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Organisational Democracy An Ongoing Challenge

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Reflections from the University of KwaZulu-Natal



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Organisational Democracy An Ongoing Challenge

Reflections from the University of KwaZulu-Natal

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ORGANISATIONAL DEMOCRACY

AN ONGOING CHALLENGE

REFLECTIONS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF

KWAZULU-NATAL

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DASARATH CHETTY

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ORGANISATIONAL DEMOCRACY : AN ONGOING CHALLENGE

F o r e w o r d

D A S A R A T H C H E T T Y



Managing an institution with 44 000 students, and 6000 employees, on 5 campuses in two cities, with an operational budget of 1.4 billion Rand per annum is a challenging task. The leadership of all constituencies are expected to take decisions in the interest of the university as a whole, to overcome sectoral and sectional considerations with a view to achieve the vision and mission of the institution. Through the perspectives

contained herein both management and union leaders have asserted that it is only through participation, consultation, transparency and accountability that organisational objectives may be met.

Union perspectives on organizational democracy tend to vary greatly. Whilst all unions are committed to the University, Comsa and Ntesu tend to locate their analyses within a broader societal context citing trends towards corporatisation as essentially problematic, therefore calling for vigilance and contestation on the part of the Union. Nehawu and UNSU opt for a less adversarial approach to labour – management relations citing the facilitative new legal framework and that national imperatives may more easily be achieved in a consultative and co-operative way.

Bruton (NTESU) argues that the congenial, interactive

and rarely confrontational relations that existed at the former NU have changed because of a negative stance taken by the new executive. He cites a reduction in union representation on decision making bodies and the erosion of negotiation powers as evidence of this trend. Bruton attributes the shift to a new managerialism, the uncritical application of contemporary business practices and private sector ideas or values to publicly funded institutions. The search for efficiency, effectiveness and excellence he claims results in, or is a smokescreen for, intrusive monitoring, appraisals, and subtle self and peer regulation - undermining the moral and social foundation of the University through an increasingly pervasive corporate culture. In encouraging the University community to resist this trend Bruton appeals for an embracing of the lofty values of a University.

Ragobeer(UNSU) argues for co-determination, a situation in which unions and management work together in a functional enterprise, an approach based on the belief that labour ought to revisit its historic role of fighting and opposing capital. This non-adversarial view is implicit in the South African legal framework which it is contended facilitates a consultative and consensual approach to policy formulation leading to trust, buy-in, participation and a lack of resistance to change. Ragobeer proposes an RSB approach based on "Reconciliation and Development, Service Delivery and Beyond" citing co-determination as the factor that



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focuses the organisation's resources on working together to achieve harmony and success in the University environment.

Thabede (NEHAWU) depicts the leadership role as the creation of a positive environment in which a shared vision is fostered. Nehawu subscribes to the King Code of governance and believes that robust debates and ongoing dialogue are essential for unions and management jointly arriving at workable plans. Worker representation in key structures at the University is critical in promoting discussion and constructive dissent; as is the transparency and accountability of the leadership.

Mantzaris and Cebekhulu (COMSA) locate their analysis within the socio- economic and political context arguing that class contestation continues apace. The role of Comsa, in being committed to UKZN, is to be decisive in challenging injustices and unfair labour practices through full participation in all decision making organs of the University. The denial of access and equity, the corporatisation of management and the development of a transitive consciousness are all seen as problematic in the new University. What is required they argue is a synergy between key stakeholders in terms of transparency, accountability, participative access, and transformation of the curriculum. They suggest that contestation is an essential component of a revolutionary organisation like Comsa.

Similarly all the Management perspectives presented reflect a need for optimising participation in decision-making so as to minimise resistance to necessary change in the pursuit of efficiency..efficiency being the concept not covered by the union presentations.

Msweli-Mbanga proposes an organisational citizenship

model including participation, in making goals, taking decisions, solving problems and making changes in the organisation. She contends that the challenge is to create a participative system that is transparent, fair and flexible and that integrates organisational change with workloads so as to include participation and undermine resistance to change.

Pete Zacharias's presentation is based on the premise that leadership is about personal accountability, self organization, ownership of one's deeds and actions and the elusive decisiveness. These characteristics are underpinned by integrity, ethics and compassion. Leadership however must be nurtured at several layers in the organization in a way that we accept the need to objectively measure progress towards our vision objectively.

Leana Uys cites as a backdrop the historically collegial relationships and decision making processes at universities which resulted in slow change, often unclear and unmonitored working hours, and sometimes a tolerance of inefficiency and low performance. She argues that the University needs to build an efficient system in which there is compliance with agreed upon modes of functioning that promotes networking in order to prevent parochialism. Uys contends that technological support enhances efficiency and that we should continue to create an open, discussion based, decision making model.

Mazibuko also asserts the need for decisive leadership in the Humanities which is losing ground whilst redefining standards and academic excellence in our quest to turn out employable citizens. Meaningful buy-in of the academic community is essential because the University is a co-operative enterprise in education requiring flat and less hierarchical styles of leadership.

Does The Participative Leadership Model Reduce Resistance To Change? An Institutional Theory Perspective

P U M E L A M S W E L I - M B A N G A



According to institutional theory, organisations are defined and shaped by institutional environment that they are embedded in. (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). In line with the institutional theory, the 're-configuration of the higher education landscape' that was initiated by the Shape and Size of Higher Education Task Team's report of the Council on Higher Education (30 June 2000), and the National Plan for

Higher Education of the Ministry of Education (5 March 2001) has shaped the institutional environment for higher education. The legislative interventions (for example, the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997) as well as other quality related frameworks, policies and guidelines have shaped the institutional environment of Higher Education. Coupled with these changes, we are living in a rapidly changing world where new technology has created a society craving for speed and action.

As leaders in higher education we face incredible

pressures to keep up with the pace and urgency of daily demands; high work loads; deliver immediate results, and rationalise within limited budgets. We are faced with demands of managing tensions between equity redress and budget; resource optimisation and quality; change management and diversity management. Broader institutional challenges include crafting mergers and managing resistance to the change process within our institutions.

As with all change, the almost conditioned response to change is to resist it. Weick (2001) points out that no matter how carefully and slowly an idea of change is introduced, the immediate reaction is to resist it. Esterhuysen (2003, p5) refers to the phenomenon as an 'in-built conservatism and preservation syndrome'. This syndrome also affects the distribution of knowledge, whereby people view the knowledge they possess as a source of power.

What strategic options do we have at our disposal to lead our higher education institutions, such that they

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are in alignment with the motives behind the policy framework provided by DoE? Perhaps, most importantly, how do we mobilise and focus our resources and energy in order to achieve organisational excellence while managing the change processes dictated by the institutional environment from which higher education institutions operate? In an attempt to address this question this paper proposes a model of resistance to change that integrates participative leadership style with organisational citizenship behaviour.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Participation has long been of interest to both academics and managers. Given the long history of scientific enquiry on participation, it is somewhat surprising that the construct is still elusive and enigmatic. Different researchers have treated the construct differently. For example, Chisholm and Vansima (1993) equate participation with organisational practices, programmes or techniques, while other researchers (e.g. Aktouf, 1992; Alvesson and Wilmoutt, 1992) view participation as a broader social issue with a variety of underlying implications, such as manipulation, oppression, and control. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) put forward an assertion that organisational receptivity, individual ego development, and knowledge availability influence the effectiveness of participation. The authors argue that often organisational members lack participative competence and are not adequately prepared to participate in organisations. As a result, questions have been raised about the feasibility for employees to participate in the full range of decisions that affect them. This is why organisational researchers have speculated that participatory processes must be considered by managers who seek to encourage the exchange of information and knowledge (Wagner, 2000). A participative system of management, according to Manville & Ober (2003) affords the people the opportunity to realise their full power and the ability

to thrive in the knowledge economy. Empirical evidence provided by Neumann (1989) has shown that approximately two thirds of a work force chose not to participate in organisational change efforts when provided the opportunity.

In their work, Glew, O'Leary-Kelly and Griffin (1995) argue that simply involving people in decision making will not necessarily produce benefits to either those involved or the organisation as a whole, because of the complexity of the participation process. A contrary view is proposed by Hall (1980) in his contention that participation is the mechanism of ownership of organisation work in a way that offers ego satisfaction. Similar to this line of thought, Pasmore and Fagans (1992) view participation in organisations as providing opportunities for people in the modern world to find meaning in their lives. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) contend that effective participation helps individuals to write life stories worth living and societies to fulfil the dreams of their citizens. To have that true meaning, the participative structure must also emerge naturally from the people's own aspirations and initiatives (Manville & Ober, 2003). They must be induced to enter and remain within the system by affording them the opportunity for innovative and spontaneous activity that goes beyond role prescriptions (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983).

