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An Analysis of the Implementation of the Teaching Development Grant in the South African Higher Education Sector

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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January 2018

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ABSTRACT

The South African government has attempted to address various transformation and efficiency challenges in the system through the steering mechanisms at its disposal. This study analyses the implementation of one of these mechanisms, the Teaching Development Grant (TDG), which is designed to enhance student learning through the improvement of teaching and teaching resources at South African universities. Since the inception as an earmarked grant ten years ago, a total of R5.5 billion has been allocated for the TDG.

The study thus sought to answer the question: What are the factors enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success at South African universities? A total of 275 TDG progress reports and budget plans were analysed alongside other TDG documentation such as TDG payment letters to universities and institutional submissions that universities made on the use of the TDG for the 2008 TDG Review. The TDG criteria and policy over the years were also included as data. The analysis used Archer's (1995; 1996) morphogenesis/stasis framework, which is concerned with how change does or does not happen over time. Archer's analytical dualism was used to identify the interplay of structural, cultural and agential mechanisms shaping the emergence of and practices associated with TDGs in order to make sense of the events and experiences in the data.

One of the main findings of the study was that the historically-based differentiated nature of the South African higher education landscape constrained the implementation of the TDG. The stark resource differences in the sector has meant that the TDG has not fully translated into system-wide gains. In the initial years of TDG implementation from 2004 to 2013, most institutions did not use the TDG for teaching development initiatives per se, but rather spent the bulk of the funds on infrastructure and equipment. Such resource gaps have persisted and continue to compromise the academic enterprise at affected universities.

The data also showed that universities which have access to additional funding other than state funding have been able to augment and advance their own funds and were

thus able to at least partially counter late payments of the TDG, fluctuations in allocations, and the short-term nature of TDG budgets and inadequate allocations. This enabled relatively straightforward implementation of the teaching and learning enhancement programmes at these universities, while there were ongoing implementation difficulties at the universities with the lowest success rates, the very institutions the grant was most targeted to address.

The study showed that the shortage of appropriate teaching and learning staff constrained the nature and type of interventions. Historically Disadvantaged Institutions in particular struggled to attract and retain the much-needed expertise. This emerged from multiple structural constraints such as geographical location, conditions of work, inefficient human resources systems, lack of access to financial resources for competitive packages, and instability in governance and management structures at some universities. Emerging from the data in the study is the fact that staffing challenges remain one of the core constraints in the implementation of the TDG. In particular, the data indicated that teaching and learning staff hired on the basis of TDG funds were generally hired as part-time or contract staff. This meant that their academic qualifications and experience in teaching development were limited and, in many cases, it meant that the posts were not filled at all. In some cases, the fluctuating budgets meant that some projects had to be downscaled or abandoned altogether.

The study found that many of the interventions that were implemented had tenuous links to teaching and learning and, even where there were such links, these interventions were often based on fairly a-theoretical, common-sense understandings of what would develop teaching. In many universities, there was little evidence of institution-level planning of interventions aimed at fundamentally addressing the need for teaching development.

The limited access to teaching and learning expertise across the sector was mirrored in the uneven distribution of expertise in administration, financial management, institutional planning and human resource divisions, which had implications for the establishment of monitoring systems and implementation processes of the TDG. The

lack of strong systems and policies encouraged cultures that did not value transparency, accountability or compliance to the TDG policy. The role of corporate agency in the form of leadership and ownership of projects emerged as a key enabler in the implementation of the TDG. All of these structures shaped the ability of institutions to spend the TDG and in some cases millions of Rands in funds were not spent and so were withheld. The study found that the inability of some universities to spend was exacerbated by the problem of a lack of alignment between the DHET financial year and the academic year.

Although the TDG has made a notable contribution to the advancement of teaching and learning (T&L) nationally, this study revealed that the blunt implementation of the TDG across the sector constrained the gains. In particular, the practice of withholding unspent funds focused only on the symptoms of underspending and not on the structural, cultural and agential mechanisms that led to such under-expenditure. The withheld funds were redirected by the government for national projects but as all universities including the well-resourced Historically Advantaged Institutions (HAIs) had access to these withheld funds this translated into a regressive distribution of the TDG.

Limited capacity within DHET to direct, manage and monitor the grants has also had a constraining effect on their use and the secondment of a teaching and learning expert to the department was seen to be a significant but short-term enablement in this regard.

