationally, where these articles and their approaches were more readily accepted (I:Grant).

Academics also encountered prejudice from commercial publishers in terms of their field of research. For example, a female academic held the view that commercial publishers would not be interested in her book that focused on women's issues and the law because they believed it would not sell:

It is very difficult to publish because Publisher X and Publisher Y don't want to publish a book on PMS and criminal liability or a book on black women's rights to inherit because they are not going to sell. So, your only way of making your research known is via articles... you cannot do it in book form really... They (publishers) don't even accept it. (Celine)

In this way, publishers exert an influence on and determine what kind of research is valued, resulting in the marginalization of research related to rural communities and women's issues. As discussed, earlier, a few participants expressed concern about the hegemony of the West in the publishing and dissemination of knowledge, pointing out the anomaly that some African journals are published in the developed world and then sold to African institutions at exorbitant prices. Furthermore, publishing can become a costly enterprise for academics already having to contend with meagre research funds.

Some international and South African journals have page charges, resulting in academics having to pay between 2,000 and 30,000 rands for a 10-page article. The *American Journal of Botany*, for example, charges \$70 per page, which is largely unaffordable for most South African academics.<sup>50</sup> According to Myburgh, these page costs may be reduced if one is a subscription-paying member of the journal. The fact that these costs may be reduced for subscription-paying members of local publishing societies, as noted in chapter four, might entail an element of exclusivity. This exclusivity together with the "local politics" of publishing mentioned above might preclude newer researchers, especially

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<sup>50</sup> <http://www.the-aps.org/publications/ajpccell/cellmsf.pdf>

black researchers, who do not have a long-standing with these societies, from publishing successfully in these journals.

As noted, financial austerity as well as increased admission of students, with little change in academic staff complement, has placed severe time constraints on academics to create and disseminate knowledge. As may be expected, publishing is given a high priority at Rhodes and academics at all levels are expected to publish widely. Stringent standards for promotion have been in place for about five years now and publishing is an important requirement for promotions. Other criteria for promotion relate to community service and committee work. Senior academics that are involved in research largely, and have limited committee responsibilities, are expected generally to publish between five and six articles per annum (I: Greg). As one academic pointed out, two to three articles per annum do not suffice and will not necessarily qualify an academic for promotion at Rhodes (I: Martha). This of course does depend on the field of study. The point is that senior academics who have significant managerial and administrative responsibilities, including a load of committee work, are not expected to publish as prolifically as those who are left to concentrate primarily on their research. As noted in chapter five, an academic with an NRF B-rating informed me that she has been publishing six to seven articles per annum for the last three years to maintain her rating which she claimed, placed tremendous stress on academics, especially when they have heavy teaching loads as well (I: Martha). At Fort Hare, on the other hand, where they are only beginning to build their research capacity, academics are expected to publish at least two articles per annum (I: Henry).

Aside from the lack of time for research, new academics, in particular black academics, and students asserted that they received very little information, support or coaching on how to go about publishing. Any guidance on publishing depended largely on the individual style of supervisors. Some actively encourage their students to publish as they proceed with their studies, even at honours level, whereas others make no mention of

publishing. The comment of one student at UPE emphasizes the sense of loneliness students may feel when it comes to understanding the publishing processes and conventions: "I have no clue!" (I: Muriel) It does not come as a surprise that students suggested that supervisors and department heads need to emphasize publishing early on in their study programme and that publishing be built into the course module on research methods (I: Anusha; Kabiru; Mugo; Muriel; Toni and others). Universities may need to find innovative ways of ensuring that academics have sufficient time for adequate supervision of postgraduate students, especially as they launch programmes to attract greater numbers of postgraduate students. Special mentoring programmes need to be developed whereby students are supported to conduct and disseminate research. One of the ways in which academics and students may be encouraged to garner their publishing capacity is through open access journals. Open access is a way of increasing access to scholarly journals. In the next section, I deal with the participants' views on open access.

### **9.3 OPEN ACCESS**

The study sought the participants' views on the notion of open access (i.e. free-for-read journal contents), to consider whether open access journals might be a way to extend access to knowledge through a two-way process: 1) to enhance access to otherwise unaffordable scholarship, and 2) to widen the readership of the knowledge these academics currently produce. Most participants in the study expressed positive views about open access to scholarship, believing that it would provide greater access to scholarly information, enable researchers to conduct searches and retrieve information with ease, reduce costs, and save time (see Table 7 below). A few, however, were skeptical about it materializing in reality. One senior academic, for example, referred to it as a "dream". (I: Murray).

The librarians in particular were positive about open access. Rather than perceive it as a threat to their jobs, they believed that their role in an open access world would be to act as managers and facilitators of information. Academic participants expressed a number of

concerns regarding open access. Among their concerns was that of 'quality,' whether open access journals would be rated, information overload and the digital divide. Academics were of the view that open access scholarship should also be subjected to a rigorous peer-review system to ensure that quality was maintained. Pat, for example, supported the notion of open access as long as a "vigorous" review system was in place: "The whole thing about journal publications is prestige... It must still... (be) vigorously reviewed as all these things are."

Given the financial incentives that universities receive for publishing in rated journals, it is not surprising that many contended they would publish in open access journals only if these journals were rated by the DNE and hence qualify universities for national subsidies. Individual universities have also discouraged academics from publishing in open access journals. Pat had received an invitation to publish in an open access journal, but was advised against doing so by the research office because it was not an accredited journal and hence would not generate a subsidy from the publication. It seems that the lure of greater accessibility and the democratization of knowledge is not enough to entice South African academics to traverse the path of open access publishing. As one participant observed, academic salaries in South Africa were not competitive and, at universities where academics receive part of the subsidy as an incentive, they often depended on publishing as a source of extra income, not to mention the prestige they received from publishing in rated journals:

They (academics) get paid if their article has been accepted in a nated journal. Fort Hare's policy – they have just developed policy now. The university gets money from that publication and a certain percentage... a big percentage actually goes to the researcher... That's how academics make ... some money because, as is, our salaries are (low). (I: Thandi)

As noted earlier, the university has to submit an annual research output report to the Department of Education on which the department will base its allocation of subsidies to the university, a percentage of which goes directly to the individual researcher at Fort Hare and UPE (I: Henry; Murray; Thandi).

It becomes clear that the existing policy and funding arrangements attached to publishing hinder the possibilities for widening access to scholarly knowledge. Fatuh's response to open access shows how the government subsidy policy shapes the way academics respond to the possibility of open access:

People would like to be promoted. I mean when you want to be promoted they ask for your publications and if you have not published in nated journals you lose points... We like to publish in nated journals because that is where we can get some money. Some get promotion, some get financial incentives... But many people here need promotion and unless their articles are published in nated journals they may not be considered... However, if we have funding from outside, specifically to publish in those (open access journals), we don't mind.

It would seem that publishing in nated journals is crucial for promotions and other financial incentives that academics receive at South African universities.

Furthermore, these academics are reluctant to encourage their students to publish in journals other than rated journals because they do not want to see their research "wasted":

That is another thing about me ... I make sure I don't design a project, whether it is honours or masters that is not publishable in international journals. My honours students, I publish... This is an honours project (pointing to research papers on his desk) that I am going to develop and send to international journals because it encourages the students ... all my honours students, they have published in international journals. I don't like their research to be wasted. (I: Fatuh).

Some students were more open to the notion of open access perhaps because it appeared to be a solution to the problems they were experiencing in accessing journals.

Muriel and Peliswa believed it would be "excellent" and they had no objection to publishing their work in these journals because they believed in the principle of "sharing" their research.

Within the views expressed by the various participants lies the notion that open access scholarship lacks the quality, prestige and hence, the value of conventional scholarly journals. These views are fallacious because academics may publish in rated journals and still offer colleagues, especially those in developing countries, the opportunity to access their works for free without compromising the status of their work or their financial incentives. Firstly,

authors may self-archive their work that has been published in rated journals articles by placing these in an open access e-print archive, using free software, in a research library. Of note, 94 % of 8,940 journals sampled in Project Romeo permit authors to self-archive (Gadd, Oppenheim, Probeta, 2003).<sup>51</sup> Secondly, they may seek out and publish in rated journals that offer open access to developing countries or after six months of publication.

A further concern expressed by several participants related to the abundance of information available through an open access online system. Librarians and academics were concerned that the students may find the information overload overwhelming. Given the students' relative lack of information literacy, academics and librarians cautioned that these students might not be able to distinguish quality research from the range of research materials and information available through open access. Although some participants believed that open access could be an "open door to learning," as Toni put it, others believed that it could result in researchers expending valuable time on irrelevant information, especially if they do not have good information literacy skills. Some students at UPE, Peliswa and Muriel for example, avoided accessing unreliable information by using keywords to conduct searches and by relying on "pertinent" authors and trusted databases.

Other concerns related to plagiarism, copyright, and intellectual property rights. Although many academics were concerned that open access would lead to greater incidences of plagiarism among students, a few pointed out that the Internet has made it easier to monitor and detect plagiarism. Academics were of the view that students must be coached on how to become discerning users of open access scholarly resources.

In addition, there also was a fear that open access would increase the digital divide in South Africa. The following observation made by a study participant may pertain to the

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<sup>51</sup> For a website listing 8,940 journal policies on authors self-archiving their work (from 107 publishers), with 94% reporting that they permit this practice at the pre-press or post-press or both stages, see "Self-Archiving Policy Journal" (<http://romeo.eprints.org/>). For a review of the initial Romeo project that set out to survey journals on these policies, see Gadd, Oppenheim, and Probeta (2003).

global realm as well: "People that have had access before, like the white people of this country, will still be more advantaged with technology because they have computer access in their homes and the very people that were discriminated are left behind now" (I: Toni). She expressed a sense of hopelessness in all of this: "I think it is more threatening to them [disadvantaged people]. People give up . . . They feel more disadvantaged now."

Nonetheless, she admits that we cannot ignore technology and that this sense of hopelessness may be limited to the older generation:

The solution is to [begin with] the younger generation, to have more computers in schools... I have learned with children that technology is not something that is threatening. It is a challenge to them, but to us who are grown-ups it becomes a threat. That is why I think the earlier people are exposed, the more advantages they will see in technology because technology is beautiful! (I: Toni)

Although this statement ends on a positive note, the concern that open access would only benefit a small privileged group, rendering those without technological capacity to the periphery, presents a challenge to the proponents of open access. It is a challenge to which careful consideration should be given, even as we push the frontiers of open access.

Table 7. Advantages and concerns expressed about open access

Advantages	Concerns
Greater access to journals and research information.	Quality and standards may drop.
More sources of information.	Peer-review systems are essential for online publishing.
Access to most recently published articles.	Issues relating to copyright and intellectual property rights may be problematic.
Home access to scholarly information.	Will lead to plagiarism.
Enables students to search and retrieve information by themselves without the help of librarians.	Open access may reduce credibility of journals.
Provides students with more choices.	Some scholars feel it is 'beneath' them to publish online.
Inspires users to conduct more research.	Can only benefit a few with access to technology. Access to technology is still limited

	in South Africa, especially at HBUs.
Time and energy saving.	Speed of access still problematic where technology is inadequate.
Timely access as opposed to time-consuming interlibrary loans.	Lack of information literacy skills. Low capacity to use technology.
High cost of subscriptions will be a thing of the past.	Management and security of technological facilities and equipment is a problem.
Will help with problem of declining library subsidies.	Information overload. Need information management training on how to critically evaluate information.
Reduce the costs of publishing.	Universities receive funds for articles published in rated journals. Open access journals would have to be rated.
Reduces need to use personal funds for articles.	

#### 9.4 PUBLIC DOMAIN OF ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE

In this section, I refer specifically to the democratization of academic knowledge. I discuss indigenous knowledge systems in chapter eleven of this dissertation. The following two quotes from interviews conducted with two postgraduate students at Fort Hare capture the range of views participants hold with respect to the public domain of scholarship:

Researchers are part of the entire South African society. The advisors to the political departmental heads use information given to them by research institutions... researchers should have the freedom to conduct their research and a freedom to disseminate their findings. They should play a leading role in giving advice to public policy makers for the sole purpose of an improved society. (I: Siphó)

And,

“What is the man in the street going to do with knowledge if he is hungry?” (I: Vusi)

The notion of the public domain of academic research was relatively new for some participants who had some difficulty believing that academic knowledge should and could be publicized. Others, however, believed that universities have a social responsibility and that the research generated by universities should have a public value. Several participants were not convinced that research could become readily available to the wider public through the

use of new technologies such as the Internet, because of the academic discourse in which it is framed and the paucity of public access to computers. They pointed out that the very communities they work with and with whom they wish to share their research findings did not have access to computers and were often illiterate. In fact, a study at UPE showed that students from severely disadvantaged communities had not even used an ATM machine or a microwave oven prior to their arrival at the university (I: Piet).

Participants claimed that it was essential at least to make research available to practitioners and policy makers. As one participant observed,

There are people out there, not all of them are interested in being researchers, but they are interested in being competent practitioners. If they could have access to the research that is being done that would give more solutions to the problems that they are encountering out there . . . That would be a useful system. (I: Toni)

Participants Fezi, Pat and Piet asserted that government, especially at the provincial level, did not have the propensity to utilise this kind of knowledge in their decision-making. Despite this view, there are examples of government drawing heavily on research generated at the university, for example, the Coega Harbour IDZ (Industrial Development Zone) project and the coastal environment project with the departments of Water Affairs and also Environmental Affairs (I: Pat, Piet). Furthermore, the government publishes all policy documents online and the South African Library website is linked to the government website (see <http://www.gov.za/>). The evidence from the study indicates that Internet access was not as unattainable as some participants believed. Some participants pointed out that there were examples of government and private sector programmes --such as school projects, equipping community centers with computers and extending Internet access throughout the country-- that render the notion of public access to knowledge less remote. The government and telecommunications corporate sector partner, Telkom, had installed computers and e-learning at some 3,000 schools across the country, including the remote Kalahari desert region,

through a project called “Schoolnet” (I: Rita; William).<sup>52</sup> It is important to be mindful that the quality of connections and the incidence of power failures in remote areas may pose a problem for widespread electronic access to public knowledge.

Notwithstanding these diverging views about increasing the public value of knowledge through new technologies, it was found that UPE academics publicize their research through popular publishing formats such as magazines, newsletters, radio programmes, newspapers and public presentations at science and technology exhibitions (see chapter four). According to Pat, the NRF, through its rating system, awards extra points to academics who make science more accessible to the public; hence, her presentations, exhibitions, discussions, displays and hands on projects and activities at the annual National Science Fest.

Graduate student Sipho, who was committed to increasing the public domain of knowledge, developed strategies to involve the public sectors in his research. He explained that his research has entailed working closely with local government. His role as a researcher has been to conduct surveys with local communities to “investigate as to what is needed and then disseminate information to such people leading those projects... in the municipality” (I: Sipho). To ensure that local government did not see his role as interference in their affairs, he worked as a volunteer in the Department of Finance at local government: “The way in which I cracked it is because there are always the barriers because the officials feel that somebody is actually interfering with their work, so I started as a volunteer with the Department of Finance in the local government” (I: Sipho).

An area of public knowledge of which Fort Hare is now custodian is the archive of the liberation movements. These rich historical archives of South Africa’s past have been formally handed over to Fort Hare, through agreements between the university, the Government, and the respective liberation organizations (I: Thandi). These archives were

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<sup>52</sup> See <http://www.schoolnet.org.za/>

deposited at the National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre of the university (op cit). The library is in the process of digitizing parts of the collection --to ensure that they are accessible to the public-- with the help of students from the University of Michigan, where Thandi completed her master's studies, using (EAD) because it "allows for better searching capabilities" (I: Thandi). The intention is: "To keep the records alive – keeping the records alive is to allow research to flow in and out of the archive" (I: Thandi).

In summary, participants were of the view that academic researchers should play a bigger role in shaping public policy, locally, nationally, and regionally. As academic Goodall contended, it was necessary to increase the public domain of knowledge:

For a host of reasons in terms of the socio-economic responsibility of tertiary institutions to, amongst other, contribute to improving the quality of life in communities. This is not just rhetoric. Secondly, the major marketing advantages to the tertiary institutions to communicate their research prowess and the contributions of their research findings to enhancing the quality of life.

In addition, academics posited that regional African organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) could benefit from research that focused on regional growth, sustainable development, peace, and security. Open access would also ensure that the deliberations of these organizations at various conferences and forums could be made available to the public immediately. As academic Geyer contended, knowledge creation does not emanate from the academia alone, but should be a two-way process in which we acknowledge the valuable indigenous knowledge that resides within disadvantaged communities. Linked to this view was the concern not only about Western domination of knowledge creation and dissemination, but Western hegemony in determining definitions of knowledge and public knowledge. One participant, for example, raised the question about the imperialism of knowledge and knowledge ownership: "Who generates the knowledge? Who sets the rules and determines what is scientific?" (Rani). These issues will be discussed further in chapter eleven of this dissertation.

## 9.5 DISCUSSION

Publishing presented a dilemma for some South African researchers because of the lack of time available due to other academic responsibilities. The limited access to the latest scholarship further impinged on the researchers' capacity to produce and publish research, let alone cutting edge research (see also Altbach, 1987; Canagarajah, 1996). As noted, scholarly journals are a key element in the knowledge distribution network and may even be more important than books (see Altbach, 1987, p. 72). Some participants believed that their research was more relevant to the South African or African context, for example, estuarine studies and the African woman's right of succession in customary law, but they felt obliged to publish in rated journals because of the publishing subsidy from the national department, as noted. Whereas a few South African journals were among the rated journals, most were international journals published in the West.

Researchers were persuaded to publish in rated international journals because there were higher incentives, such as status, recognition and rewards. The publishing subsidy is an old form of funding to universities based on standards that may inhibit the development of a new generation of scholars under the new dispensation. As a consequence, the universities encourage researchers to publish mainly in approved these journals to enable them to qualify for this stream of funding. Hence, these standards have led researchers to eschew other forms of publishing that may lead to the wider dissemination of their research, for example, through open access journals. The subsidy system creates an 'all or nothing' system that recognizes only ISI publications and fosters the research of a few top researchers, while the rest serve primarily as teachers. The system also inhibits the development of a new research culture and research capacity.

As a result of these standards, researchers did not consider publishing in or even consulting African journals for their scholarly activities. As noted, some participants did not even know of the existence of these journals. This trend is common in other African

countries as well (see DfID, 1999, p. 7). Furthermore, given their limited resources, librarians prioritized subscribing to international and South African journals over African journals. To recall the earlier point, many African journals are published in the West and sold back to African universities at high cost. A participant referred to this as the “imperialisation of knowledge.”

It is not surprising, however, that the DNE and higher education institutions emphasise international scholarship. A few developed nations dominate the production and distribution of knowledge by controlling the publishing houses and the production of scholarly journals consumed by the rest of the world: 34 industrialized countries with only 30 % of the world’s population produce 81 % of the world’s book titles (Altbach, 1987, p. 18). Although these figures are dated, scholars seem to concur that the knowledge gap has increased and will continue to do so (Altbach, 1998; Gibbons et al., 1994; Willinsky, 2000). According to Altbach (1998), 62 % of social science periodicals and virtually all “prestigious scientific journals” are published in the West (p. 28). In addition, the spate of mergers and acquisitions in journal publishing over the last few decades appears to have set off spiraling price increases that are undermining the circulation of knowledge. These increases can be traced to a growing corporate concentration in scholarly publishing, especially in the sciences, which has resulted in three Western companies, namely, Elsevier, Springer, and Taylor and Francis, controlling 60 % of the science, technology, and medicine journals in the leading citation index, the ISI Web of Science (Merger Mania, 2003). Hence, these Western countries define research paradigms and the focuses of the field, rendering the rest of the world peripheral in determining the research agenda (Altbach, 1987, p. 17; 1997, p. 16). As has been shown above, there has been little exploration of regional networks to overcome such barriers to publishing.

Aside from a lack of time for research and publishing, black academics and students noted the lack of institutional support and access to publishing. Support to graduate students

was left to the discretion or disposition of their supervisors, leading one student to claim that she had “no clue” about publishing. Academics also called attention to the politics in publishing where editors of journals make decisions based not simply on merit, but on the methodologies and ontologies they support. Publishers may determine what kind of research is valued as participant Celine found in attempting to publish her book on women’s issues. Publishing rules and conventions can serve to inhibit researchers from publishing. As noted earlier, Canagarajah (1996) has recognized that publishing conventions have “nondiscursive requirements”, a “hidden publishing” agenda that makes it virtually impossible for researchers from the Third World to publish successfully in the industrialized world and leads to the exclusion and marginalization of peripheral (Third World) research (p. 1). Drawing on Foucault (1976), he shows that these rules of publishing serve to legitimate particular conventions and exclude others (op cit.). There needs to be better balance of the research agenda between researchers and users, the strengthening of regional and international networks for sharing of research, and the inclusion of peripheral research communities in the international mainstream (see Altbach, 1997, p. 20).

As previously noted, the participants welcomed open access and the possibility of making academic research more publicly available. Their concerns about open access centered on the quality of the research and the need for strong peer-review systems, information literacy and management systems to deal with the information overload, plagiarism, and inequitable access to technology that might lead to the exacerbation of the digital divide.