In examining scholarly conceptions of participation, we find as many viewpoints and definitions of participation as there are scholars studying the construct. For the purpose of this study we found Pasmore and Fagans' (1992) study most helpful. First the authors recommend the concept of organisational citizenship as a more inclusive framework for research and practice concerning organisation development activities. Secondly, they distinguish four types of participation: (1) participation in making goals, (2) participation in making decisions, (3) participation in solving problems (4) participation

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in making changes in the organisation. Similar to Pasmore and Fagans' study it is participation in making changes in the organisation that this paper is concerned with.

Dachler and Wilpert (1978) in their study view participation as a central concept of organising. This view of participation as Dachler and Wilpert argue requires the following questions to be addressed: Who makes what kind of decision in organisations? What kind of access do employees have to information that helps in making decisions? Are employees' opinions taken into account in the decision process or is the decision completely in the hands of senior management? Dachler and Wilpert (1978) define participation as a continuum reflecting the different access that employees have to the actual making of a decision, or the amount of influence they can exert toward a given decision outcome. Following this line of argument we argue that participation is not possible without access to information that helps in making decisions. Pasmore and Fagans (1992) go on to say that participation is difficult if one lacks relevant information or knowledge pertaining to decisions to be made. In their study they assert that knowledge pertinent to the decision under consideration affects a person's ability and inclination to participate in a given situation. Tjosvold (1987) further states that several persons can increase the information and ideas being considered. They can correct each other's thinking, and pool their resources to develop high quality solutions effectively. In addition, this can heighten the acceptance and the implementation of decisions. Participation also enhances tacit knowledge because tacitness is a property of collectively held knowledge. It is co-produced through situation and activity, and therefore, context dependant (Breu & Hemingway, 2002).

On the basis of the foregoing discussion we offer a definition of access to participation as the extent to which organisations provide information and

opportunities to enhance employees' participative competence. It stands to reason that employees are more likely to consider participation in the change efforts in their organisations if they view their organisations as having access to participation. Access to participation should primarily influence willingness to participate. We thus postulate that:

Proposition 1: Willingness to participate in the change efforts in organisations is determined by access to participation.

A strong link between participation and change in organisations is well established in literature. One approach of viewing change is by looking at it as an outcome of participation. A popular approach in reducing resistance to change is to involve and engage organisational members in change processes. Although the latter approach makes good sense, Neumann (1989) as we mentioned earlier, found that even though opportunities to participate were provided, two thirds of the work force in their study chose not to participate. Glew et al (1995) contend that willingness to participate does not only depend on opportunities to participate, but is also a function of factors ranging from type of changes required from employees, how much these changes are welcome, and the workload implications of participation. Primarily, the participative behaviour cannot be invoked without the willingness of the participants. Furthermore, employees are likely to respond favourably to employee participation programmes that would not have a tremendous effect on their existing workload. One would then expect to find those employees who are willing to participate in change processes to be less resistant to change.

Proposition 2 : Willingness to participate in change efforts in organisations is likely to reduce resistance to change.

Pasmore and Fagans (1992) provide a critical evaluation

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of participation in conjunction with Organisational Development activities. While their study is non empirical in nature, it provides an extensive overview of moderating variables that influence effectiveness of participation together with outcomes associated with different kinds of participative acts. Of particular relevance to our study, Pasmore and Fagans (1992) recommend a concept of organisational citizenship behaviour as a framework for examining participation in organisations. Organisational citizenship behaviour are innovative and spontaneous activities that go beyond the call of duty within an organisation, but make a contribution to organisational effectiveness (MacKenzie, Podsakoff and Ahearne, 1998). These innovative and spontaneous activities have also been referred to as extra-role behaviours (MacKenzie et al, 1998; Morrison and Phelps, 1999; Van Dyne and Lepine, 1992; Msweli-Mbanga and Lin, 2003; Glew et al, 1995). Glew et al's (1995) conceptualisation of participation is based on the contention that it is a conscious and intended effort by individuals at a higher level in an organisation to provide visible extra-role or role expanding opportunities for individuals or groups at a lower level in the organisation to have a greater voice in one or more areas of organisational performance. This argument rests on the premise that management need to provide lower level employees with opportunities to develop extra-role behaviours. While Glew et al's definition implicitly assumes that extra-role behaviours are a mechanism for facilitating participation; Pasmore and Fagans have a different view. Pasmore and Fagans view the development of citizenship behaviour as being a driver of participation. Indeed, willingness to participate is more likely to be displayed by those individuals who exhibit high levels of organisational citizenship behaviour. We thus submit that:

Proposition 3 : Organisational citizenship behaviour is an antecedent of willingness to participate in change efforts in an organisation.

Given that organisational citizenship behaviour is the function of individual initiative, helping behaviour, organisational allegiance and loyalty (Msweli-Mbanga and Lin 2003), it is reasonable to expect those who display high levels of organisational citizenship behaviour to be less likely to resist change. It also stands to reason that without access to participation, the opportunity to exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour would be limited. Thus we submit that

Proposition 4 : The higher the organisational citizenship behaviour, the lower the resistance to change.

Hypotheses 5 : Access to participation is an antecedent of organisational citizenship behaviour.

Conclusion

This paper has shown that citizenship behaviour is an important outcome of access to participation and a strong predictor of resistance to change. The paper also provides a framework for managing resistance to change from the participation perspective. The implication to leadership in higher education is the need to create a participative system that is not only transparent, but also fair and flexible. For example, the work load of employees participating in organisational change activities could be integrated to their workload so as to increase willingness to participate. The participative system should also encourage constant sharing of fresh viewpoints and knowledge. With such a system in place organisational personnel is more likely to exhibit higher levels of organisational citizenship behaviour, which in turn will lead to reduced resistance to change. Essentially, the paper highlights the importance of providing access to participation as one method of improving organisational citizenship behaviour. Leadership in higher education could possibly aim at providing options of participation in the different structures within higher education institutions. Not only will participants

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take ownership of organisational objectives and goals, they are more likely to improve organisational allegiance and loyalty as a method of reducing resistance to change.

This paper provides a starting point for understanding how participation as a process is linked to resistance to change via organisational citizenship behaviour and willingness to participate. Future research could consider additional variables that impact on resistance to change.

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The University As A Co-operative Enterprise In Education

N T O M B ' F I K I L E M . M A Z I B U K O



Though traditionally it was the wider Humanities (including Law) that provided the bulk of the leadership world-wide in universities and in society generally, over the last generation that position has been eroded. This has been in part due to the imperatives of the technological revolution we have experienced, partly because of a dramatic massification in the higher education sector and partly because of the staccato demands of the current job-

market. But be all that as it may, the impression and the reality are more often than not at variance.

Government has no qualms about our universities being peopled with student populations that are drawn 40 percent from the Humanities. And, of course, the reality is that the number of nuclear scientists, astro-physicists and some educational movers and shakers in society might like to think that society should be 60 percent science and technology. But the converse is true, for the artistic and liberal art side of the brain

does not recognise such divisions. Or to put it bluntly, most people are more at home with literature than chemistry!

The same mindset that has relegated Humanities to a tame and minor role in academia would argue that it is the humanities that nurture and promote universities as 'Ivory Towers'. This is not so. As the MTB corridor joke goes, "Ivory looks best on elephants, not on academics."

Now, when it comes to outreach, community involvement and addressing the needs of society, the humanities lead the way. Where once Latin and ancient Greek guarded the portals of the MTB Ivory Tower, today the doors are opened wide and within are the societal disciplines: Social Work, Community Development, Development Studies, Planning and Housing, Psychology and the like.

Nor is this mission to answer to the callings of an emerging nation confined to the social sciences and

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professional subjects. Literature, Sociology, Criminology, Gender Studies, the performing arts and history cannot get away any more with a 'Blue Sky' existence.

And yet, we cannot leave the matter to rest there. We are, after all, not technicians. The intellectual fuel that drives the discourse of academia in general, and humanities in particular, marks us out from finance-driven market place. That divide does exist and is fundamentally important to the work of a university. There is a nexus between a university and society – but that implies *de facto* a divide.

In crossing that divide and providing leadership, hopefully to both, we have several problems to face. Looming starkly, for example, is the thorny issue of 'academic excellence'. In many minds this is a *sine qua non*, a non-negotiable, a bedrock to our institution. But is it? Or is the cry for academic excellence the last cry of the old guard, a tool to impede change by retaining our 60 percent white staff in Humanities and preventing the student population moving to reflect more healthily the demographics of our society?