The findings of how the TDG implementation has emerged in the South African higher education sector are particularly important at this point in time as the TDG together with the Research Development Grant will be reconfigured into a new grant called the University Capacity Development Grant as from 2018. This study provides significant insights into the structural, cultural, and agential enablements and constraints of this new grant being able to drive changes in the sector. The findings also provide insights into the implementation of other earmarked grants.

ABSTRACT

Boma la South Africa layesera kuthetsa mavuto omwe amadza posintha ndi kulongosola zinthu kudzera mu njira zosiyanasiyana. Kafukufukuyu akuunikira imodzi mwa njirazi yotchedwa Teaching Development Grant (TDG) yomwe inakonzedwa polimbikitsa maphunziro kudzera mukagwiritsidwe ntchito ka zipangizo zophunzitsira ndi zophunzirira za makono m'sukulu za ukachenjede ku South Africa. Ndalama zapafupifupi R5.5 billion ndi zomwe zaperekedwa kuti zigwiritsidwe nchito mu ndondomekoyi kuchokera pa nthawi yomwe inakhazikitsidwa; zaka khumi zapitazo.

Kafukufukuyu anayesera kuyankha funso loti: Ndi zinthu ziti zomwe zimalimbikitsa kapena kubwezeretsa m'mbuyo kagwiritsidwe ntchito ka (TDG) polimbikitsa kuchita bwino kwa aphunzitsi ndi ophunzira m'sukulu za ukachenjede? Zikalata zosonyeza makhonzedwe a ophunzira, ndondomeko za kayendetseredwe ka chuma, zikalata za malipiridwe ndi zikalata zopezeka m'sukulu zaukachenjedezi zokhudzana ndi njira ya TDG zomwe zakhala zikugwiritsidwe ntchito zaka khumi zapitazi zinatengedwanso ngati uthenga wofunika koposa. Kauniuniyu anatsalira njira yotchedwa 'Archer's (1995/1996) Morphogenesis/Status Framework' yomwe imafotokozera momwe kusintha kumachitikira pena kulepherekera.

Njira younikira ya Archer: yothandizira pofufuza momwe kayendetsedwe ka bungwe, chikhalidwe komanso anthu oyendetsa bungwe amathandizira poonetsera momwe TDG imakhalira inagwiritsidwa ntchito poyesera kumvetsa zochitika komanso zopezeka mu kafukufukuyu.

Chimodzi mwa zotsatira za kafukufukuyu n'chakuti kagwiritsidwe ntchito ka TDG kamabwezeredwa m'mbuyo ndi momwe sukulu za ukachenjede ku South Africa zidapangidwira. Kusiyana kwa usiwa wa zipangizo m'sukuluzi kudapangitsa kuti njira ya TDG isaonetse zipatso kwenikweni. Mu zaka zoyambirira itangokhazikidwitsa (2007 – 2013), sukulu zambiri sizidagwiritse ntchito TDG polimbikitsa kaphunzitsidwe. M'malo mwake ndalama zankhaninkhani zidagwiritsidwa ntchito pa zomangamanga ndi kugulira zipangizo. Usiwa wa zipangizowu ulipobe ndipo ukusokoneza mbali ya maphunziro m'sukulu zokhudzidwazi.

Kafukufukuyu anasonyezanso kuti sukulu zomwe zimalandira thandizo lowonjezera pa lomwe zimalandira ku boma zakhala zikuyesetsa kuthana ndi vuto lopereka mochedwa ndalama za mundondomeko ya TDG ndi dongosolo la m'mene ndalamazi zigwirire ntchito. Izi zinawachititsa kuti asapeze mavuto ambiri polimbikitsa ndondomeko za kaphunzitsidwe ndi kaphunziridwe pomwe ena amavutika nazo. Enawa n'kukhala sukulu zomwe sizimachita bwino, zomwenso thandizoli lidalunjika pa izo kuti zithandizike. Kafukufukuyu anasonyeza kuti kuchepa kwa aphunzitsi kudapsinja zochitika zokhudza njirayi. Sukulu zosachita bwino kuchokera kalezi zidavutika kupeza ndi kusunga ogwira ntchito ake. Izi zimakhala choncho kaamba ka zifukwa zosiyanasiyana monga komwe sukuluyo ili, malamulo a ntchito, kupanda ukadaulo kwa oyang'anira antchitowa, kutalikirana ndi njira zina zopezera ndalama komanso kusakhazikika kwa anthu m'maudindo. Zina zotulukanso mu mfundo zotoledwazi zinaulula kuti vuto lina lalikulu linali ogwira ntchito. Polimbikitsa njira ya TDG, zimatanthauza kuti aphunzitsi omwe azilembedwa azikhala osakhazikika pa sukuluzi kapena a kontarakiti. Izi zimatanthauza kuti maphunziro ndi luntha lawo zimayenera kukhala zochepera. Mwanjira ina, tikhonza kunena kuti ogwira ntchitoyi panalibe. Nthawi zina, kusinthasintha kwa ndondomeko zachuma madongosolo ena kusiyidwa kapena kuchitika mosalongosoka.

