

Traits of Leadership and Management in Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation and Community Engagement in Universities of South Africa

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ABSTRACT Since 1994, there has been a paradigm shift in South African education landscape. The Department of Education was divided into two departments in 2009. This division evolved into the Department of Basic Education and Department of Higher Education. Before 2009, there was a process of merging public institutions of higher education (universities), and this process was completed in 2005 and resulted into South Africa having twenty three public institutions of higher education. The public institutions of higher education have several structures of leadership as per Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997. Public institutions of higher education in South Africa, like any other country in the world, obviously seem to be involved in teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement. In most cases, teaching and learning becomes the main priority as compared to research and innovation and community engagement by some leaders of universities. However, leadership and management are definitely sought after elements on how to manage and lead the personnel that are involved in teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement as an add-on component to teaching. This conceptual paper aims to explore and discuss gaps on leadership and management traits on teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement as pillars of public institutions of higher education or universities and come out with fruitful significant recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

Universities worldwide are expected to undertake three core functions, namely the development of knowledge (research and innovation), the transfer of knowledge (teaching and learning), and the application of knowledge (community engagement). Universities are basically in the knowledge business (Holzbaur et al. 2012).

This statement therefore implies that universities need decisive leadership and management. Such leadership and management is required to understand the autonomy of its academics in order for them to carry out their academic duties which are the three-fold core functions mentioned earlier without interference. In this paper, the researchers are going to discuss and explore governance, leadership and management traits in universities in teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement in South Africa.

Governance, Leadership and Management in Higher Education

The concept of governance for post-secondary education predominantly refers to the internal structure, organization and management of autonomous institutions. The organization of internal governance is generally composed of institutional governance structures such as councils, senates, student representative councils, institutional forums and such other structures and offices as may be determined by the institutional statute. In addition, internal governance consists of the university president (executive head, CEO or Vice Chancellor) with a team of administrative chancellors and staff, faculty senates, academic deans, department Heads, and usually some form of organization for student representation. Good governance is essentially about effective leadership. Such leadership is characterized by the ethical values of responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency and is based on moral duties (Wikipedia 2014; Implementation Manual for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions 2012).

The institutional governance structures serve to lead and manage education facets provision in universities. Gutter in Bush (2011)

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states that educational management is a field of study and practice concerned with the operation of educational organizations, universities included. Bush (2011) has constantly argued that educational management should be centrally concerned with the purpose or aims of education. Yulk in Bush (2013) states that leadership involves a process of influence exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or groups) to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization. Bush (2011) recommends that leadership involves developing and articulating a vision for the organization. Leadership and management need to be given equal prominence if universities are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives (Bush 2007).

Cuban in Bush (2007) provides one of the clearest distinctions between leadership and management. He links leadership with change while management is seen as a maintenance activity. He also stresses the importance of both dimensions of organizational activity.

By leadership, Cuban means 'influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends'. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently, they initiate change to reach existing and new goals. Leadership takes much ingenuity, energy, and skill. Managing is maintaining, efficiently and effectively, current organizational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. He prizes both managing and leading and attaches no special value to either since different settings and times call for varied responses.

Efficient leadership and management is an inspiration to its subordinates. Without capable leadership across societies, people's hopes will gradually fade away as leadership will fail to achieve the objectives set. In fact, challenges that result from poor leadership are so serious that the National Development Plan itself acknowledges that unless South Africa builds a broad-based leadership capacity across society underpinned by a capable state, with active citizenry, the country will not be in a position to address this pressing leadership deficit bedeviling people's progress as a country (Mabelebele 2013).

According to Mabelebele (2013), leadership and management require a particular set of knowledge and skills in the higher education

context. To lead and manage in a higher education environment requires sound knowledge of the higher education policy and regulatory environment, deeper insights into the historic genealogy of higher education policy framework in South Africa, and social-political and economic drivers of such policy and regulatory regime. In other words, university leaders at all levels, in order to become effective leaders and managers in the higher education sector, must have a sound understanding of the following vital documents:

Education White Paper 3, A programme of transformation (1997), Higher Education Act, 101 (1997), National Plan for Higher Education (2001), Funding Framework for Higher Education (2005), and Reporting regulations for Higher Education Institutions of (2007).