As with so many questions relating to transformation, the answer is, 'It depends'. No one can deny that 'Standards' and 'Academic Excellence' are not important or there would not be national government concern about dropout rates and fixing intake levels. Standards and academic excellence are both essential in a university and must be monitored and nurtured by leadership – but they can also be Trojan horses.

There is collective pressure - and, many argue, responsibility - on universities to take in and turn out employable citizens who can help realise the national goals of eradication of poverty and job creation. It is within that context that the burden weighs heavily on all of us, and particularly on us as leaders, to consider how we approach the traditional conflict over

maintenance of standards and academic excellence.

Leadership is defining what is meant by such terms in an African context, especially where there has been disadvantage or discrimination, as with the many talented girl learners whose education has been discouraged within families or with learners who have seen their schooling broken by the demands of HIV/AIDS on the family. We must recognise that excellence is not something that is inherent but developed, and that what is really important in the final analysis is that there is excellence in the final product.

The problem facing leaders in the new university is that such debates are too frequently sidelined in the practical cause of constructing the super-edifice. That is inevitable to some extent, but creating rules and regulations, the endless trail of meetings (many attended by the same individuals) and the monitoring of the vagaries of the Finance will-o-the-wisp cannot be permitted to blind us to our leadership role to promote, expand and publicise those points I raise above. We as managers cannot divorce ourselves from the academics on the ground. We have created colleges that are monoliths. If the academic Ivory Towers are crumbling thanks to the scholars of social worker, psychologist and sociologist we cannot allow them to be replaced by Bureaucratic Towers: a new distant horizon within our walls. That is in many respects a greater challenge to leaders than dismantling an already dilapidated divide between Town and Gown.

The vision and mission of our university has no subplot to it. It is all-encompassing within the African context. To an extent how each academic finds their own goal within this is up to themselves. For me, the challenge is not so much the one of breaking down the traditional barriers between university and society. Rather it is to guide academics in the curriculum they teach, in the research they perform and in the external

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work they discharge along a focused path relevant to specific needs within regional and national trends. To achieve this there has to be a 'meaningful buy-in'.

The big-stick approach has a habit of backfiring on leaders in universities. It might solve an initial issue, but it rarely solves a problem. Leadership by example will impress the intellectual more than the iron fist (even in a velvet glove). In academia at least, the pen is mightier than the sword. This is not to renege on responsibility. Tasks have to be monitored and undertaken. But in the case of our new university, where there was a marriage between one large and strong partner and a smaller one – one with a radical tradition, the other with a liberal tradition – it is necessary to be circumspect.

In a College where there are 15 000 students and 1 500 members of staff; where once there were three History Departments, three Psychology Departments; five faculties with five deans – the cataclysmic changes that have overtaken staff cannot but create in some quarters a sense of isolation and temporary estrangement. That must be recognised, understood and addressed. However, it cannot be allowed to be exploited, to subvert the vision and mission. It is a balancing act, created by the unique situation in which we find ourselves. The nature of leadership at UKZN in 2005 is a unique occurrence. As we recover from the merger and the past, the mission of the Humanities must be to produce a core of scholars and public intellectual on critical and social thought, education and development, what Delanty (2001) calls reflexive communication and fundamental questions and models on social engagement. In 2015 the agenda will be completely changed. Then we will be a normal African university in the world.

I view a university as a co-operative enterprise in education. This view informs my position on cooperative, flat and less hierarchial styles of leadership. As a Deputy

Vice Chancellor and Head of College, part of my responsibility is outreach to the leadership of other service systems of the institution. Deputy Vice Chancellors (academic) must be involved in ongoing conversations about the academic and research endeavour, where we want to take the academic endeavour, contemporary policy issues such as the National Curriculum Statement, Minimum Admissions Requirements policy, visibility of higher education or academics on matters development, intellectual and cultural discourse in South Africa, Africa and globally, the type of leadership and organisational traditions we want to enhance and promote within the academy and the position of young and seasoned scholars and researchers in the academy. This category of DVC s must make time to engage with the academic endeavour on a regular basis.

This category of leadership must facilitate and drive student centred agendas in the academy institutional planning, societal engagements, particularly with educators at the level of Further Education and Training and Training Certificate (FETC). Relationships and leadership with and within other service units such as Human Resources, Student Services, Finance must be about collective enhancement of the national and University mission, promotion and quality assuring university policies particularly equity and transformation. Once the HR and Finance Divisions are not connected to the academy by mindset, operation and intent the university is in trouble. As part of collective and reflective leadership and good governance my vision is to be part of a healthy ongoing dialogue with these units mutually strengthening one another to deliver a quality service to students and make learning a pleasant and rewarding experience.

Beside spaces for critical thought, learning and teaching the University and college leadership should advocate and create social spaces for conversations, relaxation

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and reflection and social integration of the University community. These social spaces add value to harmonisation of relations in a young institution like ours. These spaces are good for the mind, social cohesion and coexistence of members of a community of about 50,000 individuals! As an institution we are located in a geopolitical space (eThekweni municipality) which has a population of 3.15 million people and generates 60% of its economic activity. This space requires unpacking.

We must view ourselves as part of the leadership that has to introduce and manage the transformation programme. That transformation includes a fundamental shift in the institutional mindset, a dedicated, revolutionary and visionary team to drive and manage the transformation, a team of leaders who understand and is prepared to identify potential and skill within the institution and allow them in the "centre of the academy". As the times of stress and strain confront us on a regular basis, as the leadership we must be able to engage in what Vico (2002) calls a FANTASIA and lead in the culture of seeking new ways and solutions within and outside the institutions, contextualise the direction and the culture of being creative and resourceful. The context is partly to understand that we are primarily serving the Millennium Generation, the need to produce and sustain a new generation of academic with a different social composition.

An Open, Discussion-based Decision Making Model

L E A N A R U Y S



The space of the modern university is one of the most contested. This is understandable if one considers the large number of stakeholders, both individuals and groups, who are involved in universities – academics and students are the first groups who come to mind, but these are quickly followed by parents, support staff, funding agencies, employers of graduates, the government, the other educational sectors, alumni, to name but a few. In this

regard the university can be compared with a large company, and I have therefore decided to use the Trilemma Triangle developed by the Shell Company to analyze the leadership situation in South African Universities in 2005.

The Shell Global Scenarios to 2025 uses a triangle to illustrate the forces that drive an organization in today's world towards different objectives:

- Efficiency (market centric)

- Social cohesion (society centric)
- Justice and security (state centric)

The trilemma is that one cannot achieve all three objectives, and that usually two wins, one loses. This leads to the description of trade-off zones which were described in three scenarios as follows:

Efficiency and Security: Low Trust Globalization

This is a legalistic "prove it to me" world. This is a world of rapid regulatory change, overlapping jurisdictions and conflicting laws, which leads to intrusive checks and controls, encouraging short-term goals and vertical integration. Complying with fast-evolving rules and managing complex risks are key challenges. Stakeholders vote with their feet, exiting the organization when they don't like it or what it does.

Security and Social cohesion: Flags

This is a dogmatic "follow me" world. Dogmatic approaches, regulatory fragmentation, national

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preferences, conflicts over values and religion give insiders an advantage and put a brake on outreach or internationalization. Gated communities, patronage and national standards exacerbate fragmentation. Stakeholders have a strong "home bias" and remain loyal even in the face of problems, also because transparency and other options are low.

Social cohesion and Efficiency: Open Doors

This is a pragmatic "know me" world, where security is based on an intimate knowledge of the other players, and a focus on voluntary compliance with best practice codes. Regulatory harmonization, mutual recognition and close links between stakeholders encourage networking, reputation and close relationships as a way of working. Stakeholders are inclined to voice their concerns, since there is greater transparency and openness.

The parallel between these scenarios and South African universities at this time, is obvious, but let us explore them briefly. On the one hand, the University has to manage an increasingly complex system – in the case of the University of KwaZulu-Natal 44 000 students in 140 programmes on 5 campuses, served by 6 000 staff members, and earning and using R50m in research funding every year. They have to do this efficiently, and optimally manage the enormous risks inherent in this enterprise. This demands efficiency, since 100% of the funding is dependant on the ability of the organization to keep within regulatory guidelines, maintain an excellent reputation and be a successful player in the national and international arena. Clearly, Efficiency is a worthy objective, and when the University embarks on such an efficiency drive, it includes demands for more information submitted on time, in prescribed formats. It leads to clear objectives, and measurement of the attainment of these objectives.