Kafukufukuyu anasonyezanso kuti zambiri mwa mfundo zomwe zinayikidwa kuti zigwiritsidwe ntchito zinali zosathandiza kwenikweni polimbikitsa maphunzirowa. Ndipo komwe mfundozi zinakhazikitsidwa, zinali chabe kufotokozera zinthu zodziwika kale ndi kale zokhudza zomwe zingalimbikitse uphunzitsi. M'sukulu zambiri za ukachenjede, pali umboni wochepa wa mfundo zomwe zinaikidwiratu ndi cholinga chopititsa patsogolo uphunzitsiwu.

Kusowa kwa ukadaulo pa maphunzirowa kunaonekanso makamaka m'madera monga a oyendetsa sukuluzi, oyang'ana za chuma, olongosola malo onse komanso oyang'anira antchito. Panalibe kugawana anthuwa mofanana. Izi zidakhudza kwambiri kalondolondo ndinso kayendetsedwe ka TDG. Kusowa kwa ndondomeko zabwino ndi malamulo okhazikika kunalimbikitsa chikhalidwe cha chinyengo ndi kusatsatira mfundo za mundondomekoyi popereka utsogoleri ndi umwini ndiye unali wofunika polimbikitsa ndondomekoyi. Madongosolo otere anathandiza kuti sukulu zigwiritse ntchito njira ya TDG ndipo pena ndalama mamiliyoni zibwezedwe. Kafukufukuyu anaonetsa kuti

kulephera kwa sukulu zina kugwiritsa ntchito ndalama kunachitika kaamba kosazindikira malire a chaka cha DHET ndi chaka cha maphunziro. Ngakhale njira ya TDG yathandizako kagwiritsidwe ntchito ka zipangizo zophunzitsira ndi zophunzirira, kafukufukuyu wasonyeza kuti mavuto omwe anaoneka mu ndondomeko ya TDG aphimba ubwino wake.

Monga, m'chitidwe wobweza ndalama zosagwira ntchito unalunjika pa kulephera kugwiritsa ntchito ndalama zonse osati pa ubale pakati pa kayendetsedwe ka bungwe, chikhalidwe ndinso anthu oyendetsa bungwe. Ndalama zotsarazi zinalowetsedwa ku zitukuko zina ndi boma. Koma poti sukulu zonse za ukachenjede kuphatikizapo HAI zinapeza mwayi wa ndalamazi, izi zimabweretsa kulowa pansi kwa dongosolo la TDG.

Kulephera mu DHET kutsogolera, kuyendetsa ndi kulondoloza thandizo kwadzetsanso mavuto pa kagwiritsidwe ntchito kake ngakhalenso kutumizidwa kwa katswiri pa kaphunzitsidwe kunaoneka ngati kofunika kosathandiza kwenikweni chifukwa kudali kwa nthawi yochepa.

Zotsatira za kafukufukuyu (zokhudza maphunziro a ukachenjede ku South Africa) ndi zofunika kwambiri makamaka nthawi ino pomwe TDG pamodzi ndi RDG (Research Development Grant) zikhale kuunikiridwanso ndi kupanga thandizo latsopano lotchedwa University Capacity Development Grant kuyambira m'chaka cha 2018.

Kafukufukuyu waunika mozama kayendetsedwe, chikhalidwe komanso oyendetsa zithandizo komanso mavuto kuti thandizo latsopanoli likathe kubweretsa kusintha. Zotsatirazi zaunikiranso kayendetsedwe ka zithandizo zina zomwe zikufuna kuchitika.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