As noted above, participants were reluctant to publish their research in open access or any other journals not on the DNE’s list of approved journals. This all or nothing system constrains possibilities for building research capacity. Scholars do not have to choose between highly rated journals and open access because they can publish in both in most cases. Firstly, a small number of highly rated journals, like the *New England Journal of*

*Medicine*, offer a form of open access, for example, free access six months after publication (Willinsky, 2003). Secondly, a survey conducted of some 9,000 titles has established that over 90 % of commercial and society publishers permit authors to post a copy of their published article in an open access e-print archive or, as it is sometimes known, an institutional repository that is maintained by the university library or a scholarly society (Harnad & Brody, 2004). For academics, this means their article, which is otherwise locked up in a subscription-based journal, is available as free to read to those who can access the Internet. According to Harnad and Brody (2004), scholars who make their work available through open access increase the number of citations they receive, which improves their standing as well as that of the journals in which they publish.

The participants expressed enthusiasm at the prospect that academic research could be made available to the public at large. Although they were concerned that rural communities would not have the technology to access such information, they agreed that it was worthwhile to make this information available to practitioners and policy makers, whose work impacts directly on the people "out there". The new higher education policies emphasize the social value of academic research and support applied research conducted in collaboration with public stakeholders (see Gibbons et al., 1994). Hence, the expansion of the public domain of research in South Africa may be well received when viewed as a contribution toward the democratization process.

Given the limited research capacity and access to research resources as noted in this and previous chapters, open access technologies may assist with increasing access to scholarly resources and for building research capacity among South African and other developing world scholars. They can also allow research agenda, contents and foci to be determined locally. However, open access and increasing the public domain of research should not be viewed as a one-way process whereby peripheral scholars may mainstream their scholarship. Rather, it should be viewed as a way, among others possibly, to revisit the

notions of knowledge and knowledge ownership, to confront what one participant referred to as “knowledge imperialism”.

The concern expressed by academics about the quality of the research published through open access journal systems is ill-founded because these journals are usually peer reviewed. Furthermore, free access could potentially expand the public domain of research. For those who have access to technology, for example, practitioners and policy makers, open access can be a readily available source of scholarly information on which competent practice and good policy making may be based. The lack of access to computers with Internet connections need not be a major shortcoming nor should it be seen as increasing the digital divide. At this point, as noted by the participants, it is necessary to increase access for those, like academics, practitioners and policy makers, who have a growing ability to tap into technology, but who cannot afford the prohibitive costs associated with current print and e-journal access. These categories of people use the knowledge and research to provide services and improve conditions for the underprivileged so that, indirectly, better access to knowledge and information for them increases possibilities for better service to the poor. As noted, instances of IT interventions through partnership efforts between the state and the private sector, for example, the e-village in the Transkei, “Schoolnet” and community clinics in townships in Cape Town, have meant that public access to IT, and as a consequence knowledge, is less remote than it was previously believed to be.

## **9.6 CONCLUSION**

The new policies, NRF funding and institutional goals have placed considerable pressures on researchers to increase their outputs. The DNE offers significant subsidy funding for scholarly articles published in their list of approved rated journals. In addition, the NRF has a rating system for natural and social scientists based on their research output. However, the constrained access to journal holdings and the lack of available time, noted in the previous chapter, have impinged on researchers’ capacities to produce and publish research at these

institutions, especially at UPE and Fort Hare. As a result, these universities experienced difficulties in fulfilling their goals of increased research output in order to qualify for subsidies and other rewards. I also found that the institutions offered little support to staff and students in the way of mentoring programmes. New technologies such as open access journals present tremendous opportunities for researchers to increase their access to the latest cutting edge research and widen the dissemination of their research outputs. However, existing rewards systems, namely the subsidy system instituted by the past government, works against them using these new opportunities to benefit research productivity. It also made South African researchers reluctant to publish in developing world journals, in particular, African journals where readers may benefit from research generated within a developing world context like South Africa. This closed system, about knowledge dissemination and 'quality,' publishing in the 'top journals' only, appears to be outdated in a new digital age and works against developing a more vital research culture throughout these universities, which in turn, fails to utilize the talent and contributions of these universities to knowledge production and social justice.

The participants' concerns about open access lacked substance because open access journals may be subjected to rigorous peer review systems and, ironically, the Internet makes it easier to detect plagiarism. Open access knowledge dissemination can assist, even if to a small extent, in stanching the digital divide and increasing the public domain of knowledge. Most practitioners in the field and policy makers in government do have access to the Internet and can thus benefit from the knowledge producing processes to enhance their own contributions to social development, and in turn, aid the democratization of knowledge and increase the public domain of academic knowledge.

Moreover, new technologies mean that scholars do not have to choose between publishing in rated journals and the open access journals. They can enjoy the best of both worlds and in the process widen the readership of their articles and the number of citations

they receive. In the larger picture of overcoming the hegemony that a few countries have over knowledge production and dissemination, open access and the public domain allow local scholars the opportunity to determine research agenda and foci and to begin to disseminate rich indigenous knowledge traditions more widely. Improving the dissemination of and even access to scholarship must begin with an interrogation of the existing system of rewards discussed above. This is critical for breaking with the historical traditions of the higher education sector and existing power relations that serve to privilege a few. Destabilizing this system is crucial to the transformation of the whole order of knowledge, as a matter of whose knowledge, for whose benefit, who determines access to knowledge, and who determines the agenda and foci of this knowledge in relation to local and global priorities and positions.

## CHAPTER TEN

### DEMOCRACY, EQUITY AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTIVITY

#### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, I discussed how the changes resulting from the forces of globalization such as neoliberal reforms and new technologies relate to the research programmes and knowledge producing processes at the three universities. I examined how these changes affected the research culture, institutional administration, access to research resources, publishing, open access and the public domain of knowledge with a view to understanding how these factors affect the universities' research productivity and capacity to contribute to a transforming society.

In this chapter, I discuss the changes in response to democratization and equity, as called for by the new policies, such as representative governance and equity or affirmative action plans. I examine, in particular, how the changes in response to democratization and equity relate to researchers, their research programmes and the knowledge producing processes at the university. As noted earlier in this dissertation, I argue that universities have an important contribution to make to the establishment of social justice in South Africa through their research programmes and knowledge producing processes. This can only be achieved through the successful transformation of these institutions from their apartheid moulds to new democratic and accountable institutions that reflect the aspirations of the new democratic society in which they operate.

According to the participants in the study, there have been three changes in response to the transformation: 1) increased enrolment of black students, 2) the establishment of new democratic structures and equity policies and 3) a shift towards the production of "socially relevant" research. I shall deal with "socially relevant" research as a response to democratization separately in the following chapter. The questions I pose in this chapter are:

1) To what extent have the democratizing and equity policies been implemented at the three institutions? 2) How have these changes been perceived and regarded by the participants?

## 10.2 POLICY EXPECTATIONS

As power changed hands in 1994, the urgent demand of the people and their government was that institutions, systems and structures throughout society reflect the demographics of South Africa. Whereas '*amandla!*' and 'freedom' constituted the clarion call during the struggle for freedom, 'equity' and 'redress' became synonymous with democracy during the policy formulation era.<sup>53</sup> Equity was viewed as the vehicle for removing existing inequities; a way of ensuring equality and access for previously disadvantaged groups. For higher education, equity meant greater representation of disadvantaged groups and the increased enrolments of blacks and women students and staff at universities, equitable resource allocations and the institution of adequate support systems in terms of finance and programmes to affirm previously excluded groups. As noted in chapter two, equity and democratization are among the key principles enshrined in the new higher education policy.

To summarise the discussion contained in chapter two, universities were required by legislation to: 1) ensure greater representation and participation of previously disadvantaged people in higher education decision-making through newly constituted representative structures – the governing councils and institutional forums, and 2) develop equity plans, commonly referred to as affirmative action policy, in accordance with the Employment Equity Act (1998) to guide the redress of previously disadvantaged groups.

Governing council and institutional forums were established through broad consultative processes at all universities post 1994. The governing councils were accorded powers as "the highest decision making bodies of public institutions" (South Africa, 1997a) and Senates were made "accountable to council for the academic and research functions" of the institutions (South Africa, 1997b). Whereas councils developed the framing policies, the

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<sup>53</sup> Power to the people

institutional forum was expected to advise council on national policy implementation, race and gender issues, candidates for senior management positions, codes of conduct and dispute resolution procedures and foster an institutional culture promoting tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights. There can be little doubt as to the important role and powers of the institutional forum in guiding the transformation project within universities.

These structures were to be aided in their responsibility by an important piece of legislation, namely the Employment Equity Act, which requires individual organizations to develop Employment Equity plans, setting out procedures and target plans for redressing current racial and gender imbalances. As noted, there were high expectations that universities would initiate, implement and monitor their own transformation beginning with the establishment of new representative governing councils. Below, I analyse the impact of these transformation policies and processes on researchers and their research programmes at the three institutions.

### **10.3 DEMOCRATIZATION AND EQUITY**

The student and staff demographics at Fort Hare closely resembled the national demographics indicating that equity, as implied in the policy, was not an issue at Fort Hare. Given Fort Hare's history as an HBU situated in a former ethnic homeland, the current student population at Fort Hare is predominantly rural, Xhosa speaking African students from severely disadvantaged backgrounds. As noted in chapter six, when the HWUs opened their doors to all races, there was an exodus of more affluent students from the HBUs to these universities. The large contingent of white staff appointed during the apartheid era has dissipated over the years and those who remain, by and large, have chosen to do so out of a commitment to their research and the future development of the university. A white professor in zoology explained that his laboratory was in the fields surrounding the rural campus, where he collected specimens of small mammals:

The research sites tie you to the Eastern Cape... for a biologist it is a dream come true. Every bit of information we write down is new... It would not be worth being in Pretoria and have to come here for research... Besides, I enjoy working with the black students here. It is most rewarding. (I: Fox)

A white female academic also believed that her research was related uniquely to Fort Hare and its proximity to rural communities with whom she works closely in the area of oral traditions and indigenous research (I: Ruth). Walter, a white librarian, also spoke very passionately about Fort Hare and the challenges the library faces in view of continued inequitable funding formulae. He spoke of the unusual commitment of staff who had sacrificed a salary increase for three years: "However under-resourced we are, we have the most fantastic and committed staff here... the quality, commitment and enthusiasm is here... This is one of the places you can really commit yourself and make a difference. I would be unhappy at Rhodes or UPE" (I: Walter). The transformation of this institution has been directed at the growth and development of Fort Hare into a credible university that can contribute to social development and the African renaissance.

The HWUs present a different scenario. As I demonstrated earlier, the impact of the transformation is hardly visible at the departmental level of the HWUs. Of the seven black academics interviewed at UPE, five believed that the transformation policies were not being implemented, whereas the remaining two did not express any views on this topic. Academic Ronelle stated emphatically: "As far as transformation and things are concerned, I am sorry there has been none. That is my opinion." Another pointed out that there had been a "dramatic change" in student demographics, but not in academic staff demographics (I: Charmaine). The "dramatic" change in student demographics over a short period at UPE has been acclaimed by higher education scholar Nico Cloete who pointed out that UPE's equity success in terms of student demographic changes must be amongst "some of the most remarkable in the world," having changed from 62 % white in 1995 to 87 % black in 2000

(Cloete, 2002, p. 416).<sup>54</sup> It is disappointing to note, however, that there has not been much change in staff demographics (see Table 8 below).

Table 8: Racial and gender profile 2003

Race/ Gender	SA Black	SA White	Male	Female
Students				
HWU-A	47%	38.4%	45.4%	54.6%
HWU-E	32.5%	44.4%	43.6%	56.4%
Staff				
HWU-A	17.5%	82.4%	57.8%	42.2%
HWU-E	7.1%	66.4%	66.8%	33.2%

One of the few senior black academics at Rhodes, Greg, posited the view that the institution had not changed much over the last 20 years, having “transformed... less than any other university in the country.” Another academic Naresh claimed that Rhodes has been “unaffected by the socio-political changes.” According to Dianna, a black guest speaker and former Rhodes student remarked in his speech that Rhodes had not changed since the 1980’s. According to Greg, the black academic staff contingent has grown only “marginally” over the years and the Senate is mainly white, comprising only four black academics and one black SRC member out of the 120 people that serve on this structure.<sup>55</sup> In the psychology department, only one academic staff member is black. In the pharmacy department, for example, 3 out of 16 academics are black, only one of whom was in a senior position (I: Dianna; Naresh). This number increased to five in 2004, none of whom was an African South African.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> It is assumed that his figures include UPE’s distant education students, the majority of whom are black.

<sup>55</sup> Student Representative Council

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.ru.ac.za/>

Greg was of the view that Rhodes would remain stagnant in terms of transformation unless an Equity Officer was appointed and greater attention was paid to the appointment of black academics. At the Senate meetings, he had even enquired about the appointment of an Equity Officer, but the official response was that there were no funds for such a post. This response is surprising considering the relatively sound financial status of Rhodes as demonstrated in annual reviews and the evidence from some participants (Annual Review, 2001, 2002). The reluctance to employ an Equity Officer may be viewed by some as trivialising the need for transformation. On the other hand, it may confirm the misplaced prevailing belief that the HWU-E does not need to change because all is going well.

HWUs have long attested that there is only a small pool of black academics from which to draw in South Africa, and that these potential candidates are often poached by government or the private sector, who offer more attractive salaries. Senior academic, Greg dismissed their contention pointing out that the neighbouring, rural, HBU had managed recently to attract black academics with good "track records." Scholar Mabokela (2000), in her study of HWUs, claims there are other reasons that black academics are not only hard to find but difficult to retain. Mabokela finds that recruitment strategies still rely on traditional methods of recruitment, which are patronised by white males mainly (2000, p. 6). Selection criteria and procedures are inherently biased and do not take into account the unequal opportunities that have existed. Mabokela cites the example of publications as a criterion (2000, p.7).<sup>57</sup> One of the reasons posited by Mabokela (2000) for the attrition of black staff is the discrimination and marginalization experienced by black academics in the uncomfortable and unsupportive institutional climate at HWUs.

The evidence from my research attests to Mabokela's findings. Black academics have encountered discrimination in their appointments, lack of promotion, lack of participation in

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<sup>57</sup> As noted, Canagarajah, (1996) points to the non-discursive elements that prohibit peripheral scholars from publishing. Some journals in South Africa will only publish scholarship of their members.

decision-making, lack of information, lack of access to research funds and an alienating Eurocentric ethos (see chapters four and five). Black female academic Ronelle, for example, claimed that when she arrived at UPE she was appointed as a junior lecturer whereas white lecturers with similar qualifications were appointed as lecturers. This alerted her to the inequities existing within the system from the moment she began her academic career at UPE. Ronelle believed that the university was aware of the need to change, but that there had been resistance to change at all levels, including the “top”:

We don't need to succumb to pressures from the outside... We rule our roost on our own and, we can. They had to put out an Equity Plan for five years. Within this department that Equity Plan has not been adhered to and so to ... throughout the institution because if there had been, we would have seen a drastic increase in the number of academic staff that had been employed from the previously disadvantaged group. They will argue that that has been the case but I will argue that your previously disadvantaged group does not consist of white females *only* because that is what they have been using. We are currently sitting with an imbalance in terms of staff (my emphasis)

Academic Charmaine, as discussed in chapter four, had to resort to labour action to secure a permanent appointment that had been given to a white female academic. For Ronelle and several other black academics, it is of great concern that UPE is applying the equity policy to affirm white female academics only. Greg, at Rhodes, observed that black staff held a similar perception that white women alone were being affirmed to the exclusion of black men and women (discussed below). Between 2002 and 2003, the proportion of black South African academics at Rhodes grew by 0.3 %, white South African academics by 2.4 % and white women by 2.7 %, whereas the percentage of black women academics fell by 0.4 %.

White female academics held mixed views about gender equity. A senior academic at UPE, for example, recently promoted to associate professor, claimed that the equity policy has led to new opportunities:

I have been promoted to associate professor... Obviously this has led to more opportunities as I am regarded as one of the senior staff members of the faculty. It has been a positive experience in that I perceive my status in the faculty to have improved. I also feel more confident in leading projects/programmes in the faculty. (Personal communication, 2004)

Another white academic at the same institution claimed that she was discriminated against as a woman academic, but that she preferred not to elaborate on the matter (Personal communication, 2004). At Rhodes, a female academic informed me that she had recently been appointed to a senior position, but she believed this had nothing to do with the gender policy, but rather her own performance as an academic:

I would hope that any opportunities, which have been afforded to me at Rhodes, are due to my own capacity rather than gender equity policies. I would not want to be given opportunities because of a policy but rather because I was judged to be the best person to make something of them. I have been promoted since (2003)... but I do not think this was because of policy. In my experience, women at my university would not be promoted solely because of gender equity issues. If a woman is available with the skills and experience to do the job, she would be appointed over a man but a woman without the necessary skills and experiences would not be appointed/promoted just because she is a woman. I do not believe women are blocked/ignored just because they are women. Women with ability are encouraged. (Personal communication, 2004)

Another participant at the same institution presented a countervailing view, claiming that her experience of the equity policy was “mostly positive”:

I think the fact that I'm a woman played a decisive role in my appointment to this job in 2001. Some years ago I doubt that I would even have made the short list. However, although the organisation is trying hard to implement equity, it is still dominated by a male culture, which excludes women from the really powerful informal structures... Formally all structures are geared to fairness and equality for all. But the underlying male power culture will take a while to transform. (Personal communication, 2004)

Librarians at the Rhodes pointed out that their profession was predominantly female based and as a result, they did not experience any gender bias whereas a librarian at the UPE pointed out that senior management positions in the library were still predominantly male controlled. This may serve to emphasise the differing history and cultures between these two types of universities where the HWU-As have been traditionally known to be white male dominated institutions. While the experiences among these women differ, there can be little doubt that they live and work in a society that has a history of male dominance. In her study on gender and access to management positions in the academy in South Africa, Mabokela

(2004) finds that women experience ongoing discrimination and oppression within the academy in South Africa.

The identification of candidates for vacant positions rests with the heads of departments, who are expected to take the equity imperatives into account when recruiting candidates. According to Greg, there is an unevenness in the application of the policies; some departments are rigorous about the need to find black candidates whereas others are not. In a recent incident where Greg served on a selection panel for the appointment of a staff member to the Psychology department, he found that the Chairperson of the selection committee had not enquired from the head of the department whether a black candidate had been sought for the academic post. A white candidate was selected and about to be appointed.

As a member of the committee, Greg raised the question in the committee and in a letter to the Vice Chancellor and, finally, the post had to be re-advertised. He explained that he was concerned that in this particular department of 15 staff, only one was black. It became incumbent upon him to scout for possible black candidates. Eventually, none was found and the white candidate who had originally been approved by the selection panel indicated that he was no longer interested in the post. Greg believed that this particular incident cast him in a bad light at the university. This incident indicates that Rhodes' current recruitment procedures need to be interrogated to determine how positions of privilege and power serve to lessen adherence to the equity policy and result in the continued imbalance in staff demographics. There is a need to give 'teeth' to the institutional forum to ensure greater participation of black academics in decision making at all levels of the institutions (see also Mabokela, 2000).

Notwithstanding his discomfort at being cast in a bad light as a result of his interventions, Greg believes that this is part of the role that he has to play at Rhodes. He often feels lonely in this role because there are so few blacks at Rhodes, and not many

academics question these kinds of issues. He points out that equity is “a black person’s problem” and that very few white academics question the implementation of the new policies to bring about transformation. Greg finds that this can be an exacting task for an ordinary academic to undertake in addition to other academic and departmental responsibilities. Naidoo, Potts and Subotsky (2001), in their study of employment equity at higher education institutions in South Africa, make a similar observation that the redress of racial imbalances is viewed as a “black issue” (p. 54).

Ronelle and Xolile at UPE also found that equity and racial issues consumed much of their time and energy, negatively affecting their work as researchers. Ronelle found the work environment not very supportive of her as a black academic. She pointed out that white academics in the department “look after their own” This view was held by other black academics (I: Charmaine; Patel), and a white academic, Mary, at a black university that is in the process of merging with UPE. Mary, an English-speaking white woman, claimed that academics at UPE had ensured that they appointed their Afrikaner colleagues to permanent positions because they were intent on “protecting their turf” against an invasion of staff from the merging partner institutions. It is interesting that there are still perceptions of ethnic divisions between English and Afrikaner whites in post-apartheid South Africa. Xolile found that he had to deal with people’s mistrust and fears: “You spend a lot of energy trying to quell those unfounded fears... To some degree certainly, you have to sort of put a level of energies towards something that you know you really don’t need.” Although this is not a role he chose to play, he, like Greg, believed that it was incumbent on him as a black academic: “My whole... reasoning (is), that we make it easier for the people to come and that they should not walk the same path I walk, it should be easier” (I: Xolile).

When I pointed out to Ronelle that UPE had democratic structures in place and had developed progressive democratic policies to ensure transformation in accordance with the requirements of the DNE, she claimed that the policies are “good on paper” only and that

there is little implementation of these policies in her department: “That is something that UPE is very good at. They go on ‘bosberade’ and then they set up policies, right policies and they are good on paper, but to execute it is another thing and that is something that I have experienced” (I: Ronelle).<sup>58</sup> Jeevan, another black academic at UPE also claimed that the “policies are good on paper only”. He pointed out that, despite having been with the institution for eight years, having held a master’s degree for 16 years and more recently a PhD, he had not received a promotion, whereas a white academic with a master’s degree had recently been appointed to the position of senior lecturer. Jeevam posited that whites who had taken the “package” often returned to the institution as consultants in “Lucrative positions... yet blacks here cannot get promotions.”<sup>59</sup>

Aside from the policy implementation not being felt, black academics appeared to have unequal access to and information about research funds. Ronelle found that the names of black academics were included in funding proposals developed by white colleagues, but once the funds materialized, the black academics were not necessarily engaged in the project. She had this experience a few years ago and when she questioned it, she was told that she was not a “team player” and made to feel as if she was creating unnecessary controversy:

Individuals will incorporate your name on the application form... for the money and they don’t involve you at all beyond that... You are put down for a specific portion, that is what happened to me in 2000. I was put down and then just left, that is it... They got the funding, yes... I had actually mentioned it in terms of using people for their colour... but people say I am not a team player because I don’t want to get involved. So I said, ‘Excuse me, I offered many times’, but then they would approach their white colleague as opposed to me or another black person. So they include their own in the support thereof. I mean it is evident in whatever they do; they look after their own. (I: Ronelle)

Ronelle felt understandably exploited by this situation.