On the other hand, Universities have traditionally been

places where collegiality reigned supreme. Decisions were made by colleagues at meetings, not by managers. These colleagues were given great freedom of choice in terms of what they teach and how they teach it; what they research and how they research it. This was called "academic freedom" and became a much valued premise on which higher education institutions are built. Because of the collegial approach to decision-making, change came slowly, and sometimes very slowly. Working hours were seldom spelt out, and never monitored. Tolerance of different opinions and even of inefficiency and low performance was high. This is the "collegial" university culture much valued by many academics.

There has been a discussion around "collegiality" and "managerialism", which reflects the dilemma of choosing between Efficiency and Societal Cohesion. At its best, the solution may be found in the "know me" Open-doors" objective, where the university builds an efficient system based on all constituencies having a clear understanding each other; voluntarily complies with agreed upon guidelines to ensure efficiency of the organization and networking across the institution and outside. This leads to a gradual building of an excellent reputation, which leads to trust based on knowledge, and close working relationship between stakeholders.

However, the development of the other two scenarios may overtake an unwary institution. I see this as a risk to be managed by any Higher Education institution today. The first possibility is that a University can become insular and reject external codes and demands. The "home grown way" is idealized, and the insider views are carefully nurtured and adhered to. Terms like "African scholarship", "excellence" and "access" can in this situation become dogmatic views that exclude debate and alternative objectives. Powerful lobbies inside the University will marginalize "outsiders", however these are defined or identified. Patronage by individuals

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or groups of other individuals or causes may become the modus operandi, stifling transparency and justice.

The second possibility is one in which the government in all its shapes and forms (Department of Education, statutory bodies) becomes increasingly dominant in the decision-making of Universities, keeping them unbalanced through fast-changing regulations, demanding compliance with minimal engagement with the stakeholders on these demands. Since regulatory demands are not negotiated, the University may find it increasingly difficult to maintain a culture of negotiation inside its borders. In this situation the "management" of the university might become increasingly compliant and demand increasing compliance from its constituencies.

I think the Open Doors is the most likely scenario for South African Universities for a number of reasons: our society is quite strong on claiming its right to be involved in decision-making, we share many values across different constituencies, we are a talking society, where decision-making has traditionally been a collective activity, and we have a reasonable consensus on the goals we are setting for our universities. However, there are also a few dangerous tendencies in our society: our democracy is new, and we still need to find ways of managing conflictual objectives and methods within such a society. There is a strong traditional of authoritarianism in many of the cultures in our country, leading to submissiveness and a respect for authority or seniority that may become problematic. We are in some ways also changing so fast that people get tired of continual engagement, and withdraw to sit and watch developments from the sidelines.

My recommendations for the future management of the University would be that we do the following:

- Enhance efficiency in a transparent manner by setting negotiated goals and targets clearly;

- Promote networking outside our own system in all our constituencies, so that we enhance our understanding of the larger world, and prevent a parochial view of the institution;
- Place a strong emphasis on technological support to enhance efficiency in a manner that does not detract from core functions and values of the institution;
- That we continue to create an open, discussion-based decision-making model in the University, which will enable people to engage with each other and with the organization.

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L e a d e r s h i p : F a c t s , F i c t i o n s O r T r u t h s

P E T E J K Z A C H A R I A S



The purpose of this symposium is to consider views on leadership in higher education. In my ancestry this symposium (derived from the Greek, roughly meaning "drink together") would have been a drinking party at which intellectual discussion takes place. We have lots to celebrate at this particular time in the history of our fledgling University but I assume I am expected to sway towards the discussion rather than the drinking!

Leadership is an elusive thing. There are those who believe leaders are born and are therefore genetically predisposed to the task (e.g. royal houses). An alternative view is that leadership can be developed and therefore can be taught (e.g. the hierarchy in armies). I subscribe to the latter and believe, therefore, that higher education by definition should be at the forefront of national leadership or at least a major contributor to its development. To say we are, currently, would be simply to delude ourselves. Great leaders can emerge from

any society and higher education provides a forum for these skills to be nurtured and developed.

I have described leadership as a task, as the derivation of the word comes from the old English "laedan" which means "cause to go with one by guiding or showing the way". This is a powerful notion in the context of the modern demand for participatory management and transparent administration, i.e. the thing we call governance. Governance (from the Greek "kubemao" or Latin "gubernare" to steer or rule) is about sway or rule and in the modern society "corporate governance" sets the benchmarks for morals and ethics in all endeavours: if you like, the barometer of corruption.

I do not believe that leadership can be separated from management and administration, but the converse is not true. Management, so often confused or used interchangeably with leadership, is about **control** which is suggested from its Latin route "manus" meaning hand. Administration is a more interesting word. I am sure that all the administrative staff, which includes the



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Executive at UKZN, are aware that this word comes from "*administrare*" which, in Latin, means **to serve**. In respect of how we see ourselves, therefore, the servant notion could be a powerful force in leadership.

A university is a complex place, and this is driven by its natural diversity. In South Africa we are extremely fortunate that this natural diversity, which comes from the many disciplines found in all universities, has a broader cultural diversity that overlays the natural; far more than in, say, European or American institutions. This has a major bearing on what kind of university we are. This enriches our dialogue, expands our opportunities, and gives us a unique depth. At the same time these marvellous attributes give us complexity, and this is the challenge to leadership. It must, however, make us one of the most exciting places in the world to be involved in leadership. But, because of this cultural diversity, it is important that my ideas are understood in the context of my views and knowledge base. As my culture determines to a large extent my interpretation, this could be described as my truths. This is why I have defined the meanings of the words I associate most closely with the notion of leadership that I have. Furthermore, it is important, in this debate, that we take time to understand the mental model that each participant has of leadership. So I take this opportunity to declare mine.

In a single word for me, leadership is **accountability!** More specifically it means "I am accountable." So, to me, leadership is about self-organization and personal accountability and ownership of your deeds and actions. To have collective governance you need to have individual accountability. Because I believe that leadership comes with management (i.e. control) and administration (i.e. service), as a leader I would rather make 100 decisions and get more than half wrong, than make none at all. To make no decisions, or even delay them, is far worse than making many that turn out wrong.

It is only by **doing** that we will learn what works on any particular occasion. As far as administration goes, the service to others is having the restraint not to get involved in the task assigned to others, even though you have the power to do so. In so doing, leaders who administer must support and value those around them. It is, of course, not always easy to demonstrate this all of the time to all of the people! This is because human frailty and a lack of personal accountability easily cloud the issue.

This is what I understand leadership to be. I have taken for granted that all models of leadership assume integrity, ethics and compassion as prerequisites. So against my view of leadership, there are behaviours that can be learnt and so any echelon has the potential to produce a leader.

So why, then, is higher education in a leadership crisis?

That crisis is defined by the general difficulty in attracting people to take up the position of 'leader' at any level. Furthermore, in my recent experience, most universities in South Africa have their institutional memory vested in a few key individuals. The same faces appear in all the committees. We ricochet issues from one committee to the next. We try as far as possible to distribute the blame. How do I know this? I sit in all these committees with the same people. Therefore I am a symptom and a cause. The choice all of us who are trapped in this rollercoaster is whether we are part of the problem or part of the solution. Reflecting on this has some interesting personal consequences. But I digress.

The job of a leader is described by Peter Senge as "... a leader's story, sense of purpose, values and vision establish the direction and target. Relentless commitment to the truth and to enquiry into the forces underlying current reality continually highlight

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the gaps between reality and the vision. Leaders generate and manage this creative tension – not just in themselves but in an entire organization. That is how they energise an organization. That is their basic job. That is why they exist.” I would add to this by saying “That is why they are necessary!”

In essence the key performance areas would be something like: relentless commitment to truth; active enquiry of reality; and generating and managing creative tension. Now who would readily accept that as a job description?

Brian Tracy is a lot more succinct in saying “Leaders think and talk about solutions. Followers think and talk about problems.”! Every day each one of us can make this choice on how we will behave in any one circumstance.

So what impact does all of this have on our institution in the pursuit of our vision and mission?

In the context of the backdrop to this debate a quick explanation of my understanding of democracy is needed. This is a powerful tool for self-governance. It gives you, the individual, the power to make the choice to lead or to follow. It also gives you the power not to participate. Both carry consequences so you cannot be a true democrat without personal accountability.

So if we have and use concepts like co-governance, participative management, co-determination, etc., we have to have a shared understanding of these characteristics and of the roles of leaders, managers, and administrators in the overall system of governance. All of these are people in our diverse organisation and all come with their own mental models, knowledge base – or truths, if you like.