Management and leadership in higher education institutions take place in the context of the struggle of the opposites. The complex nature of universities as institutions, rather than organisations, imposes on their managers and leaders a responsibility to continually balance a number of opposites which include: imparting of knowledge and education on the one hand and skills and training on the other; promoting access and success, national relevance and international credibility, institutional autonomy and academic freedom on the one hand and public accountability and self-regulation on the other, continuity and stability on the one hand and change and adaptation on the other (Mabelebele 2013).

Mabelebele (2013) further states that there are a range of personal traits required for one to succeed in a leadership and management role of a higher education institution. The personal traits required include courage, good sense of judgment; definiteness of decision and team work. These traits are discussed briefly below:

Courage: Leaders are expected to hold the mantle of leadership from time to time. They are also expected to have confidence to face worst fears, and have courage to do the right thing regardless of who is involved. Leaders must have courage to make decisions, and therefore cannot claim "perfection" out of "inactivity".

Good Sense of Judgment: Leaders often find themselves in a dilemma or situation where they have to trust their instinct, gut feel, and sense of judgment. One attribute of good leadership is the ability to discern right from wrong; and also

making the right decisions and calls when in a dilemma.

Definiteness and Decision: Decision-making rests solely on the leader's shoulders, and the leader has to live with the consequences of his/her decisions. To be a good leader, one must be definite and firm in one's decision. A leader must also be quick in making calculations and arriving at a conclusion.

Team Work: A leader needs to build and maintain a culture of team work in order to succeed in his/her role as a manager and leader in the institutions.

It should be understood by leaders, from the outset, that the university setup is different, leaders should all appreciate that managing and leading a (or in a) university is not the same as leading an (or in any other) institution or organization such as a school, clinic, hospital, FET college, business enterprise, non-governmental organization or sport club (Mabelebele 2013). Badat in Mabelebele (2013) states that at the heart of ethical, responsible and accountable leadership there is always integrity and honesty. Ethical leaders, in the words of the great African leader, Amilcar Cabral (1965), 'tell no lies, expose lies whenever they are told to do so. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories.' Without integrity, there can be no principled conduct, no prospect of winning trust and inspiring and uniting people around a vision, no effective communication, no ethical and responsible leadership. In the same vein, ethical and responsible leaders also look beyond themselves. They see potential all around them, seek to build new generations of leaders who will be better than them, create opportunities for developing people, provide the people they lead with experiences and space to learn lessons, and strive to be role models by living out values associated with ethical and responsible leadership.

In support of Badat's statement above, Mahatma Gandhi (1925) states that there are seven dangers of human virtue. These are: wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, business without ethics, science without humanity, religion without sacrifice, and politics without principles in addition education without heart. If a leader falls into this trap, he/she is compromising his/her role as a leader as the human virtue, ethics, honesty and integrity is diminished.

Teaching and Learning

The purpose of teaching in university should be based on creating knowledge-producers who can solve problems and contribute to the economic good of society. Yorke (2009) observes that around the world, governments indicate that national economies rely, to a large extent, on higher education for success. The emphasis on the economic value of higher education has become more emphasised in recent years.

Teaching done in line with equipping students with knowledge, skills and values necessary for economic development in society should follow a 'hands-on' approach. Students may not necessarily need to acquire knowledge for knowledge's sake. They should be able to apply what they learn in real life situations. Yorke and Knight (2006) list some of the desirable graduate attributes for the knowledge economy such as self-confidence, independence, emotional intelligence, reflectiveness, disciplinary knowledge and understanding, communication skills and problem-solving abilities. This calls for teaching that is consistent with the inculcation of such graduate attributes mentioned above.

Watkins (1998) advocates a student-conception to high quality learning which requires 'active construction of meaning and the possibility of conceptual change on the part of the learners.' This alludes to the fact that students' active involvement in learning is very important in ensuring high quality learning. Varnava-Marouchou (2007) asserts that the teacher's role, in this regard, is to facilitate and to encourage the students to seek responsibility for their own development. The purpose of teaching in a university should not only be to transmit knowledge to students, but to also provide opportunities for them to learn and to be responsible learners. A comparison is drawn of a deep approach to learning, based upon understanding the meaning of course materials, and a surface approach, based upon memorising the course materials for the purposes of assessment (Biggs 2003). The latter should be the focus of university teaching and learning.