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<sup>58</sup> Translated literally from Afrikaans – ‘bush meetings,’ usually used to describe senior management going on a retreat to hold high level talks.

<sup>59</sup> The term “package” is used to describe early retirement compensation.

White academics gave me the impression that they had adequate access to research funding, whereas black academics appeared to be under the impression that UPE was struggling to fund research. A white academic, Celine, claimed:

As I say, money has never really been a restraint for me because UPE is also very generous with their research grants... You are basically evaluated on your past five years... So if you perform there is really sufficient funding to undertake research and I think we are very grateful for that.

Charmaine on the other hand, a black female academic, found it difficult to secure start up funds for her research and concluded that UPE simply did not have sufficient funds to support research:

There was, for example, the NRF that was the Thuthuka programme. I was one of the first that qualified. You have to be under 35 with a PhD and black... And (the Director of Research) told me --because in that funding programme, the NRF gives one rand for every two rands-- the institution never paid this because they didn't expect a black woman with a PhD to possibly be applying for it. It wasn't foreseen as something that would be required. There wasn't enough funds for the old researchers and new young researchers coming in.

These disparate statements by two woman academics at the same institution indicate that either the old policies for funding researchers linger in ways that work against developing a more vital research culture among a new generation of academics, or that insufficient information about funding is available to newer researchers. Like Celine, Piet, a white male academic at the same institution found that funding for research had increased in recent years ("the cake is getting bigger") and that researchers needed to increase their productivity to secure these funds, "if you want more you have to produce more".

Murray explains that there are two categories of funding for researchers, established researchers (numbering 130) and new researchers (numbering 70) (personal communication, September, 2004). Novice researchers receive approximately 5, 000 rands for seed funding and are largely subsidized by the established researchers who receive 10, 000 rands on average (op cit). He explained that UPE only joined the Thuthuka programme in 2003, meaning that the university would not have budgeted for its share of the funding to assist

Ronelle to obtain the required funds. While the bulk of institutional funding is allocated to the most productive researchers, the Top 20 researchers, usually older academics, there have been attempts to develop “young researchers in designated groups” (Murray, personal communication, September, 2004).

Although the reasons for UPE’s delay in joining the NRF programme are not clear, it would appear that the institution needs to be more proactive in taking full advantage of the opportunities for research funding available, especially as these hold promise for the development of younger researchers in designated groups, such as blacks and women. To ensure a more equitable distribution of funds, which would lead to building the research capacity at the institution, better communication of policies and funding opportunities are required. Charmaine was deprived of obtaining the much needed NRF equity funding for which she could have qualified in spite of meeting the criteria of being 1) female, 2) black, 3) a young researcher because the university had failed to join the NRF programme in a timely manner. As a result, the institution and not just the individual lost the opportunity to build much needed research capacity in that particular year.

Almost all black staff at UPE was hopeful that the new Vice Chancellor who had been appointed in mid-2002, whom they believed was committed to change, would try to alleviate the problems experienced by black staff. Ronelle, however, was concerned that resistance at the middle management level would continue, pointing out that there were conflicting ‘camps’ within ‘top’ management as well: “Actually, to some extent there has been conflict within the top management as well. There are definite camps.”

The transformation at Rhodes may be in greater jeopardy. Not only has there been little change in staff demographics but also the student demographics have not changed as dramatically as at UPE. A large contingent of black students at Rhodes, 16.5 % of the total student population in 2003, was comprised of international students from other African countries (Registrar, RU, personal communication, March, 2004). South African black

students comprised 32.5 % of the total student population in 2003 (op cit.). Rhodes has strict admission criteria, as noted by participants at Rhodes and Fort Hare, which has ensured the maintenance of high academic standards. However, these standards have served generally to exclude black students from state schools from attending the university (I: Greg; Siphon). In the pharmacy department, for example, African South Africans were a minority among the black students, who were mostly South Africans of Indian origin. Not a single African student in the pharmacy department in 2002 was from a state school (I: Naresh). Some participants claimed there was also the perception that Coloured and foreign Africans were more acceptable than African South Africans (I: Dianna; Kabiru; Munene). These standards, while necessary for ensuring quality, may also serve as a form of gate-keeping in a higher education sector that is just beginning to emerge from being embedded in apartheid structures and constructs.

The majority of new staff appointments at Rhodes continue to be white despite the Employment Equity Plan. Greg was of the view that the institutional forum was impotent -- "dead to us" -- having failed to drive the transformation. As noted previously, he claimed that there was a perception among black academics at the institution that equity was being applied to white females mainly (I: Greg). As discussed previously, the new higher education legislation bestows serious and significant functions and responsibilities on the Institutional Forum for driving the institutional transformation. The views of black academics indicate that these policy intents have been largely ignored at Rhodes. Attitudes at this institution have also been problematic, even at the highest level where the Vice Chancellor publicly stated that the black Vice Principal was an "affirmative action appointment" (I: Greg).

Interestingly, at both UPE and Rhodes, the problems encountered by black academics have led them to form new Black Staff Forums towards the end of 2002. At UPE, Ronelle claimed that black staff felt the need to form a special group forum to network and table issues like discrimination within the institution:

We got together in November (2002)... We had a general meeting where we invited your general black... academics that just got together and issues came up from that, like discrimination, promotions and appointments at the lower levels. Also, research and the lecturing load versus your research and the impact of that... and also research funding.

According to Greg, a similar forum, the African Staff Association was established at Rhodes. This association was not restricted to blacks or academics alone. Hence, the term "African" rather than "black" was chosen deliberately to avoid exclusivity in terms of race and to ensure that "everybody who regards themselves as Africans" could join.<sup>60</sup> The intention of the Association was to act as,

A lobbying group, which would draw on existing staff to do the monitoring of the implementation of the policies... (and) give black staff members a sense of ownership over the place as well (because)... many of them feel alienated by the colonial and white ethos of the institution.

Ronelle related an issue that was raised by a black academic at the Black Staff Forum meeting. Apparently, the academic had arranged for funding from an external agent for a workshop, but could not secure the funds through UPE's administration. This had resulted in the awkward situation of him not being able to make the necessary arrangements and had cast him in a bad light:

They (admin.) said they would have it available within a certain timeframe; they never did. They said they were going to forward it to the institution. When the researcher phoned through... they had not received it. So it basically it puts the black staff ... in a bad light with an outside institution. (I: Ronelle)

According to Greg, the black staff's response to this lack of transformation has been to get on with their professional work. The responses of two black academics to my question about the impact of change on researchers seem to confirm this view. Sidi, a foreign black academic, stated that she kept very much to herself and was "not familiar with the social set-up here... I have not been exposed to much," whereas a South African black academic,

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<sup>60</sup> In South Africa, the term *black* has been used to denote Africans, Coloureds and Indians. In the post apartheid era, there is growing understanding that "African" can be used in a decolonising sense to denote all South Africans who identify with the country and the continent, i.e., those who have shed their colonial heritage and loyalties.

Martin, stated that people are more focused on themselves and their work rather than on broader issues such as transformation. Dianna pointed out that black academics respond to the lack of transformation differently, depending on how they have internalised their racial experiences within an apartheid society. Greg was of the view that the university has been very successful in individualizing staff, which has the effect of ensuring that there is no black collective on the campus. Hence, the purpose of the new association, according to Greg was to “atomize blacks” and involve concerned whites too. Greg was not particularly hopeful that Rhodes will change much in the next five years:

In five years time very much where it is now... I don't see dramatic changes happening. In 10 years time, maybe by that time, which is what I am hoping for, there would be more black academics. The ethos of the place may change a bit more in the direction of being an African university. We proclaim in our mission statement to be an African university and to proudly “affirm our African identity.” That is all the transformation that we have.

Hence, for Greg, like Ronelle and Jeevan, the change has occurred in policy alone. His vision for his own future seems to hinge on Rhodes' reluctance to change:

I am not really keen on moving, but I may actually be thinking of extending my horizons a bit broader and not just see Rhodes as a kind of mission because that is more or less what it has been. You need to transform this place... A couple of weeks ago we had a series of meetings, well, largely in response to that research that I did on the senior black staff attitude, a series of meetings with the Vice Chancellor on institutional culture... (So) There is some kind of movement, it is not a kind of brick wall but it often appears to be a brick wall when you look at the Senate minutes and you see the list of appointments and you see that 90 % of them are white. And it is an ongoing thing and it is just not changing, then you feel a bit despondent I have to say.

In this extract, Greg is slightly ambivalent because at times it appears that certain processes might lead to change, but then barriers to change are encountered. For example, in early 2003, Greg had conducted research into the attitudes of black staff. The report was tabled at a Senate meeting and the ViceChancellor subsequently held a series of meetings with individual black staff members. Greg was hopeful that this effort would contribute to some of the changes he believed were needed at Rhodes. The understanding was that there would

be a second phase of this research following these meetings. Months later, during our second interview, Greg expressed regret that there had not been a second phase of the research. The whole process had ended with the meetings the Vice Chancellor had held with the black staff, where black staff gave vent to their frustrations. When Greg feels despondent about the lack of transformation, he focuses on his own department and tries to make a difference there:

You try and make a difference in your own department I suppose. We are eight in the departments and three of us are black. So there is some movement in our department. We are having the first black PhD graduate from our department now. Which is very nice and of the four master's graduates that we have this year, three of them are black.

Greg's own election as a Dean signals how effective transformation could be, if more black academics like him were appointed. His experiences have led him to make a compelling and urgent argument for the need to hasten the transformation process: "There needs to be far more radical transformation. They need to say things like we are placing a moratorium on all white appointments, something like that because that is going to be the only thing that really jars the place."

It is significant to note that both Ronelle (UPE) and Greg (Rhodes) believe that top management is committed to change. This is especially the case at the UPE, where the past Vice Chancellor led the transformation of an extremely conservative Afrikaner right wing institution and accomplished major transformation in policy development and other areas. The participants were confident that the newly appointed Vice Chancellor and black female Deputy Vice Chancellor, who have been informed about the issues affecting black staff, would attend to them (I: Ronelle; Xolile).<sup>61</sup> Ronelle believes, however, that management has been preoccupied with the merger processes rather than with equity. Institutions undergoing merger processes have been inundated with time-consuming and lengthy procedures and processes, allowing senior managers little time for regular academic or research activities.

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<sup>61</sup> Appointed mid 2002 and beginning of 2003 respectively.

Greg believed that the Vice Chancellor at Rhodes was committed to change although he did not appear to know how to proceed with the transformation in the practical sense. He is concerned that if Rhodes does not make more of a concerted effort towards equity, the government may have to intervene on their behalf later on. This could be avoided if management adopted a more visionary approach to transformation, by driving the process itself.

#### **10.4 DISCUSSION**

The new government, through broad and intensive consultative processes, established a plethora of policies to ensure the transformation of higher education institutions. The policies were proactive in ensuring that democratic structures such as representative governing councils, which have significantly more legislative powers and responsibilities than previous councils, be instituted. In addition, institutional forums were established especially to ensure that policy would be implemented. Hence, there has been attention not only to policies but to a change in structures as well. The democratic, representative elected councils developed new mission statements and visions through widely consultative processes. Yet, the findings indicate that deliberations of democratic structures, such as the governing councils and the institutional forums, do not appear to have had a trickle down effect.

The issue of race equity, and the absence thereof, appeared to loom larger than gender equity because black women appeared to be more affected by the lack of racial rather than gender equity, while white women, except for one who did not wish to elaborate further, found that gender equity had enabled them to progress within the institution. That some women claimed they had not encountered any gender bias within these institutions might indicate that women academics in this study are not as aware of gender bias within their institutions. Also, it seems that the black participants' views that equity is being applied to white women mainly may be valid. White women claimed that they had received promotions and opportunities as a result of the new policy and the demographics indicate that women are

gaining access to the academy as students and staff. Moreover, the percentage of black women academics at Rhodes between 2002 and 2003, for example, decreased by 0.4 % whereas the percentage white women academics increased by 2.7 %.

Given the almost complete overhaul of the universities in terms of organizational missions and visions and the institution of democratic structures, the question begs: Why have these policies not been felt by academics, particularly black academics? Whereas senior management may be aware of these problems, it may be difficult for them to identify specific incidents where equity policies are not adhered to unless someone, like Greg, takes considerable time and energy to expose this non-adherence, at the risk of his own popularity within the institution. Acting as informal watchdogs of equity policies is no easy task for individual academics who have to teach, research and continue their day-to-day activities within an institutional environment that may be alienating.

Similarly, the council, despite its representivity and sweeping powers, is heavily dependent on the apparatuses of the institution for the information it receives and deliberates upon. The senior management, who have insider knowledge of the institution, and who in turn are dependent on the administrative apparatuses of the institution, formulate the agenda, reports, advice, motions and information tabled before the council. They respond to questions posed by council and provide feedback to council. It is safe to assume that senior management can exert tremendous controls over what is prioritized and discussed or more importantly, not discussed. There is a clear line between governance and management and rightly so. But this may also serve to obscure council from the lack of implementation of transformation across the institution.

The systems, structures, apparatuses and technologies of the institution make it difficult for senior management and council to have knowledge of systemic barriers and inequality of opportunities operational throughout the institution. For instance, administrative

procedures that appear relatively neutral may in fact act as gate keeping measures for those who have access to information, funding for research and a host of other privileges.

Globalization and its neoliberal assumptions are underpinned by the philosophical and conceptual framework of modernity, which hampers the implementation of these policies, which are intended to bring about democracy and social change at universities in South Africa. The forces of globalization threaten the democratising project in four ways. Firstly, globalization's neoliberal imperatives reflected in the policies as noted above, have led to increased managerialism, which serves to redirect the focus and energies of these institutions away from the democratization project. Secondly, I contend that equity, as defined in the policy documents and given effect through implementation, sheds its democratic portents and serves the project of modernity instead. Thirdly, given their history, context and relation to apartheid and/ or colonialism, these institutions are inherently modernist, and a decolonising approach in addition to a critical post-modern one and is required to deconstruct the modernist and hence racist apparatuses of these institutions. Fourthly, the neoliberal focus on effectiveness and efficiency leads to a preoccupation with merit and excellence that may serve to reproduce the hegemony of the dominant group.

The impact of the neoliberal policies of the government has pushed universities to become more managerial. This is not unlike trends globally (Bertelsen, 1998; Bolsmann & Uys, 2001; Currie & Subotsky, 2000; Newson, 1998; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Stromquist, 2002). Scholars worldwide have expressed concerns about the impact of globalization on higher education, characterised by cuts to social spending and the reduction of welfare programs (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Rubenson & Schuetze, 1995). For South African universities, this also means that the priorities for senior management at these institutions shift from attending to democratization, to the more urgent need of ensuring that their institutions operate effectively and efficiently in economic terms. Thus, marketization, which presents itself as a neutral and urgent force, can become a foil for ignoring the need to give

simultaneous and equal attention to the democratic transformation of the institution.

However, this force is far from neutral.

In my study, we have seen that managerialism, which presents as an urgent and neutral vehicle for achieving efficiency, is consuming the time of senior staff now expected to attend meetings and develop policy, leaving no time to attend to the implementation of equity policies. The accompanying fiscal austerity affects newer researchers more acutely in terms of heavier teaching loads and limited access to funding, whereas established researchers are able to generate their own funds. At Rhodes, the attention given to entrepreneurialism, effective and efficient management practices and research output have been interpreted as the main criteria on which to base the success of the institution. Hence, the need to engage in the transformation is ignored because the university is apparently “working so well”. There is also a notion typical of other HWU-Es that the English universities never supported the apartheid government and, consequently, do not require transformation. As Bunting notes, the HWU-Es have continued in a “spirit of ‘business as usual’ during the post-apartheid period” (2002, p. 73). Yet, as noted in chapter one, all South African institutions are inescapably the products of the colonial and apartheid state and none can claim to be exempt from the need for transformation. Furthermore, as noted, many scholars have claimed that the English universities were never major agents for change in South Africa.

Rhodes, as an HWU-E, does not appear to have noticed that outdated and discriminatory ideas about “quality” linger in ways that fail to utilize the potential talents and contributions of a new generation of scholars, yet to be welcomed into the institution. While this university currently makes a rich contribution to knowledge production, its contribution to social justice may be impaired by this myopic approach. Rhodes is well positioned to embrace the opportunities to contribute to new areas of knowledge production and social

justice through greater democratic participation of black academics and students within the institution.

While the concept of equity is linked to the notions of equality and fairness, it has been interpreted mainly in two ways: 1) Increasing the numbers of the previously disadvantaged groups in the system, and 2) ensuring that the composition of student or staff demographics at these institutions more closely resembles the national demographics of the country (South Africa, 1997a; Cloete et al., 2002, ch. 1, 12). It is the focus on access and numbers alone that makes equity a modernist project. As Slaughter (2001) points out, we need to interrogate the idea of access (p. 391). As long as higher education is not universal, access, even as massification becomes a trend, does not equalize opportunity (Slaughter, 2001, p. 391). Instead, it serves only to increase the inequalities of opportunity. The universities in this study have had to develop an Employment Equity Plan to ensure the entry of black and women students and staff. From a critical postmodern framework, attention to numbers and the affirmative action plan alone, as a form of redress to bring about social change, without any attention to destabilizing the colonizing apparatuses and technologies of the institution, threatens the progress of the transformation project. By apparatuses, I mean more than the structures of the institution.

I allude to the modernist nature of the institutions, which lent themselves well to the apartheid bureaucracy. As Goldberg asserts, the modern state and racial definition are intimately related (Goldberg, 2002, ch. 1). According to him there can be no modern state without race (Goldberg, 2002). He posits that modernity's doctrine of morality and politics, has served to legitimate prevailing sets of racially ordered conditions and racist exclusions. Therefore, Goldberg (2002) argues, it is not farfetched to suggest that "Racially conceived compromises... (such as) affirmative action... have been instrumental in sustaining a consensual dominance of liberalism in modern state formation" (p. 5). Consequently, I posit that the structures of the state, such as universities in South Africa, aside from their apartheid

and colonial histories, are inherently modernist. Because there has been little attempt to interrogate and destabilize these systems, structures, apparatuses, technologies, rules and regulations of these institutions, they have served to obfuscate potential changes in terms of policy, missions, visions and the institution of new structures. The institutional forum is “dead” at HWU-E because the other apparatuses within the university remain unaltered. It exists in name only, which is more dangerous than it not existing at all, for by virtue of its presence, it gives the semblance of change, of transformation. In reality however, it effectively silences and stalls the democratizing process.

According to Saloojee, employment equity is “perfectly consistent” with liberalism (2000, p. 302). Within a liberal discourse societal commitment to equality of opportunity ensures that all members of society are provided with the opportunity to secure valued goods and services free from discrimination (p. 294). Under these conditions of equality of opportunity there are unequal results which are accepted as justifiable within the liberal tradition and which establishes a rationale for the liberal state to intervene through a focus on numerical representation (p. 294). Saloojee argues that despite the existence of formal equality, which proclaims the equality of all citizens, socio-economic inequality is a real and permanent feature of liberal democracies (2000, p. 293). Focussing on one aspect of inequality such as access to employment, ignores the complexity of inequality and absolves institutions of their responsibility to root out structured inequality in all its forms.

Furthermore, the affirmative action policies serve to disaggregate members between and within groups. Through legislating equity, the state, Saloojee claims, structures equity discourse and effectively limits the terrain on which the struggle can be waged. In this way, Saloojee argues, the nature and form of resistance is limited (2000, p. 288). Legislated equity detracts from the solidarity of groups, making it even more difficult to monitor the institution’s non-compliance with the policy. Where individuals encounter undue stress, pressure and intimidation, they are likely to leave the institutions rather than persist in their

individual efforts to confront the oppression. It causes schisms whereby difference in gender (black/white), race (African, Indian, coloured), ethnicity (Xhosa, Zulu) might result in further marginalization of those who are doubly or triply disadvantaged, for example, African women. Scholars like Young (1990) and Saloojee (2000) warn that such schisms might lead to narrowly focussed group interest, that inhibit the advancement of democracy and social justice. In addition, equity leads to “othering” and corrodes the bonds of solidarity, thereby removing from white South Africans the responsibility or obligation to fully engage in the transformation and to seek to change past behaviour and attitudes, in order to become agents for change. Instead, it creates conflict, making white South Africans hostile and even resistant to what they consider racism in reverse.

The colonization and apartheid projects racialised these institutions, a consequence of which was equating excellence with “European” and the simultaneous denigration of African phenomena such as, for example, African scholarship. Strict admission criteria have led to the deficit model being applied to disadvantaged students rather than to institutions evaluating their “readiness” to admit a new generation of students and staff. The neoliberal detractors, too, have raised the cry for “merit based” appointments. Such “merit”, however, is often selectively defined and viewed as the prerogative of the dominant group. If, for example, multilingualism were considered a merit criterion for admission to university, many Africans rather than members of the white group would qualify for admission. As Young posits, (1990) the merit principle’s requirement of normatively and culturally neutral measures cannot be met because “impartial, value-neutral, scientific measures of merit do not exist” (p. 193). Goldberg asserts that racial progress is always measured by the white patriarchal yardstick (2002, p. 159).