So if we care to ensure a meaningful governance system we need to recognize and nurture leadership in several layers in the organization – from individuals to the collective Executive and Council. If we claim to have a value-based, mission-driven organization we need to decide what sort of university we want to be. This brings challenges as, in order to walk the path, assuming you will recognize the end when you get there, you must know how far you have gone. That means that you must measure. But ... as soon as we do that, then co-governance and participatory management get set aside in favour of academic freedom and individual rights. It's a kind of anti-leadership vaccine. This is described as the “what do we know – OR – don't want to know” dichotomy suggested by Robert Greenleaf. Simply put, his thesis says we don't want to know our systems need an overhaul or we set about convincing ourselves that the opposition is different so their good performance is not a measure for us. For UKZN it may mean being (only just) in the top 500 universities in the world is a good measure of achieving our goal of academic excellence - 'good', of course, being a highly value-laden word.

I think we are in this dichotomy now as we start to develop measures of performance of individuals and units throughout the organization and learn we have a long way to go on the path to our vision. The desire to “want to know” is an important driver along the path to being the Premier University of African Scholarship.

We have to recognize the fiction, understand the facts, and deal with the truths – we have much to debate and decide!



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Acknowledgements

In developing these thoughts I have had the privilege of interacting with many leaders of high integrity and personal accountability. They are not mentioned as their humility prefers this. I have also drawn and learnt from the challenges and enquiry from two decades of young South Africans searching for their truths.

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The Downside Of The New Managerialism

A G B R U T O N



NTESU, and the staff organisation JASA which preceded it at the former University of Natal, have a proud and active history of participation in staff matters at that institution. Our relationship with that institution, I believe, could be described as congenial, challenging, highly interactive and rarely confrontational.

It has been our clearly stated goal that we would wish to co-operate and work harmoniously with the new governance

at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the same manner, constructively working towards goals that have an overwhelmingly strong identification with the Mission of UKZN.

Sadly, it has been our experience that the Executive of UKZN has taken a strongly negative stance towards union activities in the merged institution. This is evidenced by radical reduction of union representation on University decision-making bodies, the strongly voiced challenges issued at public meetings by members of

the new Executive and the erosion of negotiation powers in various forums vital to staff interests. Previous forums of negotiation have now become bodies of consultation.

Amongst the many, and perhaps more familiar, statements of intent in the Constitution of our national NTESU body I would like to single out three statements of intent which have particular relevance to today's proceedings;

- To advance the democratic participation of members in the structures of governance at institutions of tertiary education.
- To promote the efficient functioning of the tertiary education and related institutions in South Africa, promote critical thinking and education; defend academic freedom and autonomy, intellectual, creative and other property rights.
- To engender the principles of co-determination between employer and employee and foster an

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environment that ensures current, or higher, standards of excellence in the work, teaching and research of tertiary education institutions

It is clear that the corporate model of managerialism and the concept of an entrepreneurial university are pervasive in our University, along with many others. There are frequent references in current literature to the changes in universities in many countries with specific reference to globalisation, neoliberalism, entrepreneurship, corporate governance (also called entrepreneurial governance) and the ideology of new managerialism.

The ideology of new managerialism² -the extent to which contemporary business practices and private sector ideas or values have permeated publicly-funded institutions and work practices – is in vogue. Examples of this are provided below

Entrepreneurialism in Higher Education (HE) involves academics and administrators explicitly seeking out new ways of raising private sector funds through enterprise activities such as consultancies and applied research. HEI's need to find new sources of finance to replace declining government funding for HE.

The immediate downside of the entrepreneurialism is the servicing of the greed of Multi National Corporations at the expense of the local and pressing social problems in our society.

Both themes have significant impact on organisations and organisational culture. This is an area for further research and critical examination.

The new managerialism, obsessed with the application of private sector techniques, values and practices to publicly funded institutions, claim that these directives are purely based on an objective search for efficiency,

effectiveness and excellence and the continuous improvement of organisations.

A key feature of new managerialism may involve explicit attempts to alter the regimes and cultures of organisations and the values of staff, so that they more closely resemble those found in corporations or the private for-profit sector:

Other features brought with the new managerialism include competition between cost centres and the formation of internal markets; encouraging teamwork; the introduction of targets (plans); intrusive monitoring of efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency and effectiveness may be accomplished through staff appraisal, overt measurement of employee performance and outcomes (e.g. exam results, employment destinations of graduates) and more subtle self and peer-regulation.

Teaching and research audits are also introduced and are largely finance-driven and increasingly associated with the maintenance of higher academic standards.

Funding models such as cost-based analysis (CBA) are increasingly being applied to education. HE is an example of this, which deems the provision of HE worthwhile if the benefits derived from it outweigh the costs of its implementation. Although this formula appears to be simple, it becomes very complicated when the constituent elements are examined. Benefits are often based on normative, value-laden judgments thus making objective, dispassionate judgements difficult. CBA is an inherently limited form of analysis because it can only be used when all the outcomes are measurable in financial terms and this will never be the case in education.

In purely monetary terms, costs can be relatively easy to calculate, salaries of staff, costs of learning materials, and use of facilities can be calculated in purely financial

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terms. There may, however, be disputes about what costs to include.

Challenges to UKZN – or the cost of adopting this management model.

- The growing distance between management and Faculty. Increasing isolation of the Executive group from faculty. The public 'CEO' status of the Vice-Chancellor.
- The upward movement of power into management and the top-down decision making processes.
- Significant increases in the salaries of management staff.
- Attempts by management to reduce the power of unions (attempts to use divide and rule tactics, reduction of committee representation, personal attacks on union leaders).
- Application of management tools (audits, outside consultants, etc).
- Application of Cost Based Analysis rather than Social Impact Analysis
- Centralisation of functions (appointments of staff). More regulation and control.
- The influence of the many outside persons on the present Council and other governing structures.
- Management being advised by 21st Century Consultants (they have no expertise in HE).

Some questions

Is this the route the staff wish their institution to follow?

Is what works all that matters? Can this logic of calculation and measurement of outcomes and results address the purposes and politics of education and its relation to the common good?

Why do we need particular forms of management? How does this relate to the central purpose of education?

What are the political implications of a policy mission that focuses narrowly on providing solutions to, rather than stimulating ongoing deliberations about educational problems?

What are the consequences of attempting to determine quality in education in relation to the logic of instrumental scientific rationality?

Will the enforcement of managerial principles of accountability, efficiency and programme effectiveness lead to no one being left behind?

What will be the lasting influences, if any, of the framing of educational purposes in terms of quantifiable accountability standards, educational processes in relation to interventions that can be isolated and measured, and education's public as citizen-consumers?

Threats offered by this management style

- Corporate culture threatens and undermines the role of universities;
- Corporations dictate sponsored research Business and corporations are increasingly becoming involved in the decision-making structures of HE;
- Academics are increasingly being lured into becoming operatives of corporations rather than seekers of truth;
- Research that produces massive profits is favoured above that which addresses social issues.
- Research, programmes and projects that do not translate into profits are marginalized, underfunded or eliminated;
- Management models replace faculty governance (faculty is reduced to an advisory capacity)
- Corporate planning replaces social planning;
- Management becomes a substitute for leadership;
- HE has difficulty in holding corporations accountable (democracy, human rights, freedoms, etc.);

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- HE institutions are increasingly looking for leaders who can bridge business and academe;
- Business-school deans are offered jobs as principals (those who are good budget cutters and save money even if jobs are lost, in the name of efficiency, as a result);
- HE heads are forced to develop relationships with business which result in instrumentalist curricula (instrumentalisation of knowledge) geared towards corporate interests;
- Academics are disheartened by changes and new forms of corporate-style leadership – they retreat, disengage from participating in political discussions or building/protecting democratic cultures and practices – some even fear losing their jobs;
- The notion that HE should be defended as centres of critical scholarship, social responsibility and enlightened teaching in order to expand the scope of freedom and democracy appears irrelevant if not dangerous in this discourse;
- Yet corporations have narrow and bankrupt visions of society – they are only interested in profits, downsizing, creating low-paid, benefit-free shit jobs -- they deliberately ignore the deepening inequalities in society;
- Corporations lack a moral and ethical vision (see The Corporation)
- Academics lose control over curriculum development which is outsourced and copyrighted;
- Tenured staff are replaced with those with business savvy with a love for teaching and selling;
- Creating a [permanent] underclass of part-time professional workers in HE (who deliver through distance education pre-packaged curricula based on predetermined outcomes) is not only demoralizing and exploitative but it leads to deskilling and centralized power in management structures;
- Non-commodified programmes must go;