The discourse on the scholarship of teaching makes emphasis on how to teach certain concepts better, yet not much attention is given to the kinds of learning experiences that students should have during their university years and why the researchers believe certain experi-

ences are more valuable than others (Kreber 2005). Kreber (2005) states further that the meaning of 'scholarship of teaching' is when teaching is conceptualized as the practical, intellectual and critical work done by university teachers, and that it facilitates student development towards significant educational goals. Three such significant educational goals that also have been linked explicitly to the widely perceived need for lifelong learning are: self-management (the capacity to engage in continuous adaptive learning), personal autonomy (critical thinking capacity and intellectual development) and social responsibility (moral development) (Kreber 2005). It is also important to cultivate in students an appreciation for the field they are studying and developing their capacity to solve problems within the discipline (Kreber 2005).

Kreber (2005) further argues that higher education also has a role to play in the promotion of social justice, democracy, and civic responsibility. These are to help students acquire a sense of personal autonomy on the one hand (in a sense of critical thinking capacity and intellectual development), and of social responsibility (in a sense of moral development) on the other.

Effective Teaching

There are numerous and different ways of conceptualizing effective teaching. However, there is common agreement that effective teaching should result in meaningful learning for learners. Effective teaching and learning takes place when a variety of teaching strategies are provided in the classroom and when the emphasis is on gaining understanding rather than just right answers. Barry (2010) states that effective teaching involves a deep understanding of the subject matter, learning theory and student differences, planning, classroom instructional strategies, knowing individual students, and assessment of student understanding and proficiency with learning outcomes. Barry (2010) further asserts that effective teaching also includes a teacher's ability to reflect, collaborate with colleagues and continued on-going professional development.

Understanding the Subject Matter

An effective teacher is one with deep and unquestionable expertise in his or her own dis-

cipline. Such is a true discipline expert. Glaser and Chi (1988) cited in Maclellan and Soden (2003) define expertise as possession of an organized body of conceptual and procedural knowledge that can be both readily accessed and used with superior metacognitive skill.

An expert in a discipline is one who has been initiated successfully into a discipline and is now able to show expertise by engaging with subject matter to be taught without showing any signs of knowledge deficiency in the subject matter. An expert in a discipline is confident in dealing with the content. Nathan et al. (2005) underscore the importance of discipline expertise by stating that 'expertise in a content area is immensely valuable for effective teaching.' Gonzalez and Carter (1996) cited in Smith and Strahan (2004) talk of operationalized expertise as a function of experience. This shows that through accumulated knowledge through years of experience, expertise is built. Novice experts in a discipline may not be as knowledgeable as experienced professionals. In a university set-up, the more experienced lecturers may have gathered more content knowledge through experience. However, due to changes in disciplines, experienced lecturers will require to keep abreast of the changes if their knowledge is not to be redundant or obsolete.

Understanding the Adult Learner

University's effective teachers understand the way adult learners learn. Reece and Walker (2005) observe that andragogy is an approach aimed at helping adults to learn. Knowles (1990) cited in Bullen (2004) defines andragogy as the art and science of adult learning. Andragogy is therefore a system of ideas, concepts, and approaches to adult learning. Effective university teachers require a clear understanding of how adult learners learn in order to adequately engage them in teaching and learning.

In understanding how adults learn, Rogers (2002) classifies adult learners into four categories which are activists, observers, theorists and experimentalists. This shows that as activists, adult learners learn best by being actively involved in learning. They learn best by doing. As observers, adult learners also learn by watching demonstrations and then trying out what would have been demonstrated to them. As theorists, adult learners can handle abstract concepts, and

lastly, as experimentalists, they learn by being involved in practical investigations and coming up with solutions as well as apply what they learn to different, but similar situations (Rogers 2002). It is therefore important to have an appreciation of how adults learn in order to use appropriate approaches to facilitate their learning.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

According to White Paper 3 (1997), in pursuing research, there is principle of academic freedom which implies the absence of outside interference, censure or obstacles in the pursuit and practice of academic work. It is a precondition for critical, experimental, and creative thought, and therefore, for the advancement of intellectual inquiry and knowledge. Academic freedom and scientific inquiry are fundamental rights protected by the Constitution. One of the goals of White Paper 3 is to secure and advance high-level research capacity which can ensure both the continuation of self-initiated, open-ended intellectual inquiry, and the sustained application of research activities to technological improvement and social development. On academic freedom, Kennedy (1997) states that as easily understood as it is important, academic freedom refers to the insulation of professors, academics, and their institutions from political interference. In practice, such freedom extends further, permitting unusually creative people to lead usually creative lives. Academic freedom has its counterpart, which is academic duty and academic freedom can be simply said as 'liberty and duty, freedom and responsibility.'