The conservative backlash has led to the repeal of affirmative action policies in many Western countries where there is evidence of the reversal of greater representivity of marginalised groups in the workplace (Apple, 1988, p. 172; Bannerjee, 2000, p. 1; Saloojee,

2000, p. 302). The liberal equity discourse and the legislative terrain on which this struggle has been located, disempowers proponents of these policies. This discourse limits them to defending the policies rather than enabling them to counter not only their neoliberal detractors' reverse discrimination/ merit based argument, but more importantly, to interrogate the continued hegemony of the dominant class, which is now deemed inalienable because it is supposedly merit based. In effect, the agents of social justice have been silenced by the very policies that were crafted to bring about democratization.

The ineffectiveness of equity policies have led blacks at the HWUs to establish solidarity groups, the black staff forums, where they may resist the dis-aggregation caused by equity being limited to the legal terrain. Such action must be seen as a desperate measure on the part of academics otherwise struggling to find time to conduct research. It also indicates that the newly established democratic and representative structures such as the council and institutional forums are not serving their purposes as effectively as they might or should. It is hoped members of these new forums will not allow the equity discourse to frame their discussions and constrain their resistance to the policy and legislative arrangements, seeking greater compliance with legislation as well as the monitoring of the legislation. This needs to be done, but it alone will not bring about democratization and social justice.

Those who are truly interested in bringing about the transformation of these institutions will have to deconstruct and decolonise the structural constraints perpetuating the classism embedded in the apartheid policies and structures that sought to economically privilege and empower the white group. These power relations are continuously reproduced through the apparatuses of these institutions. Those seeking to bring about change will have to look beyond the equity policies as a means of dismantling the existing class structures. They have to interrogate critically the nodal points within administrative apparatuses that appear neutral but in reality serve a gate keeping function within the institution. Saloojee draws a link between the ineffectiveness of employment equity and the downplaying of the

class struggle. He argues that the weakness of equity as a strategy to bring about redress and social justice is that it focuses “on numerical goals to be achieved via legislation or official policies, instead of building political support through fusing equity demands with class demands” (2000, p. 303). Keeping black academics out of the academy as a workplace is not simply about racial hegemony, but about the preservation of economic privileges among a particular racial group in South Africa. Concomitantly, the privileging of the dominant group’s economic base is inextricably linked to race, and goes back to colonialism and the imperial project where race as the modernist project gave rise to the modern state and its institutions.

### **10.5 CONCLUSION**

In compliance with two pieces of legislation, the Employment Equity Act (1998) and the Higher Education Act (1997), South African universities have developed an Employment Equity Plan to ensure the entry of black staff and white women into their institutions. While the governance structures, mission, vision and core values of the universities have been reconceptualised in laudable ways, the effects of these changes are not necessarily being felt at departmental levels as the experiences of staff have indicated above. This appears to be the case particularly for racial equity because gender equity did not appear to be a problem and in fact, the evidence seems to indicate, as noted, that equity was being applied in terms of gender mainly. The focus directed on numbers serves to depoliticize the transformation. As Saloojee notes, the liberal democratic state in Canada legislated equity “as a corrective to the faulty operation of an unfettered market” (2000, p. 297). In other words, it was designed to reduce inequality only in so far as it would reduce racial strife and other disruptions to the market. In effect, equity policies align well with liberal constructs of equality and pose no serious threat to the status quo. Derived from liberal notions of equality, equity policies are not concerned with the structural transformation of society. It is not surprising, then, that

black academics in my study claimed that there has been little evidence of transformation at the HWUs.

The transformation project must begin with adopting a decolonising, critical postmodern framework to interrogate the hegemony at all interstices of the institution.

Affirmative action is the application of the distributive paradigm of justice that defines race and gender in terms of the distribution of privileged positions among groups and fails to bring into question issues of institutional organization and decision-making (Young, 1990, p. 193).

Redress may have to begin with undress – the stripping away of layers of modernity's masked injustices. Only when this is done, can we fully utilise the talents and contributions of a new generation of scholars, which, in turn, will enable the universities' rich contribution to knowledge production and social justice.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### MODE 2 AND “SOCIALLY RELEVANT” RESEARCH

#### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

In the introduction to chapter seven, I outlined three changes in main that have affected the universities in this study. The first two of these, managerialism, and democracy and equity, and their effect on research capacity were discussed in previous chapters. In this chapter, I discuss the third change, being the shift to what participants referred to as “socially relevant” research or applied research and how this has influenced knowledge production as well as the universities’ role in contributing to social justice in South Africa. This shift is related to the adoption in South Africa of aspects of Mode 2 type research, the new mode of knowledge production, which has arisen globally in response to the knowledge economy. Scholars such as Bawa (1997), Jansen (2002) and others note this privileging of Mode 2 type research in the higher education policy in South Africa (see chapter two).

The rationale for this focus on applied research, espoused in the White Paper 3 (1997) and other policy documents has been to move away from the preponderance of ‘research for the sake of research,’ pure research (Mode 1), towards a balance between pure and applied research, also referred to as Mode 2 type research. The aim of this is to ensure that the research generated is responsive to both the market and social needs, i.e. responding to globalization and democratization. However, the participants in my study spoke predominantly of the change to “socially relevant” research, which some defined as working with communities and related government departments.<sup>62</sup> Their notion of socially relevant research seemed to imply the assumption of a social role in the transformation process on the part of these universities. In this chapter, I focus on “socially relevant” research, pertaining

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<sup>62</sup> I deliberately use the terms “socially relevant” and “applied research” because these are the terms used by the academics in my study. I discuss the notion of Mode 2 type research later in the chapter.

not to industry or the market, currently the dominant focus among scholars, but to communities and social redress instead (Bawa, 2002).

Globally, universities in plural societies are seeking to achieve more democratic ideals and to define and redefine their role in civil society and social justice. For South Africa, this role is urgent and is accorded high stakes as noted in the policy discussion in chapter two and in the sections below. In this chapter, I examine the researchers' engagement in socially relevant research at the three South African universities. In adopting the lens of critical postmodern feminist and decolonising methodologies (Fanon, 1963; Foucault, 1980; Lather, 1986, 1991; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Odora Hoppers, 2002; Rigney, 1999; Said, 1978; Slaughter, 2001; Smith, 1999) as noted in chapter three, I argue that research currently being conducted under the rubric of "socially relevant" research is, to a large extent, business as usual with a semblance of community "involvement". Furthermore, I find that the indigenous knowledge of local African communities is at risk of being exploited.

I contend that unless researchers pay greater attention to developing appropriate methods for working closely with disadvantaged indigenous communities, more harm than social justice may result from conventionally-trained researchers armed with ontologies, methodologies and axiologies embedded in Western traditions in one hand and, liberal National Research Foundation (NRF) funding in the other, descending on indigenous communities to conduct research on behalf of their social development.<sup>63</sup> This is not to imply that that nothing useful can be achieved through the policy, but rather that greater attention needs to be given to the ontologies that frame and the methodologies adopted for engaging in research involving local communities. Neither is my approach an essentialist one that attempts to set all things indigenous apart from the non-indigenous. Instead, it is about the integral but often overlooked (in research) role of indigenous knowledge. It is about

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<sup>63</sup> I use the term conventional rather than traditional to refer to Western-based knowledge systems and practices because the term traditional may be confused with indigenous knowledge systems.

indigenous knowledge and experience as present in South African life, even when unspoken and invisible, much as ideas of “Africa” have been present and unspoken in South Africa in political and epistemological senses. Indigenous scholar Smith poignantly captures this notion in the New Zealand context as both a matter of resources and social justice:

“Reconciling market driven, competitive and entrepreneurial research, which positions New Zealand internationally, with the need for Maori to carry out research which recovers histories, reclaims lands and resources and restores justice, hardly seems possible” (1999, p. 189; see also Hall’s discussion on the local and global nexus, 1991). Indigenous knowledge introduces new ideologies for responding to competitive globalization (see Hickling-Hudson, 2000).

## **11.2 POLICY INTENTS**

To understand the approach adopted towards “socially relevant” research, it is necessary to recall the earlier points made in chapters one and two. Aside from the pervading disparities between HWUs and HBUs, which included inequitable funding, resources, facilities and infrastructure, there were methodological and pedagogical disparities as well. As noted, the HBUs were not only predominantly teaching universities, but they focused on limited fields of study such as the humanities, social sciences and a limited range of science faculties. HWUs, on the other hand, were comparable to the universities in the West, but engaged largely engaged in research that reproduced the social and economic relations within the society. According to scholars Bawa and Mouton (2002, p. 299), the apartheid research system was disconnected from the needs of the majority of South Africans, evidenced, for instance, by the paucity of research on infectious diseases at the time when the first human heart transplant was performed in Cape Town.

While the policy documents and scholarly discussions segregate the discussions around Mode 2 type research and indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), for the purposes of my discussion and its focus on community involvement in applied research, I find that there

is an overlap between community partnerships and indigenous knowledge systems, making it difficult to discuss one without alluding to the other. As noted in chapter two, the higher education policies and several scholarly analyses seem to indicate that one of society's expectations of the university, as a knowledge producer and disseminator, is that it should contribute towards solving the tremendous social problems facing South Africa. Among deficiencies noted in the apartheid higher education system, according to the White Paper 3 (1997), is the need for a focus on local problems. The policy also calls for the advancement of "all forms of knowledge that address the African context" (South Africa, 1997a). Although the White Paper does not specify IKS, the NRF's interpretation seems to include the notion of IKS because the NRF identifies IKS as one of nine focus areas for research and for which it provides funding (NRF: Focus areas).

As noted in chapter two, Subotsky (1999) posits that there are numerous accounts in the literature that characterize the market university, but little sense of what reconstructive development might entail operationally (p. 514). Furthermore, terms such as relevance, responsiveness, social engagement, stakeholders and partnerships are discussed mainly in relation to the market (see Chet/ Sarima, 2003; Higher education and the City, 2003). Whereas South African scholars have researched and debated this issue of market-related research rather than community-based research (Kraak, 1997, 2001; Soudien & Corneilse, 2000; Waghid 2002), I wish to focus on "socially relevant" research as it relates to community involvement in research being undertaken by academic researchers.

The experience of Celine, a participant in my study, elucidates the notion of relevance in Mode 2 type of research on which I wish to focus. Celine presents a countervailing argument to her colleagues' criticisms about the lack of commercial viability of the kind of research she engages in, indicating that relevance need not only be related to entrepreneurial or commercial research. Her research was relevant to the most disadvantaged sector in South African society, namely, rural black women, but not necessarily commercially viable:

My research is not really to be sold. It is not commercial at all. I feel it is socially relevant contributing to knowledge but also not merely dried facts that cannot be used. I could for example go look at Roman law but it is irrelevant about a woman's right to inherit today.

Thus, she distinguishes between research that is relevant for social change and entrepreneurial research. I wish to deconstruct and decolonise this notion of relevance and to consider how relevant the "socially relevant" research practiced by some of the participants in this study is, in the context of a democratic transformation to a new social order. How do we decenter our Western-based notions of relevance even as we commit to research for social reconstruction?: Relevant to whom?; Who gets to decide and based on what?

As noted, the NRF is a government funded national agency responsible for promoting and supporting basic and applied research (see NRF: Profile). The stated objective of the NRF is to support, promote and facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development "in all fields of the natural and social sciences, humanities and technology, including indigenous knowledge" (NRF: Profile). The commitment to democratization is indicated by the intention to "improve the quality of life for all the people of the country", "unlock the full creative potential of the research community and establish equity and redress" and to promote knowledge creation and innovation in all fields, "including indigenous research" (NRF: Profile). As noted earlier in chapter two, the NRF sponsors numerous research activities that are socially relevant and "community oriented" involving stakeholders such as government and rural communities.

### **11.3 RESEARCH PRACTICES – CONDUCTING RELEVANT RESEARCH**

My data indicate that many academics are working with local communities in their research projects at the behest of the NRF and its funding. Most participants were engaged in what I shall refer to as aspects of Mode 2 type of research because their research included some, but not all aspects of what Gibbon et al. (1994) define as Mode 2 research (see earlier definition in chapter one). Academic and policy maker participants in the study believed, however, that

Modes 1 and 2 types of research needed to be “symbiotic”; to “co-exist as opposed to one being to the detriment of the other” because basic research “is the solid building block” or foundation of research. As noted above, experts in the field echoed this view.

An academic at UPE, Ronelle, pointed out that in the past there had been a concentration of Mode 1 type of research leading to the current emphasis on Mode 2 type research:

There has however been a shift in the focus for funding agencies where there is less available for pure research, but I think because most of the focus had been previously on pure, fundamental research. It is about time that we do have that shift. It should not stay like that though, it should balance out.

According to Celine, the application of basic research will serve to “broaden the base... So that you are discovering all the time.”

The participants in the study, who represented a variety of disciplines (see list of departments represented in Appendix B), welcomed the shift towards socially relevant research and applied research. Several academics were enthusiastic about the new directions, which they attributed directly to the socio-political changes that have taken place in the country. Celine, who was involved in legal research relating to customary law and focussing on the rights of black women to succession (i.e. to inherit), was very clear about the social responsibility of researchers, exemplified by her stance on this issue:

I actually welcome that in the sense that the law must always respond to changes within society and the law is a social norm itself. So therefore it cannot be stuck in the previous century or previous centuries... They say, for example, that laws are the products of your history. That might be partially true, but on the other hand it must solve the problems of today. So it is dynamic and because it is dynamic, it must focus on what is relevant now... I think there is also the social responsibility of academics and researchers in that respect to try to make a change to the lives of the people of the country.

The main change in her research over the last five years has been that she now conducts more socially relevant research, which she attributes to the fact that South Africa now has a Constitution and a Bill of Rights that require us to consider the existence of different notions of relevance:

From the viewpoint of legal research... I think that the most important change is that research must be socially relevant... the emphasis is shifting to more comparative approaches perhaps and not so Eurocentric any longer. So with Roman Dutch law we would... choose the Netherlands for a comparative analysis but it doesn't always happen anymore because you can actually learn from other developing countries perhaps... with the same legal diversity that South Africa has... I am thinking of Indian law as a very good example of constitutional development, which is similar to the type of diversity challenges we are faced with... and other more progressive systems of the world.

Academic Beryl "enjoyed the changes" brought about by the focus on applied research that was "more applicable to communities". As a creative and lateral thinker, she found that this approach was consonant with her own views, heralding a shift from the view that there was only one way to conduct research. As a pharmacy researcher, Annelise believed that research must be both available to society and play a role in changing society, "otherwise the research is useless". Patel held a similar view: "You need to actually develop research around the environment you are in and the people that you are serving. That is what research is for... It is what is relevant". Goodall conducted mainly applied research, "directed at solving problems... which society and industry have been grappling with for decades". He found that applied research allowed researchers to access data that academic researchers would not necessarily be able to access, hence adding quality to the research project and enhancing the relevance of pure academic research. He claimed: "The reality being that in many cases most research findings end up in a bound treatise, dissertation or thesis on a library shelf collecting dust. That is the harsh reality" (I: Goodall). Another academic, Dianna, approved of the NRF support for socially relevant research because it allowed for a shift from conducting research that aspires towards international standards alone, to research that takes into account local realities: "The problem... is that up until this point there has been this focus on international standards and doing research that will please the international community, irrespective of whether it is of relevance to the local context."

Whereas for some the incentive to engage in socially relevant research lay in the opportunity to contribute to social development, for others the incentive was more pragmatic

in response to the funding available from the NRF. The Director of Research at one of the universities, pointed out that former government research organizations like the Foundation for Research Development (FRD) and Centre for Science Development (CSD) --incorporated to form the NRF after 1994,-- funded basic research mainly and were not as concerned about commercial or social relevance as the new NRF. He explained that 8 out of 9 focus areas stipulated by the funding policies of the NRF were directed at applied research:

Specifically directed at the improvement of the quality of life, so although they claim that within any one of those focus areas you can do basic, fundamental, disciplinary research, that's not always true... you might not get funded... so there has been a kind of mechanism forcing people to do work that has a social bearing. (I: Murray)

Murray was not the only one who held this view of academics being "forced" by the funding policy to conduct socially relevant research. Academic Pat stated that many academics at UPE were conducting relevant research because of the funding available for such research: "Those people are sort of funded by the NRF, we've been *channelled* in that direction. You get more funding if your work is more relevant" (my emphasis).<sup>64</sup>

According to Fatuh, an academic from Fort Hare, researchers have engaged in collaborative and interdisciplinary research in response to NRF funding criteria: "We are being forced. The NRF is forcing us to move out because if you don't know how (to do it) with collaborative work, they will not finance it." Fatuh collaborates with other departments and local communities in the area of phyto-medicine. The participants' views suggest that the decision to conduct socially relevant research may be a pragmatic one for some academics rather than a commitment to social change. No doubt, the policy was intended to persuade researchers to engage in research that contributes to social development.

A few academics even believed that the funding was being exploited by so-called "opportunistic" academics. Ronelle, for instance, found the pragmatic approach of some

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<sup>64</sup> The National Research Foundation, a significant funder of university research, has a national rating system for researchers in the sciences and social sciences, whereby they are rated according to publications in rated journals according to the ISI list.

academics towards socially relevant research an infringement of the democratic values inherent in the transformation: "People are jumping on the band-wagon, not because they want to do the research but because the funding is there. It really irritates me, you know." She related how a black colleague's views were ignored within her department when he had expressed an interest in indigenous plant research years ago. Ironically, many academics now focused on this area of research because of the available funding. Ronelle claimed that this was "not because there was an interest in it... (or that it is) very community orientated. It is opportunistic. It is not sincere because you want to help individuals, it is because there is money." Patel also commented on the opportunism of some academics. He claimed that some academics have used the NRF funding as a "way of harnessing money" for individual research activities. He pointed out that a group of academics would apply for funds for collaborative research and then divide the funds among themselves for their individual research programmes. The views of these academics indicated that the responses to socially relevant research ranged from genuine commitment through pragmatism to opportunism.

In addition, I found that, despite the orientation towards socially relevant research, many researchers in the study, black and white, had not given much thought to revisiting their ontologies, methodologies and axiologies in the context of working collaboratively with local indigenous communities. They used approaches and methodologies, consistent with their conventional Western training and not always entirely suitable for working with communities. For most academics, socially relevant research was about extending current practices to solve community problems. Notions of participatory research, methods for working closely with communities and providing feedback, were poorly understood by these conventional academics. There was little intention of involving community participation in the design or ownership of the knowledge generated by the research act. Nor have these researchers considered it possible for these communities to contribute to knowledge creation.

Pat, who was noted for her research output, worked collaboratively with government departments and communities. Although she enjoyed her research, she found consultation with local communities frustrating and time-consuming. She stated that she could not be a scientist and sociologist at the same time. She believed that community consultation was the responsibility of the government partner:

So they are doing all the communication... and I am providing the scientific input. I cannot be a sociologist. It has actually been quite frustrating... Talking to communities and getting them involved is not an easy thing. They had one meeting in November. They had a whole different group there. Now in March they have another meeting with a completely different group of people.

Scientist, Patel, who was investigating the carcinogenic effects of toxins in the staple crop of an indigenous community, expressed surprise when I enquired whether he had provided feedback to the community. He informed me that his role as a researcher was only to identify the toxins. An academic, Fatuh, claimed that he was involved in “participatory” research with indigenous communities: “We work as partners, as equal partners”. However, there did not appear to be any feedback to the community after the information has been extracted from them. Fatuh explains that the community has a basic misconception:

What the communities are interested in is whether you have made a lot of money, ‘so where is ours.’ We have not made a cent because before you can bring a drop to the market it is millions and millions of problems, so we are still in the process of trying to bring something to the market and as soon as we do all our stakeholders will benefit.

According to Fatuh, he would only provide feedback and consider issues of Intellectual Property Rights once a major compound was derived from the plants he had secured from the community. There has been little attempt amongst these researchers to negotiate shared understandings of their engagement with these communities. The findings suggest that some academics have yet to adapt or change conventional ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies when conducting so-called “collaborative” research with local communities.

Notably, a few participants at Fort Hare appeared to have a clearer notion of issues related to working collaboratively with local communities, and have adopted methods more consistent with the theories and methodologies suggested by indigenous scholars such as Odora Hoppers (2002), Rigney (1999) and Smith (1999). Among those interviewed was senior academic Sobahle, who was introduced as the university's expert on IKS. According to him, one of the "paraphernalia" of colonialism is the "Absence of an emotional relationship between the producers of modern knowledge and the indigenous knowledge producers". Sobahle contends that IKS still exists in rural areas and, as part of the Africa renaissance, we need to recognize that Africa is not just a receiver of knowledge, but a producer too. He shares the following methodology as appropriate for engaging communities:

- 1) Acknowledge that we do not have this knowledge;
- 2) Go back to them and engage with them, not as all-knowing but as students who can learn;
- 3) Take them on board as co-researchers;
- 4) Co- publish with them;
- 5) Conduct classes there (in their location);
- 6) Do not bring them back as specimens but as teachers;
- 7) Pay attention to your behaviour, language, and protocols – engaging with indigenous communities is a whole new discourse.
- 8) Don't mistake a lack of education as ignorance – they know where they want to go.
- 9) We can help only through mutual respect. (I: Sobahle)

Sobahle points to Western power and control over knowledge and the anomaly that a special term like "indigenous" is used when African scholars research their own villages whereas if a scholar from England studied an English village it would be termed simply research and not IK. Sobahle suggested that indigenous scholars across the world collaborate to share common research experiences. He furthermore posited that an "infusion of black academics" into universities will not make them more African because the "structures" of knowledge and of the institutions remain Western-based.