AD	Academic Development
ASSAF	Academy of Science of South Africa
CESM	Classification of Educational Subject Matter
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CR	Critical Realism
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CEPD	Center for Education Policy Development.
DoE	Department of Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HAI	Historically Advantaged Institution
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Institution
HBU	Historically Black University
HWU	Historically White University
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQF	Higher Education Qualification Framework
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NDP	National Development Plan
NRF	National Research Fund
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and development
PQM	Programme Qualification Mix
PMG	Parliamentary Monitoring Group
PEP	Personal Emergent Powers
PGDHE	Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education
QEP	Quality Enhancement Programme
RDG	Research Development Grant
SAPSE	South African Post-Secondary Education
SERTEC	Certification Council for Education/Sertifiseringsraad vir Technikononderwys
SEP	Structural emergent property
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authorities
SAPMG	South African parliamentary Monitoring Group
SR	Social Realism
T&L	Teaching and Leaning
TDG	Teaching Development Grant
UCDG	University Capacity Development Grant
USAF	Universities South Africa
UoT	University of Technology

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Rationale

The Teaching Development Grant (TDG) was introduced in the South African public higher education system in 2003 to improve student retention and throughput through systematic improvements in teaching and learning (T&L) at institutional level. The grant is expected to ensure that the system is better equipped to serve our students and R5.5 billion has been awarded to universities over the last 12 years to this end. This study tracks the use of these funds and reflects on the extent to which this initiative has been successful in meeting its aims. The TDG falls within the earmarked grants category in the South African higher education funding framework. Government funding to universities in South Africa is made up of the block grant and earmarked grant funding. The block grant is funds that can be used at the discretion of the councils of each university whereas earmarked funds are not council discretionary funds and have to be used for specific purposes determined by the Minister of Higher Education and Training. These funds thus have to be ring-fenced and are distributed based on approved budgets, and their use has to be reported on to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The ring-fencing of the funds is intended to ensure that the funds are utilised for the approved purposes. The figure below briefly illustrates the South African higher education funding framework.

Figure 1: The Components of the New Funding Framework

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Higher Education Budget: Distributed to Public Universities │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
              ↙                              ↘
┌──────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────┐
│   Block Grants       │        │   Earmarked Grants   │
└──────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────┘
           ↓                                ↓
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Calculated on weighted formula of: Teaching Input Grant -Research Input Grant -Research Output Grant	-Teaching Development Grant -Research Development Grant -Clinical Training Grant -Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant -Veterinary Sciences Grant - Foundation Provisioning Grant -Historical Disadvantaged Institutions Development Grant -African Institute Mathematical Sciences Grant -National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

Source: DHET, 2016a

The TDG is used by the DHET as a steering mechanism aimed at achieving improved outcomes at universities by funding teaching [and learning] development interventions at universities. The intention of allocating TDG funds to higher education institutions was presented in the White Paper 3: *A Programme for the Transformation of Higher*

Education (DoE, 1997), the *National Plan for Higher Education* (DoE, 2001) and the statement on Higher Education Funding (DoE, 2003). The grant is focused on supporting teaching and learning (T&L) processes and environments for improved outcomes and the progression of the students through the system (DoE, 2008b). Such teaching development was also expected to contribute to 'raising educational expertise in HE institutions in general' (DoE, 2008b:10). More recent TDG policy documentation classifies teaching development as 'the improvement of student success and enhancement of student learning through sustained focus on improving the quality and impact of university teaching and teaching resources' (DHET, 2013b: 6). Operationally student success is further defined as 'enhanced student learning with a view to increasing the number of graduates with attributes that are personally, professionally and socially valuable' (DHET, 2013b: 6).

The TDG was first paid to institutions in 2004, following cohort studies of all first-time entering students conducted by the then Department of Education[1] (DoE), and a subsequent in-depth analysis of these cohort data was undertaken as part of the Improving Teaching and Learning for Success project commissioned by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) (Scott et al., 2007). These studies (Scott et al., 2007; DoE, 2008b) indicated serious inefficiencies in the system whereby only 32% of students studying in three-year programmes were able to successfully complete their programmes within four years (see Table 1 below).

The studies also looked at a longer period of six years, whereby only 49% of the studied cohort were able to graduate. Of further concern is that these studies showed that student performance was racially skewed, with African students, despite having the highest enrolment increases over the period since the end of apartheid, being the poorest performers with 21% graduating, Mixed-Race students at 31%, Indian students at 21% and White students at 41% (DoE, 2008b; DHET, 2013a). Given the history of racial discrimination in South Africa where racial segregation was institutionalised to the detriment of African, Mixed-Race and Indian peoples, this racially-skewed pattern in the

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[1] The Department of Education (DoE) was concerned with all education in South Africa, but in 2009 the department split into the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), with the latter tasked with overseeing all post-school education.

teaching outputs of the system spelled a social justice crisis as it meant that the system was still serving some groups of society better than others.