With regards to the increase of academic freedom in research, Section 5 of the National Plan of Higher Education- sustaining and promoting research (2001) highlights the following priorities: to increase outputs of postgraduates, particularly master and doctoral graduates, to increase research output, to sustain existing research capacity and strengths, and to create new centers of excellence and niche areas in institutions where there is demonstrable research capacity or potential, to facilitate collaboration and partnerships, especially at the regional level, in research and postgraduate training, to promote articulation between the different elements of the research system with a view to developing a national research strategy.

According to Lategan (2008), the National Plan for Higher Education supports the development of research and postgraduate studies. Two objectives are specifically dedicated to research and postgraduate studies. These objectives are: research concentration and funding linked to outputs and increased graduate enrolments and outputs at Master and Doctoral level.

The value and importance of research cannot be over-emphasized. Research, in all its forms and functions, is perhaps the most powerful vehicle that the government has to deepen the country's democracy. Research engenders the values of inquiry, critical thinking, creativity and open-mindedness, which are fundamental to building a strong, democratic ethos in society. It also creates communities of scholars who build collegiality and networks across geographic and disciplinary boundaries. In addition, it makes possible the growth of an innovation culture in which new ideas, approaches and applications increase the adaptive and responsive capacity of the country's societies, thereby enhancing both industrial competitiveness and ability to solve the most pressing social challenges. Lastly, research contributes to the global accumulation of knowledge and places nation amongst other nations, who have active programmes of knowledge-generation. According to Schulze (2008), South Africa's Department of Higher Education expects every academic to publish at least 1.25 articles annually in journals that the Department has accredited. Institutions receive financial rewards for meeting this target, and academics are (supposed) to be penalized for failing to meet it.

Yates as quoted by Schulze (2008) states that academics and managers are acutely aware of the auditing culture at higher education institutions. Constant auditing brings increased workload for academics to manage the compliance paperwork, and this translates to less time for research. This auditing also brings about stress which may be motivational for some but counterproductive for others.

A strong research environment, either at an institution or in departments, encourages quality research. A research environment is formed by practices that include recognition and reward for quality research, the identification of models of good research processes, and administrative support. To formulate policies accordingly, those that serve on research committees should be

high-research performers. The work climate is critical, and the ideal climate includes autonomy with affiliation, as research is a communal activity. The academic research community involves close-knit work groups and frequent meaningful contact between colleagues so that research networks may be formed. Although mentoring of novices is important, researchers with low productivity often hinder their more skilled colleagues with excessive demands for support. This leads to decreased productivity of the more skilled researchers.

In order to increase research output, universities grant funds to academics for them to attend national and international conferences. Academics are therefore required to publish the articles they presented in conferences in less than a year. According to the University of Venda's Research and Innovation Policy (2010), the purposes for attending national and international conferences by University staff are four-fold: conferences provide an avenue for exposing the research capacity of the University to international or local colleagues and peers, thereby reinforcing the image of the University as a center of excellence in research; by attending conferences, staff members are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate their intellectual capabilities and scholarship while at the same time benefiting from international or local peer review to improve the quality of papers for ultimate publication in refereed journals; conferences are fertile ground for establishing linkages and networks for collaborative research among academics from different countries; and conferences contribute to the debate on issues of international significance.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is one of three core responsibilities of higher education, alongside research and teaching. In South Africa, despite clear policy mandates that community engagement is an important task, it has been neglected. Universities are involved in many activities structured around research, teaching and outreach that entail engagement with a wide range of communities, but these activities are uncoordinated and are the result of individual initiatives, rather than strategically planned, systematic endeavours (Community Engagement in South African Higher Education Kagisano No. 6, 2010).

The White Paper 3 on the Transformation of Higher Education Department of Education (1997) laid the foundations for making community engagement an integral part of South African higher education. It calls on higher education institutions to demonstrate social responsibility and their commitment to the common good by making available expertise and infrastructure for community service programmes. It states that one of the goals of higher education is to promote and develop social responsibility and awareness among students of the role of higher education in social and economic development through community service programmes. It showed receptiveness to the growing interest in community service programmes for students and gives in-principle support to feasibility studies and pilot programmes which explore the potential of community service in higher education (Lazarus et al. 2008).