Another researcher at UPE, Celine, claimed that research, teaching and community service were related integrally. For this reason, she did not find community service a problem because it was linked to her research anyway: "I think one can link community service with research... that is the applied research and contextualising it. I don't think that the fact that you must do community service is a restraint on that (research)".

Librarian Thandi and students Wandile and Sipho expressed concern about the stance adopted by many researchers. Thandi and Wandile pointed out that communities have become skeptical about researchers because they have a reputation for not providing feedback. Thandi expressed concern about communities not receiving feedback or financial benefits for their contribution to research: "I know villages or areas near the university... (where) people sometimes get quite reluctant to answer the questionnaires because everybody comes and asks them questions and they never see anything happening, any feedback." She suggested that local communities should share ownership over the knowledge produced if they have contributed to the research process through sharing information and indigenous knowledge with researchers:

They (researchers) will come and ask them. 'Oh! You do not have enough water in this area'. (But) nobody ever goes back to them to say, 'Okay, from your research we have managed to sensitize the Minister... and this going to happen'. Yet their information is being used. I think it is the whole question then of intellectual property. Where does it really reside? Does it reside with the interviewer or the interviewee? I know there are different schools of thought but... they are the generators of knowledge... that we are 'hacking'.

Hence, Thandi is of the view that the generators of this knowledge --the communities that share their knowledge openly-- deserve some compensation and acknowledgement.

Graduate student Mbuyo was concerned about companies exploiting indigenous communities for commercial gain. He believed that the university should act as "a go between" by developing legal contracts and assisting communities to protect themselves against this kind of exploitation. Fort Hare graduate student Wandile asserts that his "University has changed its focus... taking the university to the people and not vice-versa".

He claimed that feedback meetings are held with the community where they may pose questions. It seems that there is a growing view at this university that its history, context and strategic location positions it well to engage in research involving indigenous communities (I: DoR; Sobahle). The Acting Dean of Research at this university spoke of the need for “empowering participatory methodologies,” the need for a “polemic” as the university assumes the role of contributing to social development. While there may well be trends in this direction, it is certainly not yet widespread at Fort Hare. At UPE, a young black researcher, Gumede, claimed that most academics do not know about “techniques” for working with the communities. He was looking for different research approaches by using the notion of social capital as a means to investigate policy and structures of the State and their interaction with local communities.

Most academics were positive and enthusiastic about extending the public domain of their scholarship and had found popular formats to publicise their research using for example, popular magazines, radio talks, public presentations, newspapers, science, technology or art festivals and exhibitions. Ramdass, for example, believed that newspapers were “the cheapest and wide-spread way to disseminate research.” Graduate students believed that it was important to make research available to the public because of its impact on communities (I: Binza; Emma; Gertrude; Geyer; Muriel; Peliswa). Peliswa, a young black female masters student claimed that it would be useful for policy makers too, alluding specifically to President Mbeki’s statements about HIV/ AIDS:

I think it is quite crucial, especially with having a President that goes out and makes statements, you know, I don’t know if there was a lack of information or what was the story. But I mean I just think even then people can be informed and you can make proper decisions... informed decisions.

Muriel believed that because research and student scholarships involve government funds, it should be “generated back” to the public. Krause, an academic who was engaged in PhD studies, urged researchers to be cognisant that indigenous research was a “two-way process”

benefiting not only the community but also the conventional researcher who stood to gain “valuable indigenous knowledge” in the process.

Despite their positive orientation towards increasing the public domain of research, these researchers had not considered yet the need for decolonising the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Few researchers understood that working with communities was more than simply providing feedback to communities as a one-way flow between the academic expert and members of society. Below I analyse the approaches and experiences presented above.

#### **11.4 MOVING BEYOND MODE 2 – DECOLONISING CURRENT METHODOLOGIES**

These research practices show that most academics and graduate students embraced the shift to “socially relevant” research, which for them meant working collaboratively with stakeholders such as business, government and communities because they believed that research should respond to societal needs. Their shift to applied research has been hastened not by due compliance with the White Paper policy, but in response to funding criteria stipulated by the NRF.

Some have committed genuinely to socially relevant research as a way of contributing to social justice, whereas others have adopted a more pragmatic approach by making use of the available funding. It could be argued that the end justifies the means and that the motives, intentions, orientation or values of these pragmatic researchers to social development are irrelevant to the research act, as long as they adhere to the conventional principles of rigorous research practice. I wish to counter such an argument on the basis that motives, intentions, orientations and values are crucial to the research act because they inform the researchers’ ontologies and therefore, their epistemologies and methodologies. Their motives and orientations will inform not only the way they go about designing their research projects or collecting their data, but also their analysis of the data. It will inform how and where the

community is positioned in these processes. Yet, even for those who have a genuine commitment and have not considered whether their existing assumptions towards research need to be deconstructed and destabilized, the same problem arises. To what extent are their research practices conducive to conducting socially relevant research? To what extent are their ways of engaging communities informed by Western traditions that are embedded in modernist assumptions and colonial discursive practices?

Committed researcher Pat, for example, is understandably impatient with time-consuming processes involved in consulting communities and the lack of continuity in meeting attendance. She believes that someone else should assume this responsibility since she cannot be a scientist and sociologist at the same time. Like most other conventional researchers, Pat does not appear to understand that research involving stakeholder partnerships with local communities requires time to consult and develop trust and common understandings, all of which constitute an integral part of the research act, of the methodology for engaging in such research. Her view that the government or other partners should facilitate this process shows that, for her, socially relevant research is merely an 'add on' to the way she usually conducts research.

Pat does not appreciate that taking the time to learn about the social protocols of engaging communities in respectful ways and to develop mutually agreed upon social contracts is a fundamental part of the research act. Usually, the time invested in establishing protocols, respect and cultural safety at the beginning of the project yields rich results in overcoming the obstacles that may arise later, when time needs to be devoted to data collection and analysis or when seeking the community's approval of the research results or their implementation. Inherent in Pat's approach is the view of the researcher as "all-knowing," as Sobahle puts it, and of the community as the illiterate receivers of the knowledge. Had Pat recognized the value of their potential contribution to the production of knowledge, she would not have been as dismissive of the lengthy consulting processes.

Perhaps, if more attention had been paid to establishing these relations in the initial meeting, greater interest and ownership of the process would have been evoked amongst the community members, ensuring that the same people attended the follow up meetings.

Patel adopts the conventional disassociated approach to his research. His responsibility is only to identify the microbes contaminating the crop of the indigenous community, not to provide them with feedback in this regard. Similarly, Fatuh, an accomplished researcher, who has done much to build the research culture at Fort Hare, is operating as a conventional researcher in his collaboration with the community. His notion of "equal partners" is ill-founded because it should imply at least that the community is provided with feedback. His approach is not directed at establishing trust and long-term relations with the community, which is so necessary for research with indigenous communities. His lack of understanding the need to provide feedback, regardless of the outcome of his research, is dismissive of the rights of these communities and their contribution to research.

Fatuh's statement about them only being interested in money is probably true but, as a scientist working with indigenous communities, he has a responsibility to take the time and make the effort to clarify these misconceptions. My own experience of working with indigenous communities in the same region is that they are very accommodating and have a rich knowledge to share with researchers, who approach them in a humble, transparent manner with deep and genuine respect for who they are and what they have to contribute to the research process.

No doubt the approaches adopted by well-intentioned academics like Pat, Patel and Fatuh might lead communities to develop a mistrust for research and a reluctance to participate in any further research activities, as noted by Thandi and others. On the contrary, as noted by Mbuyo, universities and academics, as part of their social contract with society

and their commitment to community service, should be protecting these vulnerable communities from being intellectually exploited by commercial interests.

Although Celine and others call for a shift away from Eurocentric research, they are not yet cognisant of the need to problematise and deconstruct the methodologies and pedagogies that inform their work in the academy. As Rigney observes, the cultural assumptions of the dominant epistemologies are Western and dismissive of indigenous people's "minds, knowledges, histories and experiences" (1999, p. 113). More perniciously, these epistemologies, which scholars both black and white like to believe are neutral, serve to reaffirm and reproduce the cultural assumptions of the dominant group (Rigney, p. 114). Knowledge, as research, played an instrumental role in the imperialist and colonizing project of the West (McClintock, 1995). Smith (1999, p. 1) asserts that the term research is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. She argues that it is difficult to discuss research methodology and indigenous peoples without analyzing imperialism, and without understanding the complex ways in which the pursuit of knowledge is deeply embedded in the multiple layers of imperial and colonial practices (Smith, 1999, p. 2).

Earlier in chapter one, I alluded to the role played by universities and their research in propping up the apartheid status quo. Today, South African researchers are imbued with the hope that their research will contribute to the new social order. Smith evinces that belief in the ideal of research benefiting mankind is "as much a reflection of ideology as it is of academic training... It becomes so taken for granted that many researchers simply assume that they as individuals embody this ideal and are natural representatives of it when they work with other communities" (1999, p. 2). The problem with this kind of research, as Smith contends, is that it tells communities things they already know and suggests things that do not work while creating careers for people who already have jobs (1999, p. 3).

Most importantly, research is not an innocent and distant academic or technical exercise, but an activity with an agenda that occurs in a set of political and social conditions

(Smith, 1999, p. 5). What is important to note is that Smith goes beyond using existing methodologies such as critical theory, postmodernism and feminist critiques, to deconstruct knowledge and its social constructs as a way of understanding the politics of knowledge (1999, pp. 5-6). She proposes an ontology and methodological framework for decolonising knowledge as an imperial construct. She argues for the centering and privileging of indigenous knowledge, in our context this would mean African knowledge. This is not to say that there is no place for Western based methodologies. On the contrary, the notion of further problematising and destabilizing knowledge is based on Foucault's work. The argument here, for South African academics, is to adopt a reflexive approach and to acknowledge and understand that knowledge is embedded in power relations, and that it is a political construct that currently privileges and centers all things European.

Fortunately, for the sake of knowledge's future in South Africa, there are a few academic researchers who have an appreciation not only of the valuable knowledge base that exists among indigenous communities, but also a clear understanding of how to work with communities in ways that privileges and centers their knowledge. Academic Sobahle shared valuable decolonising methodologies for working with communities in culturally safe and respectful ways and some graduate students at Fort Hare, despite the conventional training they have received, have developed appropriate protocols for working with indigenous communities (I: Mbuyo; Siphon; Vusi; Wandile). They posited that their success was due to them generating these protocols together with the communities. It may also be due to the fact that Fort Hare views itself as a developmental institution (I: DoR; Sobahle).

Scholar Subotsky (1999) has noted the "comparative advantage" that the HBUs have over the HWUs in contributing to community development. His study found that the HBUs' geographical proximity to and close ties with disadvantaged communities have oriented them more towards social development. To recall the words of a participant in one of his studies, "Its like sitting in the middle of a laboratory. You can just see it" (Subotsky, 1999, p. 509).

He contends that the conventional definition of scholarship must be expanded, theory and practice must be related and the legitimacy of other forms of knowledge and the existence of knowledge producers outside the academy must be recognized (Subotsky, 1999, p. 515). He argues that the “gap between ‘needy’ communities and the ‘knowing’ campuses must be dissolved and the charitable model must be supplanted by social change and the developmental model” (Subotsky, 1999, p. 521). Central to his vision for community participation in the production of knowledge is the building of relationships and involving communities in the research process; in setting agendas based on needs analyses and in evaluating programme outcomes (Subotsky, 1999, p. 521).

The policy to steer academics towards socially relevant research is part of the government’s attempt to channel universities in the direction of contributing towards social development. Unfortunately, the national policy and the NRF’s funding policies do not spell out what social development might imply or what constitutes relevant research and how researchers should go about ensuring the participation of communities in research activities. There is no nuanced understanding in the policy that terms such as “relevance”, “socially relevant”, “community involvement”, “collaborative”, “stakeholder participation”, “partnerships” and “participatory research” may mean different things to different people based on their own discursive histories and contexts. Without proper attention to deconstructing existing notions of these terms, the policy could do more harm than good. As Jansen (2002) contends policy making in South Africa has been mainly symbolic to signal a shift away from apartheid rather than to change practice.

It is necessary to recognise that the globalization project and the impetus to universalize culture are by no means new. Begun in the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods to seek out new raw materials, the latter day project is merely couched in discourse that seeks to establish and ensure its hegemony globally without exposing itself as an ongoing colonial project, this time to seek out and exploit indigenous knowledge. Neutrality is

achieved by projecting itself as an inexorable force based on the speed and reach of new technologies. Time and space have been condensed. Information and knowledge are sometimes referred to as if they are interchangeable, but they are not. Knowledge has far more currency than information – as a political idea. The West has a monopoly on the knowledge industry by controlling the creation, production and dissemination of knowledge. Peripheral scholars become consumers rather than producers of knowledge (Canagarajah, 1996, p.18).

### **11.5 CONCLUSION – THE UNIVERSITIES’ ROLE**

Socially relevant research is being conducted in a way that may not necessarily be relevant to the needs of the communities who are supposedly “participating” in this research. Most researchers do not appear to have given much thought to appropriate methodologies for conducting such research. Largely, it has been business as usual as they extend existing research practices to working with indigenous communities. Underpinning this approach is a certain arrogance of the “knower,” the expert, conducting research on behalf of the “receiver.” Except for the practices of a few researchers noted above, the participants paid little attention to meaningful consultation and the authentic involvement of local communities as equal partners in the research act. A greater infringement on the rights of these people, who give up their time to attend meetings and to share their knowledge, is that they are not paid the courtesy of feedback on the project. Hence, they are treated largely with disrespect and disregard, the main effect of the research act being the acquisition of their knowledge.

Ironically, it is the new policies, designed to democratise research in the pursuance of social development that have brought about this shabby treatment of local communities. If this situation does not receive attention, there is the risk of alienating communities from the university and the production of knowledge and worse, the colonization of indigenous knowledge by academics, black and white, who have been trained in Western-based research methods, and imbued with ontologies, epistemologies and axiologies that are foreign to local

communities. This could be more harmful and may not necessarily result in socially relevant research, except for the expenditure of public funds generously made available by the NRF and other agencies in the name of "socially relevant" research. The real danger is that the intended social change, as part of the transformation project, may be undermined, co-opted or even silenced as academics pursue "socially relevant" research for pragmatic, opportunistic or even good intentions. My concern is that this policy of encouraging academics, nay paying them, to go and exploit the indigenous knowledge of local communities may be a new form of colonization at the behest of the knowledge-based economy, driven by globalization as a neoliberal force. As a matter of urgency, indigenous scholars need to draw the government's and the NRF's attention to the damage that can result from the call for socially relevant research, which is resulting in hordes of conventional researchers, who have little understanding of or respect for indigenous protocols, descending upon local communities, thereby wittingly or unwittingly, completing the colonization project in the name of the new knowledge economy.

As indigenous knowledge systems gain ascendancy in recent years, there is great potential for their commercial value to be exploited by conventional researchers funded by our own government through the NRF. Unfortunately, it will be difficult for indigenous communities to guard against and resist these initiatives emanating from the policies of the democratic government they have elected. Indigenous knowledge is the last frontier; the last of what belongs truly to the people; of what is rich about their traditions and way of life. It is powerful in itself; it is privileged and it, in turn, privileges indigenous people because it is exclusive to them. It valorizes indigenous peoples; it is a purveyor of their way of knowing and doing for ages. As Smith (1999, p. 74) puts it: "It is one of the few parts of ourselves which the West cannot decipher, cannot understand and cannot control ... yet." Indigenous knowledge has a tremendous transformative potential, a way of validating what so-called illiterate communities know. It is a way of healing the pain and tensions of the colonial and

apartheid projects – hence it is the decolonising project, for it seeks to actively deconstruct and destruct the impact of colonization on research. South African universities, especially the HBUs, can and should play a constructive role in privileging, centering and protecting indigenous knowledge systems.

As noted, the scholarly debates related to Mode 2 type research have focused on the binary of whether it benefits social reconstruction or marketization. Little consideration has been given to whether academics understand how to conduct Mode 2 type research, especially as it relates to social reconstruction and given their previous research training and experience. As Smith (1999) puts it, “The challenge is always to demystify and decolonise” (p. 5). Perhaps researchers can begin simply by asking: Whose research? Whose interests are being served? Whose needs have been identified and by whom? Who will own the research? Have the owners designed it? What do we mean by equal partners? What do we mean by participate? Who defines these meanings? What are the communities’ notions of these concepts?

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### REFLECTIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the concluding chapter, I reflect on the existing studies that have that have dealt with globalization, democratization and research capacity at South African universities and thereafter, I make my concluding statements. Decolonising methodologies, as noted in chapter three, aim to develop a new set of goals for the work that still has to be accomplished in deconstructing the colonial and racial projects. Following in this tradition, I make a number of recommendations following the conclusions, as steps to be taken to enhance the policy implementation in furthering the transformation, and to assist in building the research capacity of these institutions.

#### 12.1 REFLECTIONS ON EXISTING STUDIES

While there have been extensive discussions on globalization and higher education in the international and South African contexts, the South African work that has dealt with the tension between the dual forces of globalization and democratization has rarely, considered how the global and local changes affect researchers and their research capacity. In the first instance, as noted earlier in this dissertation, there has been an emphasis on issues related to marketization rather than on those related to redress, noted for example by Bertelsen (1998). Secondly, as noted above in chapters one, two and eleven, Mode 2 and responsivity have been discussed mainly from the perspective of the market and industry as noted by scholars Kraak and Subotsky (1999). Much of the research has, moreover, focused on management and leadership or problematic racial and gender behaviours and attitudes.

According to Slaughter (2001), the major theories employed to frame studies in comparative higher education at the international level are modernization theories and neo-colonial theories that refrain from interrogating partisan politics, for example, who makes decisions for and about higher education (p. 397). These modernization/ structural-functional theorists focus instead on the administrative state, a benign economy when considering how

higher education can foster economic growth while preserving the “fictive” autonomy of the institutions (ibid.). The neo-colonial theorists similarly avoid partisan politics and focus on structural domination instead, particularly on the economy as an external, coercive power that violates the potentially liberating character of higher learning (Slaughter, 2001, p. 398).

Slaughter asserts that scholars of higher education rarely look at political economy (ibid.).

Slaughter emphasises the need for theories and theorists that break with the modern/ industrial era, break down old categories (black/ white; man/woman; public/ private etc) and destabilize enduring paradoxes (macro/micro; structure/ agency; subjective/ objective) (ibid.). She claims that theorists who adopt this approach are often modernists who have paid close attention to the critique of modernism offered by postmodernists but do not yet have a group label.<sup>65</sup> Among these theories are political economic globalization theories (see Castells, 1993; Carnoy, 1993), networks of social/ political power or political sociology theories (see Mann, 1986), power/knowledge theories (see Foucault, 1979), narrativity theories (Somerson & Gibson, 1994) and feminist theories (Callas & Smerchich, 1998) (ibid.). Scott (1999) notes with concern that only a small fraction of higher education research is directed towards social and intellectual change (p. 330). Scott contends that higher education research in its present form has had few insights to offer; much of the speculation has been left to social theorists (Scott, 1999, p. 333). The management of systems and institutions has thus been the main thrust of higher education research. Researchers nonetheless have comparatively little to say about the urgent issues of higher education development (Scott, 1999, p. 333).

My review of the literature indicated that redress is treated principally from the perspective of representation within organizational structures and equity in terms of numbers. Alternatively, it is treated from the perspective of group differences such as race and gender, but even here the outcome of the research has been mainly quantitative, focusing on the

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<sup>65</sup> See Aronowitz and Giroux (1991, p. 63) for a discussion on the relation between modernism and postmodernism.

numbers of blacks and women being admitted to the institutions as staff and students. The few studies that have been based on in-depth interviews with academics and students across the disciplines highlight the need to problematise attitudes or the status of blacks and/or women, but they often end there. Much of the research generated by CHET, a non-governmental organization that undertakes research on higher education, has been pragmatic and aimed at analyzing policy implementation and developing further policy by drawing mainly on quantitative data. There has also been a dangerous trend in these research studies, especially policy studies such as that generated by CHET, to avoid problematising or even referring to issues of white hegemony or racism. This trend is characteristic of the “new South Africa,” where a new “colour blindness” has been adopted by the so-called “rainbow nation” as it engages in the transformation. In some instances, individuals engaged in the transformation process have responded by rolling up their sleeves and becoming immersed in technical processes, e.g., managerialism at the universities. In other cases, the response has been one of active or passive resistance. In terms of research, some scholars have chosen to focus on the technical and tangible issues to understand and describe the change processes, policy implementation and so forth.

It is for this reason that I have come to the conclusion that to problematize the change process from a postmodern perspective will serve only to identify the persistence of hegemony and discrimination. To find ways of removing the obstacles to change, such as racism, will require more than changes in representative governance structures, innovative leadership and management, management strategies, personnel attitudes and behaviours, shifts in modes of production, curriculum or equity and affirmative action policies, which current studies focus on. My argument is to go a step further and adopt decolonising methodologies as a programme to further analyse and investigate the hegemony and gate-keeping processes that I believe resides not with individuals alone but which are an intrinsic part of the colonial and racial systems, apparatuses and technologies of these institutions.

Some argue that resistance from the old guard has made the transformation difficult. I argue that this has been possible not simply because of their resistance and machinations, but because they have had at their disposal apparatuses (of the modern and hence racialised states) that appear neutral but have lent themselves well as tools for undermining the democratic processes.