Table 1: 2005 Cohort Enrolled in Three-Year Programmes

Race[2]	Graduated within 4 years	Graduated within 6 years
African	21.1%	37.5%
Mixed-Race	30.5%	47.2%
Indians	20.6%	47.4%
White	40.7%	63%
System Average	32%	48.6%

Source: DHET, 2013c

In addition to the poor performance by African students and Mixed-Race students, and despite most institutions having a complement of mostly African students, the higher education system seemed to exclude people along racial lines. As presented in Table 2 below, the participation rates[3] for White and Indian students nationally were the highest at 54.7% and 48.9% respectively, and those of African and Mixed-Race students were low at 17% and 15% respectively (DHET, 2016b CHE, 2016). Compounding these racially-skewed patterns in participation rates, the inefficiency and inadequacy of the South African higher education system was exacerbated by the fact that the participation

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[2] The use of different racial terms is always politically and socially charged, particularly in South Africa where it was on the basis of such designations that people had access to resources or were prevented from accessing them under apartheid. South African policy documentation continues to refer to people of multi-racial ethnicity as 'coloured'. However, in this study the term coloured will not be used given that some communities have indicated that the term coloured is a derogatory term, which is closely tied to its apartheid era origins. In addition to this, the term coloured (colored) is considered an offensive term in other parts of the world such as the USA, which originates from the country's racist past where people of African descent were referred to as coloreds. Other terms I have elected to use can also be considered problematic. For example, 'Indians' refers to South Africans of Indian descent, many of whom will never have been to India. 'Africans' refers to South Africans of indigenous descent, but many other South African groups claim this nomenclature for themselves too. Given the racialised past of the country and the ongoing differentiation of economic and other characteristics along racial lines, it would be disingenuous to set aside discussion of race, and indeed this issue permeates many of the deliberations in this thesis. However, I would like to flag the generally problematic nature of such terminology.

[3] The gross higher education participation rate is calculated on the basis of the total headcount enrolment in each year and the total population in the 20–24-year age group. Therefore, the gross participation rate refers to the proportion of a population enrolled in universities as a percentage of the total population in the 20–24-year age group, the official university-going age group (DHET, 2013b).

rate in 2004 was 16% (CHE, 2017). Although the participation rate increased from 16% to 19% in 2015, which is higher than some developing countries, this is still far from developed countries which have participation rates exceeding 40% (DHET, 2013a; DHET, 2016b. Despite the dramatic increase in enrolments from previously disadvantaged groups, their participation in higher education remains the lowest, as presented in Table 2 below. 'A closer scrutiny of the figures shows that there are still massive discrepancies even at the level of equity of access, whereby there is persistence in racial inequities' (McKenna, 2012: 56).

Table 2: Enrolments and Gross Enrolment Ratio (participation rate)

	Head count enrolments 2013	Percentage enrolments 2013	Participation rates 2013
African	689 503	70%	16.5%
Mixed-Race	61 034	6%	14.5%
Indian	53 787	5%	48.9%
White	171 927	17%	54.7%
Other[4]	7 447	1%	
Total	983 698	100%	19.5%

Table constructed from data extracted from the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS).

In observing this pattern, Wilson-Strydom (2011) argues that increasing access without increasing chances of success is a new form of social exclusion. Inequality in access and success in higher education has been widely documented both in South Africa and internationally (Scott et al., 2007; Baker and Velez, 1996).

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[4] This data anomaly is due to the incompleteness of the data submitted by universities, in particular one historically advantaged university which refuses to submit comprehensive student demographic data. This in many ways compromises the tracking of progress in transformation achieved by the university and the system as a whole. The university has been allowed to submit the data as such, raising questions about the different treatment of universities by the DHET as other universities comply with the data submission requirements.

The need for improved participation, retention and throughput has been widely discussed in South Africa (for example, DoE, 1997; Scott et al., 2007; CHE, 2016) and cannot be overstated. Despite the fact that headcount enrolments doubled from 1994 to 2013, as shown in Table 3, with the enrolments increasing from 495 356 to 983 698, the system has not achieved equity in success. The study is thus motivated by the urgent need to improve the effectiveness of the educational process in the interest of social justice by achieving equity of access and success for all South Africans.