Importance of Universities (What leadership should protect and advance)

Universities should:

- be non-commodified spaces of social protest, and assigned to respond to the imperatives of democratic social change driven by a vision and a future of human dignity, freedom and peace
- a space that theorizes education as a political and ethical practice – an act of critique and resistance;
- encourage intellectual courage and adhere to the ideals of critical citizenship, building democratic public spheres and creating public values in favour of genuine social change and the development of a substantive democracy;
- teach and analyse audience reception, challenge rigid disciplinary boundaries, critically engage popular culture, produce critical knowledge, or use cultural studies to revitalize the curricula and disciplinary formations with educational institutions;
- embrace human capacity
- not allow intellectual pessimism to become complicit with the status quo by degenerating into indifference and quietism;
- reinvent political agency that intervenes in the world especially in favour of the poor, alienated and public interest;
- embrace civic mindedness and such values as citizens participation, the public good, political obligation, social governance and community;
- encourage rather than mould Human agency
- make questions of pedagogy and political agency central to their definition of critique and possibility
- encourage critical forms of knowledge and skills to enable students to discover their potential and imagine themselves as social agents struggling to further the ideals of a full and rich democracy;
- bring political agency and culture back to life as an ethical and critical response to the demise of democratic public life;

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- be defended as both a public good and as autonomous sphere for the development of a critical and productive democratic citizenry;
- be humanizing spaces in society where the value of people is always a priority;
- safeguard intellectual inquiry that is unpopular and critical, treating it as an important social asset, and public intellectuals as more than merely functionaries of the corporate order;
- resist allowing commercial values to shape the purpose and mission of higher education (in light of sharp reductions of state aid to HE);
- be supported for the values they represent and not the service they perform – values of justice, freedom; equality and the rights of citizenships as equal and free human beings;
- be reinforced and protected in their role in educating citizens for the demands of leadership, social citizenship and democratic public life.

Co-determination: The Unions Weapon For Success Within Higher Education

N I S H A L R A G O O B E E R



The historic strength of South Africa's union movement has allowed it to win unprecedented rights in the post-apartheid period. Unions now have an institutionalized role in policy-making, and the democratic government recognizes them, along with business, as social partners (Baskin 1996: 21).

Ironically, trade unions and the labour movement of South Africa are failing to maximize benefits from these gains. Unions often lack capacity, experience and strategic intent needed to exploit new and changing circumstances afforded to them. Why is this and why is it that trade unions still focus and function with political intent and aggressiveness? Should unions not, rather, be looking at leveraging labour as a human resource critical to any organization? Is the focus of wages the only element to an employee, or does the employee want more out of the environment they function in?

The concept 'union' basically means the coming together of employees. The fundamental purpose of unionism is the unification of employees for the principle purpose of representing such employees at the workplace. As higher education continues to re-shape and mould itself, the role of unions and its leadership within such organizations becomes even more challenging. So how does one clearly define the role of unions and its leadership within the higher education landscape?

This paper focuses on the principle of Co-determination and its application within higher education and the challenges it presents to leadership. The principle of co-determination can be considered to be the key driver in any organization as the human resource domain evolves, and the economic, political and social landscapes change.

What is Co-determination and what does it mean?

One of the most revolutionary principles underpinning the Labour Relations Act (LRA) is co-determination, that is, the statutory compulsion for employees and

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employers to work together in the management and the moulding of the organization.

According to Miles (1996: 36), co-determination has for some time been an accepted part of the labour relations system of many European countries. However, the understanding of co-determination differs depending on the historical, economic and socio-political backgrounds of the country's industrial relations system. It would be wrong to assume that the co-determination of another country could be transplanted into South Africa.

South Africa has to develop its own system of co-determination for it to operate effectively within the South African environment. There are some universal principles, however, which both labour and management need to accept. One of the key principles is that of industrial democracy. Industrial democracy and worker participation is based on the belief that the traditional strategy of 'labour opposes and fights capital' must be overcome. The democratization of the economic life should result in extensive participation of the employees in the development of their organization, and a strong interest on the efficient work of the organization (Miles 1996: 37).

Democratization means that the employees elect representatives who act on their behalf. This trend imposes an important responsibility on trade unions, which cannot think and act in terms of conflict strategy, but rather, have to practice co-operation.

Co-determination is the implementation and practice of worker participation. It is a move away from an adversarial and antagonistic system of industrial relations, towards a more collaborative system, hence a more co-determinant system. The trade unions in South Africa must accept that they can no longer pursue a strategy of struggle and demand, whether it is at national

policy forums or securing the interests of their members at the workplace (Miles 1996: 38).

In terms of the LRA 66 of 1995, provisions are made for trade unions to represent the interests of its members as best as they can. This can only be achieved if they share in the decision making of those policies, which affect their members. Therefore, a move to a determined approach to labour management relations must be accompanied by worker participation beyond simple task related participation. In fact, task related participation cannot effectively work unless policy-related participation is effective (Miles 1996: 39).

Policy related participation, in terms of the LRA Chapter V, should take place at the workplace forum. According to Du Toit (2000: 290), when the LRA was being drafted, provision was made for legislation to facilitate worker participation and decision-making in the global workplace. In fact, section 1(d) (iii) of the LRA mentions the promotion of employee participation in the workplace as one of its primary objectives.

To reiterate, the workplace forums are the means by which the LRA seeks to promote employee participation. This employee participation is aimed at leveraging the principles of co-determination.

Succinctly, the success of co-determination depends solely on the joint and active participation of both the employer and the union. If either party is compelled to work together, then the success of the joint participation is limited. However, if both the employer and the union consent to work together, then the success will be far greater, as they are both working towards the same goal.

It is clear from the discussion that the intention of the LRA is to give trade unions greater recognition to work with the employer for the economic uplifting of the

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workplace and the country as a whole.

Co-determination and the Evolving Higher Education Landscape!

During late January 2000 the Council on Higher Education (CHE) released a report titled *"Towards a New Higher Education Landscape"*. This report outlined the course that higher education within the new democratic South African context had to follow. It paved the way for the formulation of new institutions, as a result of mergers, and reshaping the path of higher education, within the South African context.

The higher education landscape, as we all know, is a very unique environment, as it is most closely aligned to the concepts of the *'knowledge worker'* and *'knowledge organization'*. These workers tend to enjoy the picturesque ethos and a freethinking environment, coupled with innovation and creative spirit.

Clearly as this landscape changes, the role of unions and its leadership in shaping these landscapes and playing an integral part in helping achieve and support the national imperatives that are laid out, will have to become vitally important. The manner in which unions and their leadership attack this landscape in protection of their membership would have to change. So how do the unions and leadership of these organizations effectively bring about a trouble-free transition?

Clearly the landscape, the labour force and the environment of higher education is more closely aligned to the concept of co-determination. As one can see, applying the concept of co-determination could lead to endless rewards; however the process must be one of mutual consent rather than an authoritarian approach. If unions and their leadership, together with the leadership of the organization jointly re-shape and mould the organization to achieve the same common goal, then the various potential stakeholders would be

greatly influenced to be a part of this progressive organization. The process would not be seen as unfairly weighted. This then would mean that the resistance to change would be less, as the workers confidence and trust in the new leadership, strategic path and vision would be greatly enhanced, as they would feel a part of the reshaping and moulding process. The worker would further have a greater stake in the process.

An example that could be used in this instance would be that of policy formulation. If the unions, jointly with the leadership of the organization create a policy, the unions together with management would be left with applying the policy, and the workers, whom, are represented by the unions would be more susceptible to accepting the policy, as they would have been part of this process. The apparent flaws of the policy could also be picked up early on in the process, as all stakeholders would be party to its discussion. It would also mean that when it is applied, the various sections within an organization will not only consult with the management but also with the unions to ensure that the policy is applied effectively and consistently. This then would eradicate any errors in the interpretation of the policy, as the workers, through the unions at the forefront, would have been acquiescent to the contents of the policy and the workers would therefore be more susceptible in accepting the policy. This could further lead to better relationships being created between the management tiers and the workforce, and in turn, obliterate any scepticism and pessimism.

There are various other ways in which co-determination could enhance worker/management relations and it is a matter of exploiting it consentingly. A lot of hard work needs to be undertaken to reach the desired goals, targets and the vision of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN). A vital question that needs to be asked here is what percentage of our labour force

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understands what the UKZN's vision, mission and strategic outlook mean, and what is required to achieve this? That's where co-determination plays a pivotal role. It will ensure that through willing consensual agreement, the objectives and goals are reached with all parties partaking fully as they would have understood and played a role in the process of formulation.