My research also focuses on universities in a poor and remote part of the country. Much of the existing research, even that generated by the research institution, CHET, has focused on the larger universities located in the bigger centers such as Cape Town, Johannesburg or Pretoria. The Eastern Cape universities have been neglected largely in higher education research studies.

## **12.2 CONCLUSIONS**

Higher education in South Africa is in an unprecedented state of flux as global and local changes, under the force and influence of neoliberal reforms and democratization efforts, have come to bear on institutions that are traditionally phlegmatic in responding to change. These changes have placed senior management, policy makers, academics, librarians and graduate students under tremendous strain as they confront pressures to increase research output and implement a host of new policies amidst severe resource constraints and institutional changes (largely in the form of institutional mergers). In analyzing the responses of the participants at the three universities in my study to the changes now underway, I believe that the current climate of higher education is dominated by three trends: 1) increased managerialism or entrepreneurialism -- in response to globalization and new policies aimed at growth, efficiency and effectiveness -- which has resulted in the tightening of reins over spending and an increased emphasis on research output and massification; 2) new democratic governing structures -- such as a representative governing council and institutional forums-- and equity policies to bring about redress; and, 3) a shift to the new mode of knowledge production, Mode 2, so that the research generated is responsive both to the market and

social needs, i.e., globalization and democratization. While there each one of these universities have much to contribute towards a new democratic nation through their knowledge producing processes, there are obstacles to them achieving their full potential. These obstacles arise not only from the lack of implementation of the new policies, both on the part of the institutions (e.g. equity) and government (e.g. processing of funding) but from shortcomings within the policy itself, for example, the narrow notions of equity and relevant research, as noted. Nevertheless, these obstacles can be successfully overcome with the development of new programmes to interrogate the transformation process more critically, especially through an evaluation of the policies and their implementation.

In examining the impact of managerialism on the research culture and research capacity of these universities, the implementation of democratizing and equity policies and their effect on researchers and their research, and the response of researchers to aspects of Mode 2 type research and the NRF funding for research, I find that the tension and dissonance between the dual goals of globalization and democratization have made it difficult for universities to pay equal attention to achieving growth as well as social redress. The effect of the globalising trends, in the form of neoliberal macro-economic policies embedded in modernist assumptions, have been to silence the democratizing and redress intentions of these policies, thereby potentially bringing into jeopardy the transformation project in South African higher education.

The forces of globalization threaten the democratizing project in several ways: First, neoliberal imperatives have led to increased corporatization of the universities and the development of managerial/ entrepreneurial models that invoke the urgent attention of senior managers, preventing them from paying equal attention to implementation of the transformation policies. Second, the severe resource constraints brought about by neoliberal reforms at two of the three institutions have placed extreme pressures on researchers and hamper the capacity of these universities to contribute to knowledge production and

dissemination. Third, the principles of democracy and equity, as defined in the policy documents and implemented by the institutions, focuses on representativeness and numbers alone, thereby shedding their democratic portents and serving the project of modernity instead. Fourth, the neoliberal focus on effectiveness and efficiency leads to a preoccupation with extremely narrow and hide-bound measures of merit and excellence that may serve to reproduce the hegemony of the dominant group. Fifth, neoliberal interests have led to Mode 2 approaches to knowledge production, resulting in notions of “relevance”, “partnership” and “collaboration” not being appropriately understood or applied in relation to research involving local communities and indigenous knowledge systems. Sixth, there is a need to move beyond critical postmodern methodologies to create a space for decolonizing methodological approaches if we are to destabilize the inherently modernist and hence, racist apparatuses of these institutions, especially given their historical context and relation to colonialism and apartheid.

In this study, I have paid particular attention to the university’s role as a knowledge producer and disseminator as one important way of contributing to the establishment of a new democratic order and social justice in South Africa. As noted earlier in the discussion in chapter one, it has long been recognized that the main role of the university has been the production of high skills, knowledge and culture. South African policy makers recognized the contribution that universities could make to growth and development in a new South Africa. As discussed in chapter two, the White Paper 3 (1997) identified research as one of the core functions of higher education, linking research to the “development of high-level human resources”. Furthermore, the future research agenda is linked to local needs and the need to be competitive in the global arena:

There is still insufficient attention to the pressing local, regional and national needs of the South African society and the problems and challenges of the broader African context.... (The) production, acquisition and application of new knowledge: national growth and competitiveness is dependent on continuous technological improvements and innovation, driven by a well-

organized vibrant research and development system which integrates the research and training capacity of higher education with the needs of industry and of social reconstruction. (South Africa, 1997a, pp. 8-10)

As can be seen from this excerpt, and as discussed in chapter two, research has an important role to play in producing knowledge that contributes to national growth and competitiveness and in meeting the needs of the social reconstruction programme. The growth of the economy is viewed as an essential and urgent step towards ensuring that the necessary redress, social development and redistributive measures can be undertaken.

The apartheid state had left behind a huge debt incurred for payment of the war against its own people. In addition, a decade of international sanctions and boycotts of South Africa had brought the economy to its knees. To summarise the points made in chapter one, growth and development contribute to the progress of nation states and the key ingredients for growth and development are technology, innovation, knowledge production and higher education, all functions of the university. Knowledge assumes a powerful role in production and has been recognized as an essential factor for successful economic growth and competitiveness. In a knowledge-based world, moreover, it is an important commodity with high currency. Given the emphasis on higher education and its role in contributing to the new social order through knowledge producing processes, this study has examined how the changes resulting from globalization have affected researchers and their research programmes, and whether the universities in the study have the research capacity to play the role expected of them.

These forces of change are not unique to South Africa. Globally, there have been increasing pressures on universities to respond to globalization in the form of neoliberal reforms and new technologies, while simultaneously, the heightened awareness of the need for democracy and social justice has resulted in calls for universities to shift from traditional elitist institutions to ones that are more equitable, accountable and responsive to society. This has led to a number of changes in higher education institutions globally, namely, cuts to

spending, the speed and pace of new technologies affecting the knowledge production and dissemination processes in significant ways, massification, greater accountability, new modes of knowledge production and the commercialization of research. All these changes have a bearing on researchers and the knowledge-making processes of universities. International scholars have expressed concern that these changes have led to the increasing marketization of universities, which may lead to the demise of the traditional collegial model in favour of the managerial or entrepreneurial model.

In South Africa, these forces of globalization and democratization have been given added emphasis, as the national response to these global changes has been to develop macro-policies supporting neoliberal reforms to promote growth and efficiency, as well as social redress and transformation. The intention of the South African government has been to adopt neoliberal policies to grow the economy in order to support development that will benefit social redress. Thus, neoliberal economic policies have been viewed as a means to an end, the end being the development of social justice in South Africa.

As noted in chapter one, globalization has many forms and can be viewed from several perspectives. Competitive globalization has a top-down approach and its internal logic is the accumulation of capital shaped by the corporate interests of transnational corporations and rich countries. This form of globalization is driven by neoliberalism and is characterized by expanding capitalism globally, seeking out new markets and being driven by communications and information technologies. It serves to increase the gap between the rich and poor nations. Co-operative globalization has a bottom-up approach with human development as its motivating force. Its internal logic is the accumulation of human capacities. It has been used to mobilize global action against the hegemony of corporate interests that drive competitive globalization, seeking instead to use new communications and information technologies to make the world a better place for all its peoples, seeking social justice as an end.

Those who have supported the neoliberal policies in South Africa argue that economic growth is necessary to generate the income needed for the social redistributive needs of the country. The pervading national policy discourse, reflected within the higher education sector as well, has been that the dual goals of neoliberalism and democratization may be balanced in application. Although later policy documents emphasized the neoliberal goals of growth, efficiency and effectiveness, there has been a view among scholars that South Africa presents a history and context from which lessons from the past will prevent neoliberal imperatives that lead to growth for its own sake from attaining hegemony and, as a consequence, obfuscate the democratic, redistributive and social redress intentions of the policies. At its 93<sup>rd</sup> conference held on 8-9<sup>th</sup> January 2005, the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), indicated a renewed commitment to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which many critiques of government had charged had been forsaken in favour of the neoliberal GEAR policy (ANC, 2005).

A decade after the inauguration of Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected president of South Africa, concerns are being expressed that the neoliberal emphasis may be overriding the ends of social justice (see Siphos comments in chapter two). This concern recently became public when Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the national trade union, COSATU, charged that wealth creation in the new South Africa was only benefiting a few only. In other words, class domination in the new South Africa had remained intact and growth has become an end in itself rather than a means to an end. All that has changed is that the colour of the privileged few, previously white only, now includes blacks. Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) refers to the creation of a new class of rich wealthy blacks in former colonies as the "comprador bourgeoisie." Of note, the South African economy has done remarkably well over this decade accomplishing the highest growth rate in 2004 since 1986. President Mbeki, taking umbrage at the former Archbishop's remarks about government's failure to deliver on the promised social reconstruction programme, pointed to the gains

government had in fact made in achieving social redress for the masses. What is interesting is that both the Archbishop and the President are committed to achieving the same ends; democracy and social justice in South Africa. What the government contends is that its original agenda, using growth as a means for responding to social redistributive concerns, is still on track, whereas the Archbishop is concerned that the means is becoming an end in itself, that is, the redistributive concerns have been forgotten as neoliberalism dominates. As noted in chapter two, some scholars have argued that neoliberalism not only increases inequality and widens the gap between poor and rich nations, given that there is no example in the world where neoliberal economic adjustments have produced socially progressive outcomes (Bertelsen, 1998, p. 136; Adam, 1997, B3; Jones, 2000, p. 30; Marais, 1998, p. 171; Odora Hoppers, 1998a; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000, p. 12).

This discussion on macro-policies may appear to be a digression from my thesis. This is not the case, though, because the higher education policies mirror the macro-policy intents and developments, as has been noted earlier in the dissertation. The findings of my study indicate that the concerns raised by Archbishop Tutu may be raised for higher education too. When the neoliberal reforms serve to reduce inefficiency, wastage and duplication, which are characteristic of the apartheid system, with the intention of developing “a unified, equitable, well-planned, program based system of higher education,” which will contribute to growth as well as social development, then neoliberalism serves as a means to the end of social justice. It creates the possibility for the “equitable, well-planned system of higher education” envisaged in the White Paper (see chapter two). However, when these reforms are driven purely by market logic, for example, with a focus on increased student enrolment to increase institutional revenue alone and not as part of the equity and redress programme, then the means serve to threaten the ends of social justice.

The question that needs posing is whether the efficiency brought about by managerialism/entrepreneurialism at UPE, Rhodes and Fort Hare was a means for achieving

growth to bring about redress and social development, or a means for the growth and economic survival of the institutions themselves? Is the transformation of the institutions through the democratization and equity policies serving the ends of social justice or neoliberalism, where a privileged few within the institution hold power and continue to make decisions, as in the Senate at Rhodes, for example? Similarly, does relevance in terms of Mode 2 type research pertain to industry and the commercial sector alone or to local communities as well, in an effort to solve the social problems facing South African society? To what extent are the dual goals of globalization and democratization being realized in the three areas I have identified? What is the consequence for research of neoliberal intents assuming dominance at the expense of realizing the goals of democratization?

The three universities in this study have great potential to contribute to the knowledge-making processes that are so necessary for building a new nation capable of competing on the global markets and simultaneously attending to the major redistributive needs locally. As can be seen from the case studies, these universities have similarities, but their differences, despite the deplorable apartheid system that gave rise to them, also serve to enrich the higher education sector. This means that the Eastern Cape Province has an eclectic mix of universities that can respond to the diverse needs of our diverse society. While there is a need to remove the negative factors that set these universities apart, such as inequitable resource allocation and remnants of racial and gender exclusivity from the past, there is also reason to celebrate the diversity of these institutions and the rich contributions they can make to the growth and development of South African society through their knowledge-making processes. Each of the universities has struck me as a sterling institution in very different ways. But there are obstacles to them achieving their full potential as institutions of higher learning for the benefit of all. If attention is paid to overcoming these obstacles, these universities are set to soar in terms of their own development and the great contributions they can make to society. Hence, despite the tremendous potential each has to contribute to the

new social order, important interventions will have to be made to ensure that the gains they have already made in building their research capacity and productivity, initiating the transformation processes within their institutions, and expressing a commitment to change in the higher education sector and to social development in the Eastern Cape Province, are not lost. For the moment at least, the evidence from the study shows that the third way has eluded the three universities under study.

UPE is certainly using its knowledge producing processes to contribute to the development of the Nelson Mandela Metropole and the Eastern Cape as a whole. UPE is undertaking significant research that contributes to social development, environmental issues and industrial development. It is a good and stable institution with a sound reputation, strong administration and excellent facilities. It is significant to note that UPE, as an Afrikaans HWU, was ahead of the national higher education transformation process when it began democratic institutional reforms in the early 1990s (see Austin, 2001; MacKenzie, 1994). The dramatic change in student demographics is amongst the most remarkable in the world as noted by scholars Cloete et al. (2002). Even staff demographics at UPE stand up well when compared to Rhodes, in taking equity of race and gender into account (see Table 8, chapter ten). The positive attitudes of white female academics to the new changes and their effect on research, as indicated by their enthusiasm and commitment, have been exemplary. Librarians are visionary and have a good sense of the future role of the library in a knowledge-based information society. In addition, the leadership of this university appears to be committed to change, as attested to by the black participants at UPE.

Nevertheless, serious attention needs to be paid to achieving staff equity at UPE. Black participants at both HWUs feel excluded by the institutional climate and structural and systemic processes. Staff does not appear to have equal access to information, funding, promotions and appointments. This can hinder their work performance and the institutions' ability to utilize fully the talents of this new generation of researchers. In addition, current

financial constraints resulting from managerialism at UPE are not productive when they serve to curb access to research resources and hence productivity. Managerialism at UPE has had a negative influence on staff's capacity to produce research and cuts to the library have seriously compromised knowledge production. Most importantly, though, the equity policies are not being implemented for a host of reasons that seem to escape management. For UPE, it means the strides taken earlier, in moving towards democratization from its Broederbond roots, may be weakened when weighed against their current inability to achieve equity goals for staff.

Rhodes is among the foremost research institutions in the country and enjoys international recognition because of its excellent standards in teaching and research. Based on its renown and reputation, Rhodes is able to raise significant funds from donors and through its entrepreneurial activities, which increase its potential to contribute to both growth and democracy. As noted, Rhodes can be commended for having attained and sustained the status of producing the highest per-capita research output consistently over a four-year period. Rhodes also has programmes in place that support newer researchers and the income derived from subsidies is used to support them. This institution is an asset to the South African higher education sector. As an institution of higher learning, it has managed to resist global and local pressures to adopt the managerial model and has successfully maintained its traditional collegial ethos. However, this very ethos that serves to preserve its teaching and research traditions may also harbour elements of the past and make it difficult for the leadership to recognize the need for change. The adage commonly heard at Rhodes, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it", which essentially implies that the university does not need to change because it functions so well, indicates that the leadership has not recognized that Rhodes is failing to contribute to social redress locally. Rhodes is compromising the great potential and promise it holds for contributing to social development through its research productivity. It is failing to develop a more representative generation of scholars as rapidly and as extensively as it has

the capacity to do because outdated and unduly discriminatory ideas about knowledge, access, standards, merit and quality linger in ways that work against developing a more vital institutional culture. These ideas preclude the institution from developing an Africa-focus, making it difficult to realize its "African identity" as stated in its mission statement. That Rhodes sees itself as part of a larger academic community of international Western universities and has the traditional Oxbridge ethos despite its African setting is not the issue here. As pointed out earlier, the diversity of types of institutions enriches the higher education sector. It is an advantage to the sector that one of its smaller universities located far from the bigger centres has positioned itself as an international university. The problem lies with Rhodes' incapacity to relate to its African setting in a way that enables it to balance its global aspirations with its need to make local contributions. Instead, some black participants were of the view that Rhodes was locked within an outdated British colonial university model, which in turn fails to create an environment that can accommodate the new generation of students and staff slowly beginning to enter its portals.

Ironically, Fort Hare, an institution that, like most other HBUs, has been typecast as a failure among universities and nearly faced closure a few years ago, has great potential for engaging in knowledge production processes that will contribute to social development. Drawing on its tradition as the seat of black intellectualism that provided the philosophical framework of resistance to the apartheid ideology, its historic commitment to social development and its strategic location amongst the dispossessed, Fort Hare is well-positioned for engaging not only in developmental research that can directly affect the lives of disadvantaged communities, but also for building capacity in IKS. One of Fort Hare's assets is the zealous commitment of some staff and students to ensuring that the university will achieve its research goals. Fort Hare has made significant strides in developing its research culture by establishing a faculty of research under a Dean of Research, appointing academic staff with good research records of accomplishment, who have already made advances in

developing the research capacity of Fort Hare, and by waiving fees for postgraduate students. Interestingly, the efficiency derived from managerialism at Fort Hare has unfolded in the way originally intended by the policy, i.e., neoliberal reforms supporting the democratization process; the third way. However, this balance is precarious for two reasons. Firstly, the national government has not been forthcoming with promised funding, which serves to hinder the development of Fort Hare's resources and research capacity. Further, local government does not provide the infrastructure that will attract and retain high quality academics at Fort Hare. Secondly, despite current resource and other constraints, management could give greater priority and attention to research, for example, better use of existing resources and establishing programmes to develop and support researchers.

Hence the three universities, in their own special ways, hold much promise for the higher education sector in the Eastern Cape. However, they experience certain conditions that threaten the realization of South Africa's higher education policy goals and their own institutional missions. The neoliberal imperatives, which have led to increased managerialism/ entrepreneurialism, have redirected the institutions' energies and attention away from a more democratic transformation. In addition, the institutional technologies, structures and systems, which are embedded in modernist constructs that are linked to the colonial and apartheid project, hinder the capacity of these institutions to self-transform. This, together with outdated and unduly discriminatory ideas about knowledge, access, standards, merit and quality, linger in ways that work against developing a more vital research and institutional culture that can fully exploit the universities' contribution to the new social order.

Institutional changes such as managerialism and entrepreneurialism affect how knowledge production and dissemination are viewed, prioritized and implemented. These changes have a bearing on the universities' orientation towards research and the kind of resources they allocate to research and new technologies, such as IT, library holdings,

publishing policies and trends, opportunities for and attitudes towards open access and increasing the public domain of knowledge. All of these affect the research capacity of these institutions and determine the role they can play in contributing to the new social order. Changes in response to social pressures such as democratization and social redress have led to the establishment of representative governance structures and the development of equity policies. These changes should contribute to the growth and development of these universities, enabling them to make better use of the human resources, skills and talents of a large proportion of South African society previously excluded from HWUs. In this way, they may contribute to building research capacity and knowledge productivity in the country.

Any practices that continue to exclude large numbers of previously disadvantaged groups from higher education will hamper the growth and progress of South African society in the long term and reduce the opportunities for these institutions to rejuvenate themselves and build their research capacity. Adopting Mode 2 approaches to research that can be of relevance in ways that contribute to redress and the social development of underprivileged communities is a way for knowledge producing processes to contribute directly to social justice. Hence, all the questions I have posed in the thesis revolve around the role research can play in contributing to the dual goals of growth and social redress.

### **12.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the preceding analysis, I have drawn up a series of recommendations intended to further demonstrate the consequences and potential benefits of this study for higher education in South Africa. I have organized these recommendations, which are directed at policymakers in government and the higher education sector, as well as university administrators and faculty.

#### **Access to research resources**

To differing degrees, these universities lack adequate access to research funding, IT infrastructure, human resources and library holdings, all of which are necessary for building

their research profiles. Access to IT has enabled researchers to overcome not only the severe resource constraints but also to enhance their research productivity through engaging in global scholarly networks. Relevant information literacy training is crucial, however, to improve research productivity. Aside from the lack of time available for knowledge dissemination, researchers received no institutional coaching and support for publishing.

***Recommendations for increasing access to resources :***

- 1) Ways have to be found to use existing resources more efficiently. The libraries at the three universities should conduct a needs survey of researchers and design structured information literacy courses, rather than once-off short courses, to build capacity among researchers and enable them to use IT more efficiently for their research purposes.
- 2) UPE and Fort Hare should make computers more readily available for student use to allow them to develop skills to use the computers independently of the librarians.
- 3) UPE and Fort Hare should follow Rhodes' example of circumventing publishing agents and approaching publishers directly for more favourable subscription prices.
- 4) The regional Eastern Cape library consortia need to create the space for librarians to discuss and share problems they encounter and the creative responses they have developed to overcome scholarly resource constraints.
- 5) Programmes to familiarize high school students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with the library may contribute to preparing future students to use libraries more effectively.
- 6) The DNE should facilitate the development of formal collaboration between the three universities for sharing resources, expertise and innovative practices. The better-resourced institutions have access to facilities and resources that could be used more widely across institutions.

### **Knowledge dissemination**

The subsidy system, instituted by the past government, is an “all or nothing” system of rewards that supports the development of a few “top” researchers, rather than encouraging a much broader range of participation in producing knowledge. This rewards system may have to be re-evaluated in the light of: a new digital society and higher education environment where knowledge productivity is crucial for growth and social development; where new modes of knowledge production are in place, and where research capacity needs to be developed among a new generation of researchers locally. New technologies such as open access journals present tremendous opportunities for researchers to increase their access to the latest cutting edge research and widen the dissemination of their research outputs. However, the subsidy system has made South African researchers reluctant to publish in developing world journals, in particular, African journals whose readers might in fact benefit from research generated within a developing world context like South Africa.