Table 3: Headcount Enrolments in 1994 and 2013

Race	Enrolments in 1994	Enrolments in 2013
African	212 042	689 503
Mixed-Race	27 474	61 034
Indian	34 010	53 787
White	221 829	171 927
Unspecified	1	7 447*
Total	495 356	983 698

Table constructed from data extracted from the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS). *60% of unspecified 2013 enrolments belong to one university. Students are classified as unspecified if details are not captured during registration.

The need for efficiency and effectiveness in HE is of importance because 'targets' and 'teaching outputs'[5] represent people whose life chances are constrained by the current uneven and poor throughput and retention rates. Together these individual experiences of failure and drop-out have a number of deleterious effects on the country because higher education has 'a particularly important role to play in the overall development of the economy and … has a key role to play in extending educational benefits to the disadvantaged, thus contributing to equal opportunities and fairness' (Moleke, 2005: 5). The failure of the system to achieve equity in outcomes translates into the loss of dreams and aspirations of the affected students, whose only escape of generational poverty is

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[5] Teaching outputs, such as success rates and graduation rates, are performance measures used in the performance-based funding framework.

higher education success. In a racially-segregated South Africa where Africans and Mixed-Race people are underrepresented in virtually all economic sectors, the failure to attain a post-secondary or higher education qualification by affected students throws them back into the vicious circle of poverty and hopelessness (BusinessTech, 2017). The need for the transformation of the inefficient exclusionary system is highlighted in the 1997 White Paper on Higher Education (DoE, 1997) and the 2013 White Paper for Post School Education and Training (DHET, 2013e). Both policies stipulate that the transformation of higher education is part of the broader process of South Africa's political, social and economic transition, which includes political democratisation, economic reconstruction and development, and redistributive social policies aimed at equity.

Furthermore, it was noted in the detailed analyses of the above-mentioned studies that performance was uneven according to the type of institutions. In South Africa, diplomas are primarily offered at Universities of Technology and degrees are mainly offered in Traditional Universities, with the third institutional type, Comprehensive Universities, offering a combination of the two[6]. As presented in Table 4, the performance in specific programmes, such as national diplomas of engineering, was particularly poor in comparison to other programmes.

Table 4: Performance in National Diplomas, by selected CESM: All first-time entry, undergraduate students (excluding distance)

CESM Category	Graduated within 5 years	Still registered after 5 years
04: Business/Management	33%	8%
06: Computer Science	34%	11%
08: Engineering	17%	14%
21: Social Services/Public Administration	29%	6%

Source: DoE, 2008b

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[6] More discussion on institutional differentiation of type and history is provided in Chapter 4.

These analyses also noted that the loss of students in the system across all programmes was above 50% (DoE, 2008b). This meant that half of the students who managed to access higher education and begin their studies exited without a qualification.

A recent higher education DHET cohort[7] study published in 2016 on student progression has shown that overall the first-year dropout rate in undergraduate programmes is decreasing, and the ability of students to graduate in regulation time or close thereto is increasing (DHET, 2016b). The latest data shows that for each population group and qualification type the first-year dropout rate has improved significantly between the 2000 and 2008 cohorts (DHET, 2016b). However, drop-out rates and throughput rates still need much improvement and still reflect apartheid-era patterns with respect to race. Figure 2 below shows that equity in outputs is still an issue that needs to be addressed, as Indian and White students still outperform their counterparts in all types of qualifications: three-year diplomas, three-year degrees and four-year (or more) degrees (DHET, 2016b).

While the persistence of poor, racially-skewed teaching outputs clearly emerges from multiple causal mechanisms, these statistics suggest that problematic teaching and learning (T&L) practices that lead to inadequate gains continue to exist on various campuses in the sector (Boughey & McKenna, 2016). This data also suggests that some institutions were better positioned to undertake T&L development work (Gosling, 2009[8]; Leibowitz et al., 2014) and T&L as a focus of academic work has in many cases been left inadequately addressed over the years (DoE, 2008b; Boughey, 2013).

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[7] Cohort studies are the study of first-time entering undergraduate students, who are tracked over a 10-year period to determine the percentage of students that have dropped out from their studies or who have completed their studies. The purpose of extending the study over a 10-year period is to take cognisance of the distance education method of educational provisioning.