Further, if all parties agreed on the path forward, it would mean, especially during periods of transition that there would be greater trust, buy in, participation and a lack of resistance, as every worker would understand what it is we are aiming for. One cannot always attain a 100% satisfaction ratio, from a worker perspective, but the mere fact that the unions would propose, as well as partake in the process through co-determination would mean that the workers would be more susceptible to accept the change. A critical success factor in the effective exploitation of co-determination would be the way in which unions are viewed within the organization as well as the role they play within the human resources domain of the organization. In a co-determined organization there would be a lack of need for "consultation" as consultation defeats the purpose of 'joint' and mutual agreement. While it allows for all parties to make input so very often, it becomes a tool to inform. Consultation by itself leaves the decision-making ultimately in the hands of the employer and hence revokes the efficiencies of co-determination. What would, rather, be needed within a co-determined organization is *'joint communication'*.

Whilst co-determination entailed joint consensual re-shaping on governance, there has to be a limit when applied to the management of the organization. Clearly if the principles of governance and if the future of the organization is well- defined and clearly spelled out, through the process of co-determination, then one would know the skills pool, resources, and processes needed to achieve these goals, and hence there would

be no real need for unions to play such a vital role in managing the organization. Co-determination does not really favour participative-management as it indoctrinates the belief that if all is shaped and spelled out clearly, then there will be no real need for unions to participate in managing the organization, but rather ensure that it stays on course to meet its intended goals and objectives. It is here that I would like to introduce my strategy called, the RSB Approach to Building Success.

The RSB Approach to Building Success is governed by the use of co-determination as its critical success factor and focus's on all of the organizations resources working together to achieve harmony and success. This approach encompasses three key phases, a) Reconstruction and Development (RND); b) Service Delivery; and c) Beyond. In all three phases co-determination has to be used in order to achieve success. In the RND phase, we jointly plot a new way forward building structures integrated through unity. The focus is on eliminating fears, sceptism, pessimism and the building of trust. In the Service Delivery phase, the principle of co-determination can once again be applied to uplift standards and offer new goals and measures to ensure long-term sustainability and recognition, which are imperative for success. Focus on doing what we do best to become the renowned leaders and to create a distinctive competence for the organization. Lastly, in the Beyond phase, co-determination can be used to ensure that jointly, a new, innovative and strategic focus is created and set in place to ensure that the organization stays ahead of its pack through unity, joint decision making and planning, and strategy setting.

As pointed out earlier co-determination clearly leverages the organization, in particular the creation of a new entity. The challenge that arises now, is how do we break free from the 'old' and build the 'new'? Unions are still pretty much viewed in the old traditional sense of having militant and belligerent means to solving

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problems. This in itself is a major setback for unions as it immediately creates a perception of 'them' and 'us'-management and workers. Unions also face a capacity crisis within their movements, further exacerbating their problems. Most importantly, as Baskin points out, the key challenge for unions and their leadership would now entail finding effective means to revitalize, regenerate, re-invigorate and mainly sustain themselves, and use their collective power in this new context (Baskin 1996: 22).

Like many other spheres of an evolving landscape, the challenge lies with its leadership, their perceptions and strategic capacity to leverage as well as transform. From this perspective co-determination clearly is the tool to use going forward, however, its lack of use can be attributed to a lack of understanding and resistance as a result of past mindsets. If unions and their leadership embrace co-determination as a principle and overcome the hurdles of a traditional and historic past, it is certain that the labour movement can only grow and assist in aiding as well as supporting our national imperatives. The focus of unions would now be to tackle key issues of policy formulation at inception, rather than at implementation and partake in the bodies that create, rather than those that carry out. In so doing, we can amalgamate our forces into taking the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal to becoming the 'Premier University of African Scholarship'.

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The Role Of Leadership In Higher Education With Particular Reference To Labour - Management Dynamics

L A N G A L I H L E T H A B E D E



Leaders are designers, teachers and stewards. These roles require new skills: the ability to build shared vision, to bring to the surface and challenge prevailing mental models, and to foster more systemic patterns of thinking. In short, leaders in learning organizations are responsible for building organizations where people are continually expanding their capabilities to shape their future – that is, leaders are responsible for learning.
..... Peter Senge, The Fifth Discipline: The Theory and Practice of Learning Organization, 1990

make a positive difference in organizational results. Against this standpoint, leadership has to inspire a shared vision of the future and enable others to act so as to make a new vision a reality – ‘model the way.’

Universities have always played the role defined for them by the societies within which they are located. Various factors like history, culture and ideology in the society define what this role will be¹. Like many other tertiary institutions in the country, the University of KwaZulu-Natal is in the process of transformation. The transformation process is not free of diverse traditions and ideologies.

In life, as in work-life, we encounter many paradoxes. However, leaders develop innate abilities to negotiate these paradoxes. One of the things we seem to overlook is that leadership is less about position or rank but primarily about a relationship of trust between leaders and followers. Leadership needs to create a positive environment that not only helps employees learn but also helps them apply that learning to their work to

In its simplest versions, transformation refers to a marked change in nature, form and appearance². The question that immediately arises is what kind of an institution we are seeking to build? This paper will speak to issues of leadership within a context of a newly created institution. It will also suggest options that may be considered in working through complex issues underpinning the transformation process.

¹Drawn from Manuel Castells characterization of universities as dynamic systems of contradictory functions

²Concise Oxford Dictionary

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2. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Reports I & II of the King Commission clearly articulated the principles of corporate governance. NEHAWU subscribes to these principles. It is our belief that these principles have aspects which are fundamental to steering the change process explicitly articulated in our vision and mission. NEHAWU recognises that corporate governance places the role of monitoring and evaluation of organizational strategies to organizational leadership – the board – in our case, the Council. However, we are of the view that sound evaluation should also seek to include those who drive as well those affected by the implementation of these organizational strategies.

NEHAWU believes that mechanisms to establish a platform within which robust debates and dialogue on the transformation process may be held need to be explored. This platform need not be a talk shop but a 'workout' system that may help the stakeholders to deeply look into strategic issues and jointly arrive at options and workable plans of action. This platform may further harness the content and context in ensuring that the transformation process remains on track thereby becoming a strategic learning post for the Council.

3. MANAGING THE INSTITUTION

Albert Einstein gave us three rules of work. They were as follows:
Out of clutter, find simplicity.
From discord, find harmony.
In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
In translating the Council decisions into tangible organizational activities, management has a responsibility to interpret and organize functions in a coherent manner to ensure that the stated mandate – mission and goals – is realized. In doing so, reflection becomes critical. A question then becomes, what is it that we want to give birth to through our work?

Day-to-day activities are cluttered with competing priorities. Being clear on the strategic agenda and having it etched on our consciousness becomes integral to organizing jobs in relation to our clear and simple ideal – **premier University of African Scholarship**. From this perspective, rather than "one best way of organizing" management needs to explore several approaches that will give them additional strings to their bow to design jobs that are coherent, challenging and in synch with both the demands of the environment and the strategic agenda. In doing so, alternative approaches to engage employees in business strategies, measures, skills development and training, recognition programmes and expectations of each other need to be found.

Work that is not hitched to organizational principles has a potential to degenerate into a mundane chore and loses its meaning. If we clearly analyse the ingredients of any difficult situation, more often than not, we realize that the real knot of the difficulty lies more in ourselves than in the situation. Greater worker involvement may contribute in invoking our capacities for thought and action. Key to these approaches must be a genuine interest to creating a culture of inclusion, trust and mutual respect. As Gandhi said, 'Be the change you want to see in the world.'

The wisdom to know how to manage a 'new workforce' requires self reflection and awareness. Thus, knowing others first requires insight into self. Work that inspires through meaning and in relationships with others is effective. Engaging human energy, including fear, and connecting it with mission and goals is fundamental to managerial processes. Creating a conducive work environment may yield passion, excitement and enthusiasm.

4. WORKER PARTICIPATION

Workers are at the heart of every living corporate strategy. The meaning workers derive from their work

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and its relevance thereof become an expression of coherent action. Even what we may see as the smallest piece of work, such as cleaning the garden, invariably alters the face of the institution.

It is general knowledge that an institution where the workforce is dissatisfied can be easily equated to a car whose engine is not properly maintained. The direct consequence can be the breakdown of that car. In the context of worker participation, this means change in the nature in which workers are given an opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the design of business strategies and development of policies defining human relationships in the workplace. It involves worker representation in key structures that pronounce or decide on worker rights and the manner in which those rights are to be protected.