#### ***Recommendations for knowledge dissemination:***

- 7) Mentoring and support programmes for researchers, staff and postgraduates need to include a component on publishing.
- 8) The subsidy system that rewards publication needs to be interrogated and deconstructed to determine whether it remains appropriate as the main rewards system to encourage publishing, given changes in modes of production and the need to democratize knowledge.
- 9) New rewards systems that recognize increases and innovation in research productivity as well as community impact should be instituted. Research should be valued as a public good.
- 10) New technologies for the dissemination of knowledge, such as open access e-print archives and online journals systems may be used to disseminate knowledge more widely and to increase readership and the number of citations authors receive. An

example of an online journal system is the Open Journal Systems (OJS).used by African Journals Online to increase the online presence of some 210 African journals (<http://www.ajol.info/>).<sup>66</sup>

- 11) Scholars should self-archive their articles by placing them in open access e-print archives, which can be established by university libraries (utilizing free open source software), as this will ensure wider access to their scholarship, especially for developing worldclass scholars.
- 12) Open access journals and the democratization of knowledge go hand in hand. Open access is a way for the three universities to contribute to widening knowledge dissemination in Africa, as part of the African Renaissance, by finding a way to make the journals currently published by these universities, for example “Speculum Juris”, a joint publication of Rhodes and Fort Hare, open access online publications. This could be done six months to one year after publishing their subscription-based print version, to avoid any loss of revenue from print subscriptions.
- 13) Extending the public domain of knowledge entails the “authentic” involvement of people, and feedback to local communities should go beyond the current one-way process discussed above.

### **Research culture**

The research culture and capacity of these institutions is based largely on historical factors. Fort Hare was predominantly a teaching university and received inequitable funding from the state, whereas UPE, whose main function as an Afrikaner teaching university was to provide opportunities for working class Afrikaners and to produce an Afrikaner elite to assume key professional, political and bureaucratic positions, was dependent on the apartheid government

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<sup>66</sup> OJS is free to download and was developed by the Public Knowledge Project, University of British Columbia (<http://www.pkp.ubc.ca>). It reduces publishing costs and enables editors to manage, publish, and index peer-reviewed journals over the Internet on an open access or free-to-read basis.

for its generous funding in the past. Rhodes, on the other hand, as an old English HWU established in colonial times, enjoyed relative autonomy as a traditional university based on the Oxbridge model.

Unlike the HBUs that had to return unspent funds to the state, the HWUs had the option of investing surplus funds. In addition, Rhodes, due to its success in teaching and research, attracted the support of mining houses and other private donors over the decades. Of the three universities, Rhodes has the research profile, resource access and capacity to make the greatest contribution to knowledge production. However, as the study shows, it is not resources alone that have made Rhodes such a successful university. Rhodes has a well-established research culture and a management that, at the highest level, is giving serious priority to research, a practice not nearly as evident among management at UPE, for example. In this sense, both UPE and Fort Hare can learn from the gains made by Rhodes in prioritizing research at the senior management level, as is evidenced by the attention given to the library, as noted. It is encouraging, however, that both UPE and Fort Hare management are beginning to place greater emphasis on research as the evidence I gathered indicates.

***Recommendations for research culture:***

- 14) Universities should design structured programmes to develop and support research, using participatory methodologies to ensure ownership and commitment to these programmes at all levels within the institutions. The programmes need to carefully define criteria for funding and tiers of responsibility for research output.
- 15) All three universities may benefit from developing mentoring and coaching programs whereby senior researchers take junior researchers under their wing to nurture and encourage their development. At UPE, for example, the Top 20 researchers may assume this mentoring role, whereas at Fort Hare, academics like Fatuh and Gumbi may assume this role. These programs must include a component on developing research projects and writing grant and funding proposals.

- 16) Policy makers and senior managers need to prioritize research based on a clear understanding of its importance for the university and the role of knowledge production and dissemination within global and local context and not merely as a response to conforming with policy or to access government and NRF funding. In developing their own understanding of the value of knowledge production in society, universities need to become more supportive of and seek to build the research profile of their institutions despite the neoliberal and other pressures they may encounter.
- 17) The Dean of Research at Fort Hare, the Director of Research at UPE and the Head Librarians of these institutions need to participate in executive management and central budget committees of the university so that they can use their knowledge and experience to inform debates and decision-making that affect their respective units. This must be preceded by an unambiguous appreciation on the part of management that the library is pivotal to enhancing the teaching and research capacity of the institutions, the main functions of the university.
- 18) A Faculty of Research or Dean of Research should be instituted at UPE, to replace the existing Office of Research or Director of Research, as a sign of enhanced recognition of and commitment to knowledge production at UPE. Faculty Deans are usually included in the executive committee and Council, which are key decision-making committees.
- 19) UPE and Rhodes should consider following Fort Hare's example, one adopted by some overseas universities as well, of waiving postgraduate tuition fees in an attempt to attract larger numbers of postgraduate students to their universities.
- 20) Following Rhodes' example, UPE and Fort Hare should consider publishing a newsletter that focuses on development in research.

- 21) Fort Hare may institute additional incentives to attract researchers, such as graduate fellowships (in conjunction with NRF support) and travel or accommodation allowances.
- 22) Fort Hare needs to fully exploit the potential it has for becoming a developmental research institution; its capacity for adopting the third way through balancing neoliberal reforms with reconstructive development.
- 23) Fort Hare needs to create a multi-sectoral forum to engage more meaningfully with local government in a way that will benefit both parties and lead to the upgrading of the local infrastructure and facilities of the town. This will make the town more viable in its own right but also enable Fort Hare to attract new academics to the institution, which in turn will contribute to building its research capacity. The different sectors that may need to be engaged to help overcome the current hiatus in engagement between the university and the town include civil society representatives, local businessmen, professionals, political organizations, parents, students and academics. In the initial states, this forum may also need to include provincial and national government and political party representatives because higher education is a national government competence. This forum could begin by establishing a joint understanding of the role of the university in society, especially in terms of the relation of its knowledge producing processes to local community development.

### **Funding**

Unfortunately, the research efforts of these universities continue to be compromised by the exacting standards and lengthy procedures for processing government funding and the bureaucratic tardiness in the roll out of these funds. This is especially the case at Fort Hare which, as a result of the inequitable funding arrangements that have continued into the post-apartheid era, does not have access to reserve funds like the HWUs and is already servicing a huge historical debt.

Managerialism and its accompanying fiscal austerity appear to have inhibited research productivity at UPE, whereas at Fort Hare it has enabled the university to avert closure -- "pulled up by the bootstraps" as the Vice Chancellor has put it. Instead, managerialism has enabled Fort Hare to reduce its debt by 50 % and increase student debt recovery from 16 % in 2000 to 92 % in 2004. Rhodes, on the other hand, has "managed" its foray into the marketization mode well, having averted managerialism and financial austerity, opting instead for entrepreneurialism and the profitable commercialization of its already successful research programme. I argue that the three universities will have to increase their entrepreneurial activities without necessarily compromising their commitment to social development and justice. In other words, use the profits from their commercial research activities to fund research programmes that foster social development.

***Recommendations for funding:***

- 24) University administrators need to work closely with academics, especially junior academics, to ensure that the university is allocating adequate and well-targeted finances to support research.
- 25) Universities will have to form stronger alliances and develop mechanisms to hold government to the terms of the new funding policies.
- 26) Aside from accessing government funding, UPE and Fort Hare in particular need to intensify their fundraising activities and identify untapped sources of funding, for example, other government departments, private and industrial partners.
- 27) Resources do not have to be in the form of funding alone. Strategic collaborations with international partners such as universities and research institutes will enable the exchange of skills. Although these are among some of the initiatives being undertaken by some of these universities, there is space for these initiatives to be extended and intensified.

- 28) Greater use should be made of post-doctoral fellows supported by the NRF programme, as this will contribute to the research capacity within departments.
- 29) An approach adopted in some departments at UPE whereby academics teach for three terms and use one term for research should be extended to all departments to grant academics more time for research activities.
- 30) UPE and Fort Hare should consider following Rhodes' example by optimising opportunities to commercialise their research. UPE's location in the industrial and commercial centre of the Eastern Cape positions it well to exploit opportunities for commercial research. Research should be commercialized in ways that do not compromise collegiality, academic professionalism, autonomy, academic freedom, public accountability and community service.
- 31) Institutions need to interrogate and deconstruct existing funding policies and procedures to uncover instances of gate-keeping and inequitable practices. New transparent procedures should be developed with wide academic participation, including from groups that feel they are being unfairly marginalized or discriminated against.
- 32) At UPE, bursaries and other funds due to postgraduates need to be processed more efficiently to avoid students expending a great deal of valuable research time trying to retrieve these payments.

### **Equity**

Unfortunately, the HWUs' contribution to transformation and social development may be compromised because of the lack of implementation of the transformation policies (such as the functioning of the governance structures and the employment equity plans). The experiences of black academics and students indicate that they find the prevailing ethos of these institutions alienating and that the equity policies have not been felt at the departmental levels. The absence of a culturally safe working environment might hamper their research

productivity. These universities may need to develop more of an Africa-focus as a way of increasing their impact manifold. Thus, outdated discriminatory ideas linger in ways that fail to utilize the potential talents and contributions of a new generation of scholars who are yet to be welcomed into the institutions.

Fort Hare, on the other hand, though it is too early to be certain, presents the possibility for meshing managerialism with the concerns for social justice and democratization. This university has recognised its role in research that contributes to the development of local communities, while at the same time adopting managerialism to cope with its assailing debt and other problems more effectively.

I argue that marketization, which presents itself as a neutral and urgent force, can become a foil for ignoring the need to give simultaneous and equal attention to the democratic transformation of the institution. Democratizing policies that focus on access and numbers alone to bring about social change, without any attention to destabilizing the colonizing apparatuses, systems and technologies of the institutions, serve to obfuscate potential gains that can be made by changes in visions, missions, and the establishment of democratic governing structures, such as councils and institutional forums.

The focus on access and numbers alone depoliticizes the transformation and makes equity a modernist project. Equity aligns itself well with liberal constructs of equality and poses no serious threat to the status quo. Administrative procedures that appear relatively neutral may in fact act as methods of gate keeping for those who have access to information, funding for research and a host of other privileges. Those who are truly interested in bringing about the transformation of these institutions will have to deconstruct and decolonise the structural constraints that perpetuate the classism embedded in the apartheid policies and structures that sought to economically privilege and empower the white group. These power relations are continuously reproduced through the apparatuses of these institutions.

The implementation of equity plans is a beginning, but it will not lead to the deracialization and decolonization of these institutions. Those seeking more profound change will have to look beyond the equity policies as a means of dismantling the existing class structures. They have to critically interrogate nodal points within administrative apparatuses that appear neutral, but in reality serve a gate keeping function within the institution. These technologies and apparatuses might include, amongst others, the rules, procedures, guidelines, criteria, application forms, lines of authority and information channels for accessing funds and processing claims. The transformation project must begin with adopting decolonizing and critical postmodern frameworks to interrogate the hegemony at all interstices of the institution.

***Recommendations for equity:***

- 33) University Councils need to recognize that representativeness alone will not bring about transformation of the universities. Council and stakeholders whose representatives sit on Council should evaluate the performance of their representatives to ensure that they are not simply redressing numbers but are playing a constructive role in transforming these universities. They need to assess whether these representatives have not been co-opted into the existing ethos, and that they have the capacity and skills to interrogate the transformation process within their institutions.
- 34) The HWUs in particular need to evaluate the achievement of equity goals and the functioning of the institutional forums based on more than statistical reports provided by management. Councils need to establish task teams that visit departments to investigate recruitment, selection and promotion procedures, and to interview black and women academics to identify issues and practices that hinder the transformation process.

- 35) Administrative technologies and procedures, for example grants and payment procedures, at all levels need to be interrogated to identify hidden agendas embedded within the modernist nature of these structures and systems.
- 36) The institutional forums need to be revitalized, perhaps overhauled and given greater powers and the space to drive the transformation process.
- 37) The issues raised by the newly established solidarity group forums (the Black and African Staff Forums at UPE and Rhodes respectively) need to be taken seriously by management and Council, and it is advisable that the revised statutory Institutional Forums liaise formally with these new solidarity forums.
- 38) Notions of merit and the admission criteria and procedures that serve to maintain standards should be re-evaluated and deconstructed to ensure that they have not become a foil for controlling the access of disadvantaged students and black academics.
- 44) Those attending to meaningful change at these universities, for example, the revamping of the institutional forums, will have to adopt decolonising methodologies in addition to critical postmodern methodologies so that they can go beyond problematising or 'deconstructing' colonised and racialised apparatuses to find ways of 'de-structing' them and reconstructing new technologies, systems, structures and apparatuses for the university.

### ***Mode 2 and indigenous knowledge***

The scholarly debates related to Mode 2 type research have focused on the binary of whether it benefits social reconstruction or marketization. Little consideration has been given to whether academics actually understand how to conduct Mode 2 type research, especially as it relates to social reconstruction, given their previous research training and experience. The policy to steer academics towards "socially relevant" research is part of the government's attempt to channel universities in the direction of contributing towards social development.

To recall the earlier point made in chapter two, scholar Kraak (2001) posits that Mode 2 is not just a new way of conducting research but the outcome of powerful social forces (p. 15, 17). Unfortunately, the national policy and the NRF's funding policies do not spell out what social development might imply for research, nor what constitutes relevant research and how researchers may ensure the participation of communities in research activities. There is no nuanced understanding in the policy that terms such as "socially relevant", "stakeholder partnerships" and "participatory research" may mean different things to different people, based on their own discursive histories and contexts. Without proper attention to deconstructing existing notions of these terms, the policy could do more harm than good.

Most of the researchers interviewed do not appear to have given much thought to appropriate methodologies for conducting such research and have paid little attention to the meaningful consultation and authentic involvement of local communities as equal partners in the research act. If this situation does not receive attention, there is the risk of alienating communities from the university and the production of knowledge and, worse, the colonization of indigenous knowledge by Western-trained academics, black and white, imbued with ontologies, epistemologies and axiologies that are foreign to local communities. The interest in socially relevant research also poses a risk of encouraging the commercial exploitation of indigenous communities and their knowledge, giving rise to a new form of colonization at the behest of the knowledge-based economy, driven by globalization as a neoliberal force. Universities, as part of their social contract with society, can play a constructive role in privileging, centering and protecting indigenous knowledge systems.

***Recommendations for Mode2 and indigenous knowledge:***

- 39) Following the example of Rhodes, UPE and Fort Hare need to establish procedures led by the Deans of Research for ensuring that Mode 2 supplements rather than supplants Mode 1 type of research.

- 40) Along similar lines, these officers need to ensure through careful monitoring that Mode 2 serves the dual goals of marketization and social development and that relevance is not interpreted as pertaining to the market only but to social development as well.
- 41) The NRF and universities have to review existing policies that promote “socially relevant” research in “partnership” with local communities. Special attention needs to be given to developing nuanced understandings of terms like “relevance”, “partnership” and “community involvement”.
- 42) Appropriate methodologies and protocols need to be developed for working closely with indigenous communities and indigenous knowledge systems, for example, by including these communities in developing the research agenda. To achieve this, existing ontologies need to be destabilized by using decolonizing methodologies.
- 43) Universities should play a role in privileging, centering and protecting indigenous communities. Universities should support indigenous communities against exploitation by commercial and private interests through facilitating the negotiation of contracts or other agreements that protect these communities.
- 44) Researchers working with indigenous knowledge systems should constantly ask the following questions to ensure that their research is ‘relevant’ and that they are not exploiting indigenous communities: Whose research is this? Whose interests are being served? Who will own the research?

#### **To conclude**

The new government in South Africa has established a plethora of higher education policies to assist in the transformation of the higher education sector into “a unified, equitable, well-planned program based system of higher education” that will contribute to growth and efficiency and well as to democratization, redress and social justice. These policies may serve a symbolic purpose but they also establish, most importantly, the framework and

parameters for guiding the transformation of the higher education sector from the inequitable, segregated and inefficient apartheid institutions to new democratic institutions. Through effective institutional change, universities can strengthen the higher education sector in South Africa and in turn, contribute to the transformation and development of South African society. Through the effective implementation of these policies, these institutions can contribute to developing high skills, innovation and knowledge that will enable the nation to play a competitive and developmental role internationally as well as nationally.

The three universities in my study will have to take bold steps to develop programs that support a vital research culture that will contribute to growth, democratization and social justice. The new higher education policies and NRF policies need to be reviewed and interrogated because the liberal intents of these policies and the way in which they are being interpreted and implemented tend to favour neoliberal interests that reproduce privilege and power among dominant groups rather than serving the ends of redress and social justice.

A critical postmodern framework as well as a decolonizing methodology is required to unmask hidden interstices of power and privilege within the technologies, systems and structures of these institutions. Critical postmodernism is useful in deconstructing notions of power and privilege and instances of gate keeping whereas decolonizing methodologies will assist in exposing and 'de-structing' sites at which these obstacles to transformation are located and embedded. I have deliberately used the term "de-structing" to show the active intention to go beyond deconstructing to uncover and remove racialised sites within the technologies, systems, structures and apparatuses of the university.

Earmarked funding, especially that intended as redress for HBUs, needs to be operationalized as intended in the policy because current administrative procedures are unacceptable and do little to support the development of higher education. The new national department for higher education requires additional staff and capacity to ensure that it can better fulfill the role it is expected to play in managing and supporting higher education in

South Africa. After all, it is government's responsibility to ensure that universities have the administrative and management capacity to implement policies.

There is, as well, the broader role these universities should play in civil society. HWUs should develop an African-focus to authenticate their expressed mission and vision that positions them as universities at the tip of Africa. This can be done by: ensuring greater access to African scholarship; forging of linkages and networks with African institutions at all levels; valuing African culture and African contributions to knowledge, including indigenous knowledge systems; developing ontologies, methodologies and pedagogies that are African; reconfiguring institutional and individual notions of identity, believed to be one of the roles of universities (see Altbach, 1987, Neave, 1991) and; according foreign African students more respect by recognising their histories and contexts. On another level, universities and their civil society partners have to be ever vigilant that government does not renege on its promises to build capacity at these universities.

Aronowitz and Giroux (2000) argue that higher education should be defended as a public sphere for developing democratic citizenry against the encroaching market-driven logic:

Education must not be confused with training, suggesting that educators resist allowing commercial values to shape the purpose and mission of higher education... the best reason for supporting institutions of higher education "lies not in the services they can perform... but in the values they represent." The values of justice, freedom, equality and the rights of citizens as equal and free human beings are central to higher education's role in educating students for the demands of leadership, social citizenship, and democratic public sphere. (p. 332)

As discussed earlier in this dissertation, despite government's commitment to the RDP and the principles of democratization and social justice, the influence of market forces may create conditions for government to become proxy to corporate interests, thereby neglecting its responsibility to these universities and, in turn, civil society. It is essential in a new democracy like South Africa that universities, despite their dependence on government

for public funding, maintain their autonomy and responsibility to act as the “vanguardismo” of social justice and a strong civil sector. In the words of Vusi, one of the student participants at Fort Hare, the university should adopt a critical role because “democracy is a carefully crafted ideology.”