[8] The 2009 David Gosling Report provides an analysis and discussion of the responses to a survey of directors of academic development (AD) in the universities of South Africa. The survey was commissioned by the AD Leadership Forum of the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of South Africa (HELTASA). The online survey, distributed in 2008, was a modified version of a survey previously distributed to the Heads of Educational Development Group in the UK in 2006 and directors of academic development in Australia in 2007. The research was designed to investigate the size, function, and priorities of Academic Development Centres (ADCs) in South Africa. It also explored the directors of ADCs' perceptions of their roles in their institutions, and issues that they face in managing their centres. Some information was also sought about the directors themselves: their background, qualifications, method of appointment and their professional preparation. Nineteen respondents completed the survey. The sample was representative of all types of higher education institutions in South Africa.

Figure 2: Dropouts by race and qualification type (2000 & 2008)

	3 year diplomas		3 year degrees		4 year degrees	
	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008
■ African	42.3%	32.1%	28.6%	23.7%	25.7%	20.3%
■ Coloured	43.0%	32.1%	27.4%	25.9%	23.4%	16.5%
■ Indian	41.1%	30.1%	20.2%	19.7%	14.9%	10.7%
■ White	41.4%	28.5%	21.5%	15.1%	18.9%	10.6%
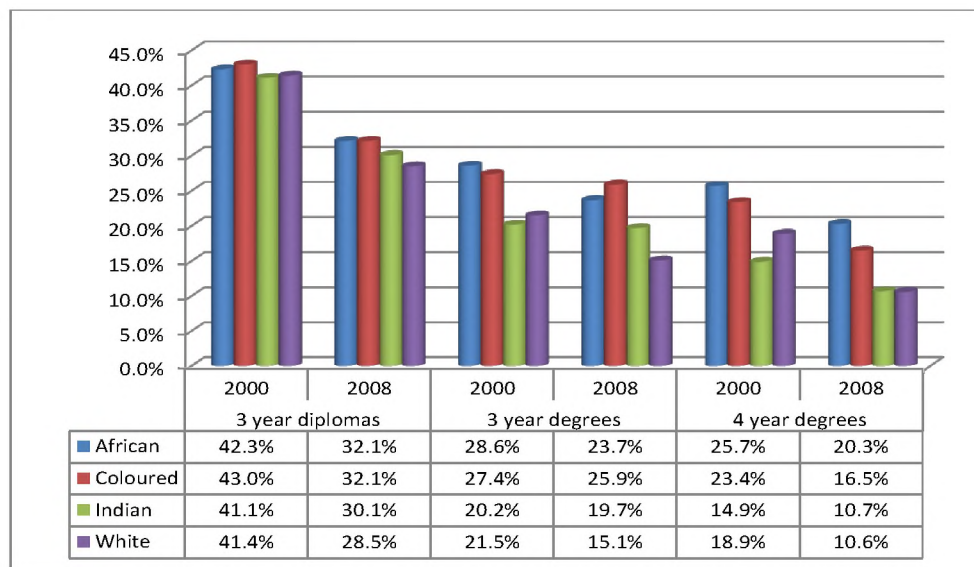
Source: DHET, 2016b

The cohort studies highlighted that dropout rates for distance education were particularly high. Distance education in South Africa enrols approximately 400 000 students. According to the cohort studies (DHET, 2016b), as presented in Figure 3 below, after ten years of study only 17.4% of those enrolled got to graduate and 74.4 % dropped out.

Figure 3: Distance Education Teaching Outputs

NATIONAL 2005
undergraduate diplomas & degrees (distance)

- dropout
- graduated
- assumed in progress
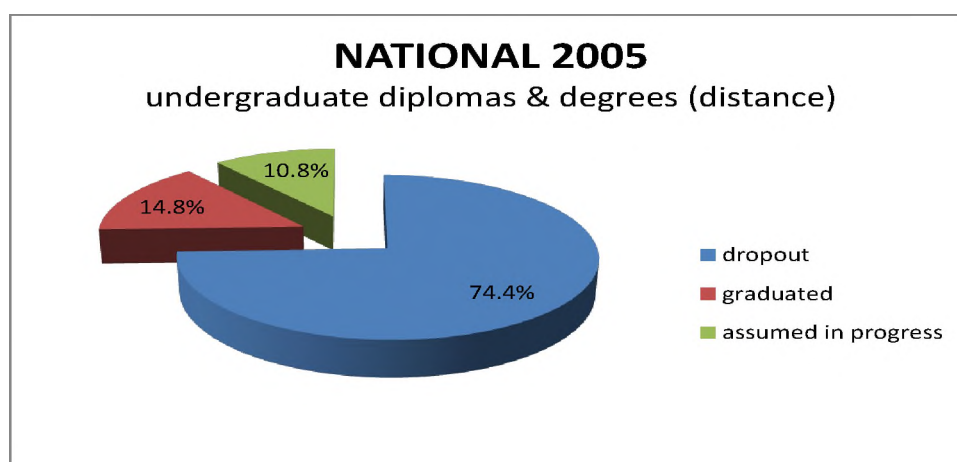
Source: DHET, 2016b