The manner in which this institution is governed will indeed inform the speed, content and direction of the transformation process. Structures and policies thereof will be integral to the meaning of the transformation. This is primarily and fundamentally so because the transformation agenda does not only relates to the change in goals but in nature and content.

Human, social and structural capital remains an integral part of the transformation process. It therefore becomes critical that policies and strategies looking at issues of investment on employees be considered in their entirety. The notion of redressing imbalances and inequalities of the past need to be multi-dimensional – employing those referred as “previously disadvantaged” and capacitating them so as to grow and develop as proud members of the university.

5. MAKING IT HAPPEN

The university exists in a rapidly changing environment necessitating decisive responses and often shrewd strategic capabilities. Leadership, like luck, is a secret ingredient in every successful organization. However,

unlike luck, leadership can be cultivated. The knowledge and capacity latent within the university are valuable resources for taking the transformation process forward.

Decisiveness, vision and understanding context are at heart of successful leadership. Within this context, the role of management facilitates dialogue, and encourages constructive dissent. By implication, management needs to open to new approaches and ideas. However, they have to communicate their vision clearly. Management has to consistently communicate their vision and provide guidance to workers to achieving mission and goals.

In summary, the role of management has to include amongst other responsibilities:

Aligning work priorities with the vision.

Involving stakeholders in deciding organizational priorities. Communication and transparency – holding itself accountable.

Leading with others and encouraging people to join in creating leadership at all levels.

NEHAWU hopes that management will make endeavours to ensure that workers are not merely considered as instruments of production, but as citizens, with responsibilities outside the institution; in their respective families and communities. The transformation process has to be seen to adding value and fostering dignity and respect to all concerned. NEHAWU, as a working class organization, hopes no worker will be subjected to several renews of contracts whilst carrying out duties that are fundamentally of a permanent nature.

6. CONCLUSION

Strategic direction is less about command and control and more about focusing – encouraging people to focus on what really matters. Today’s employees are more questioning and informed. It is critical that we

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translate the UKZN vision and mission to meaningful work. The transformation process demands us – management and workers – to stir the pot instead of putting on the lid. All of us have a responsibility to support this institution in realizing its stated mandate. The transformation process requires leadership at levels to live in questions instead of quick-fix answers.

Universities: Sites Of Knowledge, Research, Outreach And Contestation

E V A N M A N T Z A R I S &
E L I A S C E B E K H U L U



Universities are sites of knowledge, research outreach and contestation. They are sites of transformation, hope and disillusionment. It is extremely difficult to create a clear cut understanding of the exact nature and mission of universities in South Africa and worldwide without taking into account the nature of the social and economic context within which they operate and the social and economic contradictions emanating from the past

present and future class and racial inequalities that persist within most societies.

This is particularly true in South Africa, given the country's history, and the perpetration of a political economy that despite its proven macro-economic stability has not achieved the much-debated levels of economic liberation of large sections of society. The development of human resources in this milieu is not outside the class struggles that have ensued since 1994. On the contrary social and economic contestation has

become an integral part of university life since the democratic order became a reality.

One of the key imperatives of all existing democratic legislation was the reversal of the devastation that apartheid created for South Africa. The history of apartheid education and the resultant political and ideological contestations will be reversed; there is no question about this. The skewed allocation of resources will never last forever.

For this to occur two fundamental paths exist, which are mutually and fundamentally exclusive:

- There will be a senior and middle management that will manage the university in a democratic, transparent, fair; accountable participatory and above all humane and just process.
- If this process does not occur the two most important role players and stakeholders (staff and students) will be forced to intensify their short, medium and long term efforts in terms of changing radically the



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pace, content and institutional forms of the new democratic dispensation.

THE MERGER PROCESS

The merger processes at play were publicly declared as the pillars of transformation and massification, according to the existing legislation and the relentless pronouncements of then Minister Asmal. In fact they will ultimately become the pillars of rationalization, cost-efficiency, managerialism, and outsourcing. The mergers, despite existing legislation and guidelines created institutions that are based on a top down approach, in an unequal way. Asmal himself stated clearly in 2002 that the mergers would be based on access, equity, regional collaboration and rationalisation of programmes (Star 12/2/2002). What the Minister did not say was why UWC and Stellenbosch were left untouched while UDW and UN had to merge in the name of "regional collaboration". Geographically speaking, the country's map indicates that the Western Cape is as much a region as KwaZulu Natal. Thus the Western Cape has three universities, while the most populous province in the country; KZN has the University of KwaZulu Natal and the remnants of the University of Zululand.

Lest we forget that the impending mergers were challenged (at least verbally and initially) by Black Vice Chancellors (Sunday Independent 17 February 2002). Then there was deafening silence. COMSA, in a thought provoking letter to the then Minister outlined its opposition to the merger in August 2002 (COMSA 2002; Daily News 16/9/2002). In this three fundamental issues were raised:

- The skewed rationale behind the merger.
- Student access in the future.
- Staff rationalisation.

However, it needs to be said that the union, its leadership and members are fully committed to the new University and its mission and vision. We are fully committed to a University that is transparent, equitable, fair, accountable, open and just. We are prepared to work with its leadership towards the University's goals, but we will be vigilant and decisive in challenging injustices, unfair labour practices, through full participation in all decision making organs of the University.

The merger so far has proved beyond doubt that the organisation's position was vindicated. The merger pains have been described elsewhere (Cebekhulu and Mantzaris 2004 "Stop beating about the bush: UKZN merger a tragic mishap", to be published in the 2005 issue of a SAPSE accredited journal; COMSA Memorandum to the Education Department Merger Task Team) and will not be tackled in this short presentation.

It needs to be said that in the merger process there have been a number of legal and humane and transformatory principles that have not been adhered to in the new institution, the crucial ones being equity and access, the latter especially in regard to entrance requirements that have been increased substantially e.g. BA entrance has increased from 24 to 32 points. Such measures disadvantage Black students and especially African students.

The increasing corporatisation of management (the adoption of business models of organization and administration of universities), coupled with the social composition of top management are a direct affront to transformatory imperatives. In this sense the key conceptual and practical underpinnings of transitive consciousness is of paramount importance. Hence transitive consciousness emerges as the people begin to perceive and respond to the themes and myths that characterise their world. Naive transitivity, is the initial

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stage of transitive consciousness and is marked by gross simplifications and generalizations of problems; frail arguments and lack of interest in critical investigation; polemics rather than dialogue; and magical, emotional explanations for problems (Paulo Freire, 1973 *Education as the Practice of Freedom in Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Continuum). The new leadership of the university needs to avoid this path.

The personal is the political, said Karl Marx some centuries ago, this means that the organisational and the educational are also political. Freire in his "Praxis and Education reiterated this point when he wrote that not only in the universities, but also in secondary and primary schools education is always a political event. Thus, power is inseparable from education. Those who hold power define what education will be, its methods, programme and curriculum" (Freire P, Praxis and Education, Social Policy File 85/1999, pages 70-71). In the new dispensation there needs to be a clear cut synergy between the key stakeholders and players at the university in terms of transparency, accountability, full participation, access transformation and the curriculum? Such synergy will ultimately avoid confrontation, contestation will be confined to widely accepted channels and communication across boundaries will substitute top down directives.

For these processes to unfold the major step forward will be that of a continuum of *conscientisation, a dialogical, dialectical and material process shaped by prevailing circumstances and the vision and mission of the university*. Conscientisation is founded on a critical and fundamental understanding of justice, equity, access, fairness and democratic practices advanced and adhered to by knowing subjects, and aspiring to achieve a deepening awareness both of socio-cultural, educational, social and economic realities that shape their lives, and their capacity to transform it (Freire P, Literacy And Revolution, SPP File 89/1989, page 72).

It needs to be reiterated that UKZN stakeholders and role players cannot avoid contestation, as it is an integral historical and present reality of every transition. Contestation does not necessarily mean conflict or absolute consensus, but a continuous effort to unite the opposites, whenever possible. Through contestation unity might result, but the road is not a bed of roses.

We re-commit ourselves to the gigantic effort to make UKZN the Premier University of African Scholarship where excellence in teaching, research and community outreach become the foundation of humanity.

We re-commit ourselves to the relentless struggle for equity, transparency, accountability, fairness and justice.

We congratulate the newly installed Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of this University and plead with them to listen carefully to the powerful words of Paulo Freire:

"When the revolutionary leader focuses on the people's needs, a true revolution may begin without the oppression. The true revolutionary leader has the power to liberate both the oppressed and the oppressors". (Freire, P 2000 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed (30th Anniversary Edition)*. N.Y: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc. Page 183).



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