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**APPENDIX A**

**List of Participants Cited**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS CITED**

<b>Pseudonyms</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Participant Type</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Annelise	UPE	Senior academic	White	Female
Brent	UPE	Postgraduate	Coloured	Male
Beryl	UPE	Senior academic	White	Female
Bonang	UPE	Junior academic	Black	Male
Celine	UPE	Senior academic	White	Female
Charmaine	UPE	Junior academic	Coloured	Female
Emma	UPE	Postgraduate	Indian	Female
Feziwe	UPE	Junior lecturer/Postgraduate	Black	Female
Gertrude	UPE	Postgraduate	White	Female
Geyer	UPE	Postgraduate	White	Male
Goodall	UPE	Senior academic	White	Male
Grant	UPE	Senior academic	White	Male
Gumede	UPE	Junior academic	Black	Male
Helga	UPE	Head Librarian	White	Female
Jeevan	UPE	Junior academic	Indian	Male
Macy	UPE	Postgraduate	White	Female
Muriel	UPE	Postgraduate	White	Female
Murray	UPE	Senior manager/academic	White	Male
Myburgh	UPE	Senior academic	White	Male
Nora	UPE	Postgraduate	White	Female
Pat	UPE	Senior academic	White	Female
Piet	UPE	Senior academic	White	Male
Peliswa	UPE	Postgraduate	Black	Female
Ramdass	UPE	Junior academic	Indian	Male
Rita	UPE	Librarian	White	Female
Ronelle	UPE	Junior academic	Coloured	Female
Vanita	UPE	Postgraduate	Indian	Female
Verster	UPE	Head Librarian	White	Male
William	UPE	Junior lecturer	Coloured	Male
Winters	UPE	Postgraduate	White	Male
Xolile	UPE	Junior academic/Postgraduate	Black	Male
Bertrand	UFH	Senior manager/academic	White	Male
Dirk	UFH	Senior academic	White	Male
Fatuh	UFH	Senior academic	Black	Male
Fox	UFH	Senior academic	White	Male
Gumbi	UFH	Senior academic	Black	Male
Henry	UFH	Senior manager/academic	Coloured	Male
Loodts	UFH	Senior academic	White	Male

Mbuyo	UFH	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Miso	UFH	Senior academic	Black	Male
Nyazi	UFH	Senior academic	Black	Male
Otto	UFH	Senior manager	White	Male
Raleigh	UFH	Senior official	White	Male
Ruth	UFH	Senior academic	White	Female
Sandhu	UFH	Senior official	Indian	Male
Sasha	UFH	Librarian – periodicals	White	Female
Sipho	UFH	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Sizwe	UFH	Senior academic	Black	Male
Susan	UFH	Research official	White	Female
Thandi	UFH	Head Librarian	Black	Female
Thembi	UFH	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Vusi	UFH	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Walter	UFH	Librarian	White	Male
Wandile	UFH	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Zukov	UFH	Senior academic	White	Male
Anderson	RU	Senior academic	White	Male
Anna	RU	Postgraduate/ junior academic	White	Female
Asante	RU	Senior academic	Black	Male
Audrey	RU	Head Librarian	White	Female
Dianna	RU	Junior academic/ Postgraduate	Coloured	Female
Donna	RU	Junior academic/ Postgraduate	Coloured	Female
Duane	RU	Senior academic	White	Male
Elizabeth	RU	Head Librarian	White	Female
Gibbs	RU	Senior manager/academic	White	Male
Greg	RU	Senior Manager/ academic	Coloured	Male
Haines	RU	Senior academic	White	Male
Hodges	RU	Senior official	White	Male
Hugh	RU	Junior academic/ Postgraduate	White	Male
Julia	RU	Senior academic	White	Female
Kabiru	RU	Postgraduate	Black	Female
Kathy	RU	Senior academic	White	Female
Mandla	RU	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Martha	RU	Senior academic	White	Female
Martin	RU	Junior academic	White	Male
Massey	RU	Senior manager	White	Male
Mugo	RU	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Naresh	RU	Senior manager/academic	Indian	Male

Ngoma	RU	Junior academic/ Postgraduate	Black	Male
Rani	RU	Academic	Indian	Female
Rens	RU	Senior academic	White	Male
Sara	RU	Senior academic	White	Female
Sandra	RU	Librarian – Information Sciences	White	Female
Serfontein	RU	Librarian – Periodicals	White	Female
Sidi	RU	Junior academic	Black	Female
Simon	RU	Postgraduate	Black	Male
Toni	RU	Junior Academic/ Postgraduate	Black	Female
Zandi	RU	Postgraduate	Black	Male

**APPENDIX B**

**List of Departments**

## LIST OF DEPARTMENTS

**Accounting**  
**Agriculture and Environmental Sciences**  
**Agronomy**  
**Anthropology and Archaeology**  
**Biochemistry**  
**Botany**  
**Computer Science and Information Science**  
**Construction Management and Quantity Surveying**  
**Economics**  
**Education**  
**English**  
**Geography**  
**Language and Linguistics**  
**Law**  
**Library and Information Science**  
**Literacy**  
**Microbiology**  
**Nursing Sciences**  
**Pharmacy**  
**Politics**  
**Psychology**  
**Public Administration**  
**Science, Mathematics and Technology in Education**  
**Sociology**  
**Social development**  
**Theology**  
**Zoology**

**APPENDIX C**  
**Introductory and Consent**

Department of Language & Literacy  
Education  
2125 Main Mall  
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4  
(604) 822-3950 / john.willinsky@ubc.ca

March 20, 2003

## **INFORMED CONSENT: RESEARCH CAPACITY AND TECHNOLOGY AT SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES**

This doctoral study is linked to the Public Knowledge Project, University of British Columbia (<http://www.pkp.ubc.ca/>)

### **INTRODUCTION**

As a new nation, South Africa is faced with challenges that are both local and global. At the local level, the country needs to build a democratic society from the devastation left behind in the wake of apartheid. Concurrently, South Africa, like all developing countries, needs to find its niche in a globalized world economy that is knowledge-based (White Paper 1997, as cited in Kraak, 2001, p. 20). Technology, innovation, knowledge production and higher education are often identified as the key ingredients for the successful development and progress of countries (Bhagwati, 2002; Brown et al., 2001; Carnoy, 2000; Mokyr, 1990; O' Rourke & Williamson, 2000).

The new higher education policies emphasise that universities – as the main producers of knowledge, high skills, and as transmitters of culture – have a dual role to play in the transformation process in terms of both democratization and globalization. At the local level, the research activities of universities can contribute towards solving the tremendous social problems facing the country and assist in reconfiguring notions of culture, identity and diversity in South African society (Cloete et al., 1999). At the global level, knowledge creation, innovation and high skills formation at the university may help to position the country as a competitive player in this global knowledge-based economy.

Currently, our universities confront the dual challenge of ensuring that their programmes are responsive to the needs of a changing society while at the same time establishing academic standards that will set South Africa on par with tertiary education internationally. Exchange rates have limited our access to research and scholarship and have made it difficult for our universities to keep up with global knowledge developments. Instead, global developments in technology have tended to increase the gap between the developed and developing nations. A handful of developed countries have dominated the publishing and dissemination of knowledge.

Taking into account the rising cost of research and publication, it may be worthwhile to consider how the academic and public value of research may be enhanced with the support of new technologies. Yet little research has been conducted on the research capacity of South African universities in the light of transformation and bounding technological innovations and, on the impact of the new policies on academics and their research.

Consider, for example, that universities may be able to contribute to social transformation by enabling greater public access to relevant research through the Web. As things now stand, researchers generate the knowledge with the hope that it will benefit humankind, yet there is little coordination between those who generate the knowledge (researchers), those who apply the knowledge (policymakers, legal professionals, teachers, physicians and social workers) and those on whose behalf the knowledge is applied (the public).

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this research is to examine how globalization and transformation have impacted on knowledge production at South African universities and, to determine whether new technologies, in particular, “open access”, may assist in building research capacity at South African universities. The questions that I ask are: How has the recent transformation affected research at South African universities? How have global changes, such as new technologies, new modes of production and resource constraints, impacted on research at South African universities? How have these changes affected HWU’s and HBU’s differently? To what extent would “open access” to research and scholarship, made possible by new technologies, contribute to building research capacity in South Africa? What do researchers, librarians and administrators believe might be the public value of knowledge? How do researchers perceive their changing identities as researchers in a transforming society?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study will be conducted at three sites in the Eastern Cape, Rhodes University, the University of Fort Hare and the University of Port Elizabeth. Research methods include a survey, interviews and document analysis. Interviews will be conducted with librarians, academics and postgraduate students from a range of disciplines and, administrators / policymakers. Documents related to research policy will be collected and analysed.

The research findings may describe the extent to which technology is being used in research and how its use may be exploited in increasing access to scholarship and in building research capacity at our universities. It will inform us whether South African researchers consider it desirable to increase their participation in the local and global scholarly community in ways that will enrich the exchange of knowledge for the benefit of all. This research may inform academics, policy makers and donors what the first steps might be in restructuring publishing and knowledge management technologies in the future so that universities may contribute to sustainable social development.

## **CONSENT**

We seek your consent to use your response in reporting the findings of this study. You have the options of either complete anonymity or a crediting of your contribution. You have the right to refuse to participate or to change your mind about these options at any time during the study. If you have any concerns about your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact Dr. Richard Spratley, Director of the UBC Office of Research Services and Administration, at 822-8598. This study has been approved by Research Ethics Committee (Certificate B99-0180).

Yours sincerely,  
Ms Saloshini Muthayan  
Co-Investigator / PhD candidate: Literacy and Technology  
Tel/fax:

Sincerely,  
John Willinsky, Professor and Principal Investigator  
The Public Knowledge Project (<http://pkp.ubc.ca/>)

Public Knowledge Project: Research Capacity and Technology at South African Universities

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please sign here to acknowledge that you have received a copy of the consent form for your own records.

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign here to acknowledge that you have consented to participate in the Public Knowledge Project as described on this form

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state whether you prefer anonymity or a crediting of your contribution:

\_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Principal Investigators:

John Willinsky: Pacific Press Professor of Literacy and Technology

Bonny Norton: Associate Professor Language and Literacy Education

Co-Investigator: Saloshini Muthayan; PhD candidate.

**APPENDIX D**  
**Request for an interview**

## REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW

I have received your contact details from [name of contact person] who suggested that I correspond with you directly. I am currently reading for a PhD at the University of British Columbia, Canada. Please find attached a study introductory that outlines the purpose of my study. My field of study is research capacity and access to scholarship at South African universities with an eye to examining whether open access, which new technologies have made possible, may contribute to building research capacity.

I commenced data gathering for my study last year at 3 universities (UPE, RU, UFH) in the Eastern Cape. I interviewed 14 respondents and hope to interview a further 10 to 14 this year. Due to costs, I would like to spend a week in [place] to conduct interviews with academics and graduate students from a range of faculties (e.g. humanities, sciences and health sciences) paying attention to diversity in terms of race and gender.

I understand that you are very busy and I apologise in advance for imposing on you but I would be most grateful if you could avail yourself for approximately 60 minutes for an interview during the week of the [dates].

Please can you also assist me in identifying graduate students, preferably doctoral students, in your department who may be willing to be interviewed.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sal Muthayan  
East London  
Phone/fax:

**APPENDIX E**  
**Interview Schedule**

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARTICIPANTS

### A. RESEARCH AND CHANGE

1. What have been some of the changes in your research over the past five years?
2. How have the recent socio-political changes in South Africa, the transformation and new policies, affected on your research? Please elaborate.
3. How do you feel about these changes?

### B. ACCESS TO RESEARCH RESOURCES

1. Describe your current access to resources such as facilities and equipment?
2. What impact has IT had on your research?
3. What has been your access to scholarly publications, South African, African and international?
4. Describe any constraints faced?
5. What have been some of your creative responses to these constraints?

### C. KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

1. What have been your experiences with publishing?
2. Do you prefer to publish in local or international journals? Please elaborate.
3. What are your views on open access, free to read, online journals?
4. What do you believe are the advantages and disadvantages of open access?
5. What are your views on scholarly research being available publicly to practitioners, policy makers interested parties or individuals? Please give reasons for your response?
6. What efforts have you made, if any, to make your research publicly available?

### D. LINKAGES AND NETWORKING

1. Describe collegiality and the nature of networking with colleagues in:  
this institution;  
the other two universities in the study;  
other South African universities and;  
universities internationally.
2. How has this affected your research?
3. What differences have you observed between HWUs and HBUs?

**F. THE ROLE OF RESEARCHERS**

1. How do you perceive your role as a researcher?
2. Has your view changed from five years ago?
3. What are your aspirations and visions for the future?
4. What places constraints on your role as a researcher? Why?
5. How does this make you feel?

**APPENDIX F**

**Surveys**

**APPENDIX F1**  
**Questionnaire for Faculty**

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FACULTY

### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: .....

Institution: .....

Department: .....

Affiliation: .....

Phone: ..... Fax: ..... Email: .....

Permanent Position: Yes..... No.....

No. of years at institution: .....

Percentage of time spent on research: .....

Percentage of time spent on teaching: .....

Percentage of time spent on policy/ administration processes: .....

#### *A. Access to Scholarly Journals*

1. What is your principal area of research?

.....  
.....

2. How would you rate your current access to scholarly journals in this area of study? [please circle the correct answer]

Poor / Adequate / Good / Excellent

3. What percentage of this access to research is through the university libraries?

.....

4. What percentage of this access is through private subscription? .....

5. Can you name journals, not currently available in the library's collection that you would like to consult regularly?

.....

.....  
6. How do you rate the importance of your collection of journals published in Africa to those published elsewhere?

More  Equally  Less

7. How do you rate the importance of your collection of journals published in South Africa to those published elsewhere?

More  Equally  Less

8. What serial indexes do you consult to find journal articles (indicate if print/online)?  
.....  
.....

9. What effect do you think the quality of access to research literature has on: [Please circle the correct answer. 1 = little effect, 5 = great effect]

Teaching	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Working with graduate students	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Conducting research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Writing up research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Publishing research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Participating in scholarly communities	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Providing counsel to public bodies	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure

10. How often did you turn to print versions of scholarly journals in the last month? [Tick the correct answer].

Daily  Thrice a week  Once a week  Once in 2 weeks

What proportion of this was for teaching purposes: \_\_%

What proportion of this was for research purposes: \_\_%

11. How often did you turn to online (electronic) versions of journals in the last month?

[Tick the correct answer]

Daily  Thrice a week  Once a week  Once in 2 weeks

What proportion of this was for teaching purposes: \_\_%

What proportion of this was for research purposes: \_\_%

12. What poses the greatest challenge in getting online access to journals you would like to consult? .....

.....

13. How do you feel about your current rate of access to scholarly journals?

.....

.....

### ***B. Access to Internet Technology***

1. Where do you have access to the World Wide Web?

University  Public  Home  Other (specify)

How much, if anything, does this access cost you? .....

2. What are the main purposes for which you use the World Wide Web?

.....

3. For how many hours, approximately, did you use the World Wide Web in the last month?

.....

4. How has your use changed over the last year? .....

5. What online scholarly resources have you consulted in the last month?

.....

6. In what ways would you imagine taking advantage of online journals in your field that are

“open access” (available free of charge)? [Please circle the correct answer. 1 = very unlikely;

5 = very likely.]

Use as a teaching material

1 2 3 4 5

Unsure

In work with graduate students	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To keep up to date in the field	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To find models and ideas for research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To enrich your scholarly writing	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
As a source or outlet for publishing work	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To increase participation in scholarly communities	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To provide counsel to public bodies	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
7. Can you give examples of how the World Wide Web could help you more:		In your
teaching? .....		
In your research? .....		

***C. Library Resources and Policies***

1. How would you rank the following priorities in the university library. [Please circle the correct answer. 1 = unimportant, 5 = very important]

Subscribe to more print journals	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Improve access to African journals	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Improve access to online journals	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Improve access to online serial indexes	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Provide more computers and printers	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Provide access to computers outside of library	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Increase access to the World Wide Web	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure

2. What do you see as the advantages of online scholarly journals that are "open access" (free to read)?

.....

.....

3. What would be your principle concerns with efforts to increase the number of online journals that are "open access"?

.....  
.....  
4. If "open access" publishing systems were used in the coming years to do the following things, how would you rank them in importance. [ 1=highest; 5=lowest; or leave blank if not important]

- Increase access to SA journals .....
- Increase access to African journals .....
- Increase access to overseas journals .....
- Increase the international indexing of SA journals .....
- Increase the international indexing of African journals .....
- Improve the chances of publishing in overseas journals .....

5. To what extent would you be inclined to publish your research in a locally run open access (free), peer reviewed, online journal? Please give reasons.

.....  
.....

6. If an existing peer-reviewed journal switched from subscription-based access to open access, would you be more inclined or less inclined to submit a paper to it for publication? Why?

.....  
.....

7. Do you believe that increasing open access to peer-reviewed research literature has a positive impact on the research capacity of this country?  
Can you give an example from your experience that will explain your response?

.....  
.....

8. Are there areas of need or interest in which a new peer-reviewed journal in your field should be started, resources permitting? If yes, please identify them:

.....  
.....

**D. The Role of Researchers**

1. How do you feel about the amount of time you devote to research? Please elaborate.

.....  
.....

2. How do you feel about the amount of time the university as a whole devotes to the generation of research?

.....  
.....

3. How have recent changes in technology affected your role as a researcher?

.....  
.....

4. What role do you see yourself playing 5 years from now?

.....  
.....  
.....

Please return completed questionnaire to: Sal Muthayan  
Address:

Or, Fax to:

**APPENDIX F2**

**Questionnaire for Librarians**

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LIBRARIANS

### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: .....

Institution: .....

Department: .....

Affiliation: .....

Phone: ..... Fax: ..... Email: .....

No. of years at institution: .....

Percentage of time spent on information research: .....

Percentage of time spent on policy/ administration processes: .....

### *Access to Scholarly Resources*

#### *A. Library's Serial Holdings*

1. How many journals does the library currently subscribe to in total? .....

a) How does this compare to the number five years ago?

.....

b) How does this compare to the number ten years ago?

.....

c) Can you give examples of particular areas or fields that have seen a decline in number? .....

.....

d) Can you give examples of particular areas or fields that have seen an increase in number? .....

.....

e) In your opinion, what are the reasons for these changes?

.....

f) As a librarian, how do you feel about these changes?

.....

2. With regard to the current serial collection, can you provide a rough breakdown of the number or percentage of journals by discipline?

Social Sciences.....	Education.....
Life Sciences.....	Law.....
Pure Sciences.....	Technology.....
Humanities.....	Other (specify).....

3. With reference to the lecturers, what effect do you think access to research literature has on: [Please circle the correct answer. 1 = little effect; 5 = great effect]

Teaching	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Working with graduate students	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Finding research ideas and models	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Conducting research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Writing up research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Publishing research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Participating in scholarly communities	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Providing counsel to public bodies	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure

4. To what extent does your library subscribe to a) African journals ....., b)

International journals .....

5. How do you rate the importance of journals published in Africa compared to those published elsewhere:

More  Equally  Less

6. Describe any linkages with university libraries in Africa, for example, the University Libraries in Africa.....

.....

**B. Technology in the Library**

1. How many electronic serial indexes and databases does the library currently subscribe to?

.....

2. What free online indexing services do your students and faculty use?

.....

3. What is currently the most popular format for consulting research literature among your students and faculty? Please give reasons for your answer.

print                    .....

CD-ROM                .....

microfilm              .....

online                  .....

4. What do you believe the most popular format will be in five years? Why?

.....  
.....

5. How many computers are there in your university library with World Wide Web connections? .....

6. How many of these are connected to the World Wide Web by

Modem..... ISDN..... Cable ..... Satellite..... Other (specify) .....

7. How many of these are connected to printers that faculty can use? .....

8. How many of these are connected to printers that students can use? .....

9. What do you see as the advantages of online scholarly journals that are "open access" (free to read)?

.....  
.....

10. What would be your principle concerns with efforts to increase the number of online journals that are "open access"?

.....  
.....  
11. To what extent do you think researchers would be inclined to publish their research in a locally run open access (free), peer reviewed, online journal? Please give reasons.

.....  
.....  
12. If an existing peer-reviewed journal switched from subscription-based access to open access, would researchers be more inclined or less inclined to submit a paper to it for publication? Why?

.....  
.....  
13. Do you believe that increasing open access to peer-reviewed research literature has a positive impact on the research capacity of this country?  
Can you give an example from your experience that will explain your response?

.....  
.....  
14. Are there areas of need or interest in which a new peer-reviewed journal should be started, resources permitting? If yes, please identify them:

.....  
.....  
***C. Library and Technology Policy***

1. What policies or initiatives, if any, are underway that will expand the library's research resources? .....



**APPENDIX F3**

**Questionnaire for Graduate Students**

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: .....

Institution: .....

Department: .....

Affiliation: .....

Phone: ..... Fax: ..... Email: .....

No. of years at institution: .....

Percentage of time spent on research: .....

Percentage of time spent on other processes: .....

#### *A. Access to Scholarly Journals*

1. What is your principal area of study? .....

.....

2. How would you rate your current access to journals in your area(s) of study? [Please circle the correct answer.] Poor / Adequate / Good / Excellent

3. Can you name journals, not currently available that you would like to consult regularly?

.....;

.....

4. To what extent do you consult journals published in Africa?

Frequently  Seldom  Never

5. What is the reason for this? .....

6. How often did you resort to print (paper) versions of journals in the last month?

.....

7. How often did you resort to online (electronic) versions of journals in the last month?

.....

8. What serial indexes do you consult to find journal articles (indicate if print/online)?

.....  
.....

9. What poses the greatest challenge in getting online access to journals that you would like to consult? .....

.....

10. How do you feel about your current rate of access to scholarly journals?

.....

***B. Access to Internet Technology***

1. Where do you have access to the World Wide Web?

University   Public  Home  Other

2. How much, if anything, does this access cost you? .....

3. What are the main purposes for which you use the World Wide Web?

.....

4. For how many hours, approximately, do you use the World Wide Web in a day, week, month? .....

5. How has your use changed over the last year? .....

6. What online scholarly resources have you consulted in the last month? .....

.....

7. How could the World Wide Web help you more in your studies?

.....

8. In what ways would you imagine taking advantage of "open access" (available free of charge) online publishing of journals in your field? [Please circle the correct answer. 1 = very unlikely; 5 = very likely]

Use for preparing course papers	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To keep up in the field	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
To find models and ideas for research	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Other (specify)	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure

**C. Library Resources and Policies**

1. How would you rank the following priorities in the university library? [Please circle the correct answer. 1 = unimportant, 5 = very important]

Subscribe to more print journals	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Improve access to online journals	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Improve access to online serial indexes	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Provide more computers and printers	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Provide access to computers outside of the library	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure
Increase access to the World Wide Web	1 2 3 4 5	Unsure

2. What do you see as the advantages of online scholarly journals that are "open access" (free to read)?

.....  
 .....3.

What would be your principle concerns with efforts to increase the number of online journals that are "open access" ?

.....  
 .....

4. To what extent would you be inclined to publish your research in a locally run open access (free), peer reviewed, online journal? Please give reasons.

.....  
 .....

5. If an existing peer-reviewed journal switched from subscription-based access to open access, would you be more inclined or less inclined to submit an article to it for publication?

Why? .....

6. Do you believe that increasing open access to peer-reviewed research literature has a positive impact on the research capacity of this country?

Can you give an example from your experience that will explain your response?

.....

7. Are there areas of need or interest in which a new peer-reviewed journal in your field should be started, resources permitting? If yes, please identify them:

.....

***D. Your role as a researcher.***

1. How do you feel about these changes in technology?

.....  
.....

2. How has it affected your research study?

.....  
.....

3. How would you like to use technology in your research / work five years from now ?

.....  
.....

Please return completed questionnaire to: Sal Muthayan Address:  Fax to:
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