The scholarship of engagement means connecting the (rich) resources of the university to its most pressing social, civic and ethical problems, to children, to schools, to teachers and to communities. There has been growing conviction that what is also needed is not just more programmes, but a larger purpose, a sense of mission, a larger clarity of direction in the nation's life as moving toward in the 21st century (Calleson et al. 2005). Calleson et al. (2005) are of the opinion that community-engaged scholarship can apply to teaching (for example, service-learning), research (for example, community-based participatory research), community-responsive clinical and population-based care (for example, community oriented primary care, academic public health practice), and service (for example, community service, outreach, advocacy). The process involved in collaborating with communities is an essential part of the methodology of community-engaged scholarship. The collaborative inquiry and the relationships that form between a lecturer and communities to examine and address problems should be an essential part of a lecturer's assessment.

In an evaluative context, these are considered process measures. Process measures would be included with the traditional focus on products or outcomes such as the number of publications in peer reviewed journals and the number of grants obtained as a principal investigator.

Couto in Calleson et al. (2005) emphasizes that community-based participatory research requires that students, lecturers, and communi-

ty partners listen to one another, deliberate critically about common problems and issues, arrive at solutions to mutual problems creatively in a community setting, and work together to implement solutions. Other researchers and authors have made similar observations about the importance of including process measures in a faculty member's assessment. Community scholarship requires the scholar to be engaged with the community in a mutually beneficial partnership. Community-defined needs direct the activities of the community scholar. It is these process measures that are a hallmark of community-engaged scholarship. Process itself can have an important effect on community health improvement, leading to increased leadership and capacity by communities for sustaining intervention programs and determining whether communities will continue to work long-term with the faculty member.

Often, community-engaged faculty is the critical link to long-term institutional community partnerships. Process measures need a more central place in departmental and institutional promotion and tenure guidelines. Existing tools on collaboration, partnerships, service-learning, and community-based participatory research can be modified specifically to measure process in community-based scholarship (Calleson et al. 2005).

According to Lazarus et al. (2008), community engagement can take on many different forms and shapes within the context of higher education. These forms include distance education, community-based research, participatory action research, professional community service and service-learning. In its fullest sense, community engagement is the combination and integration of service with teaching and research related and applied to identified community development priorities.

Traits of Leading and Managing Academics

To lead and manage a team and to operate in educational organizations of academics nobody has freedom without undermining their duties. Leaders, at various levels in universities must have basic knowledge and understanding of Acts and policies and regulations of the Department of Higher Education and Training. They are: Education White Paper 3: A programme of transformation (1997); Higher Education Act, 101 of

1997, as amended; National Plan for Higher Education (2001); Funding Framework for Higher Education (2005); and Reporting regulations for Higher Education Institutions of 2007.

All these policies, regulations and Acts include to the importance of teaching and learning, research and innovation and community engagement. Research outputs either at Master and Doctoral level or research articles by academicians increases the income of the universities.

Capable leaders and managers of universities have the mandate of pursuing and encouraging their colleagues in implementing teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement policies. Despite work-load of teaching and learning, research and innovation and community engagement is supposed to be undertaken as universities are in the business knowledge. On the other hand, community engagement can take on many different forms and shapes within the context of higher education as it has been stated before.

CONCLUSION

Universities in South Africa form an integral part of higher education. Leaders in all spheres of universities are expected to support and give decisive leadership and management to their subordinates. As universities are in the business of knowledge, through knowledge development, knowledge transfer, and knowledge application, it is of utmost importance for leadership of universities to be regulated by existing policies and the Act.

The most important thing in any organization is to realize its own vision and mission; the same applies to universities. The realization of the vision and mission of universities is when all core-functions of university(ies) are met or realized. This paper discusses the importance of leadership and management in managing academic affairs in teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to effectively lead and manage, university leaders should have courage, good sense of judgment, definiteness of decision and team work. Universities should encourage academics to increase research outputs through supervising Master, Doctoral students and writing re-

searched, publishable articles through adequate incentives in order to raise more income. Teaching in university should be based on creating knowledge-producers who can solve problems and contribute to the economic good of society. Teaching should be done in line with equipping students with knowledge, skills and values necessary for economic development in society and should follow a 'hands-on' approach. The goals of higher education are to promote and develop social responsibility and awareness, among students, of the role of higher education in social and economic development through community service programmes. It is necessary that community-based participatory research require that students, lecturers and community partners listen to one another, deliberate critically about common problems and issues, arrive at solutions to mutual problems creatively in a community setting, and work together to implement solutions.

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