These poor throughput rates point to inefficiencies and constraints in the system, thus although physical access has been more widely provided to students, this has not led to similar increases in success. This loss of students continues to lead to a significant wastage of human resources and limited financial resources. Just over R30 billion[9] was invested in the 2015/16 financial year for the higher education sector (DHET, 2015; 2016c) and this is regularly indicated to be insufficient (DHET, 2013b). Given the limited funding available and the inefficiencies in the system, it is imperative that resources such as the TDG are utilised in ways that lead to system-wide sustainable gains.

This study is thus of key importance as it investigates the throughput bottlenecks in the system with particular focus on the challenges that have constrained universities to implement the TDG, looking at both systemic and institutional perspectives. Having invested R5.5 billion for T&L support at universities since 2007/08, the DHET has indicated that for the 2018/19 financial year it plans to spend approximately R 945 000 000 on T&L initiatives (DHET, 2010b; DHET, 2016a; DHET, 2016c). In current economically challenging times, where there have been significant protests regarding access to higher education in South Africa (Boughey & McKenna, 2016), it is crucial that such funds are indeed being utilised in ways that serve the country.

In addition to the funding spend on the TDG, the government currently invests about R9 billion a year on student bursaries and loans through the National Students' Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) for previously disadvantaged groups who earn below a family income threshold. However, questions are raised as to the economic wisdom of such investments given that a 2010 study showed that 72% of students who were funded through NSFAS drop out and only 28% graduate (DHET, 2010c). Such statistics raise difficult questions about efficiencies and justice in the South African system. This study, with its focus on how the Teaching Development Grant has been utilised, contributes towards a fuller understanding of our challenges and the sector's attempts to address them.

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[9] This amount only includes the Department of Higher Education Allocations to universities and excludes National Skills Fund allocations and allocations to Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges.

The picture painted thus far of inequality in access and success and general inefficiency indicates the difficulties the Higher Education system in South Africa has experienced in undoing its past and contributing to the needs of the fledgling democracy. It would seem that the sector remains some way off from achieving the enabling environment needed to achieve the transformation agenda of the 1997 White Paper (DHET, 2013c; Wilson-Strydom, 2011). It is thus imperative that the factors that constrain an enabling environment for achieving the HE policy goals are identified and addressed. The achievement of policy goals will also require the unlocking of the constraints in the system to ensure that system-wide adequate gains are achieved.

The TDG has been a significant and costly initiative designed to address some of these concerns over the last 13 years. To date no overarching study has been undertaken as to its implementation. The analysis of TDG reports and budget plans and other related documentation from 23 universities over the period year 2003 to year 2015 provided by this thesis thus makes an important contribution to the sector at both institutional and national policy level.

1.2. Research Question

Given the background and rationale for the study, briefly outlined above, my study seeks to investigate the factors enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success at South African universities.

From inception, the TDG has been implemented in a higher education landscape that is highly uneven and where universities exist and operate in different socio-economic contexts (DoE, 2008b; Gosling, 2009; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). The implementation of the TDG in such a highly differentiated HE system has inevitably meant that the TDG has had varied impact across the system as the capacity to implement T&L across the system is varied (DoE, 2008b; Gosling, 2009; Leibowitz et al., 2014). However, no study has analysed exactly how it has been utilised or how the differentiated nature of the sector has played out in the use of this grant.

The differentiation in the system also has implications for the ways in which teaching development is understood and valued by different universities in the sector, which

impacts on how the TDG is utilised and also how policies addressing teaching development are implemented (Boughey and McKenna, 2016). The different contexts within which universities exist and operate thus have influence on the nature of teaching development activities that emerge (Gosling, 2001; Leibowitz et al., 2014). This study attempts to take such complexities of the sector into account as it analyses the use of the TDG to date.

The study thus seeks to answer the question:

> What are the factors enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success at South African universities?

1.3. Goal and Significance of the Study

The goal of the study is to find out how universities have understood the concept of teaching development and how they have utilised the TDG to implement initiatives in this regard within their individual contexts of geographical location, institutional histories, student and staff body, human and physical capital, typology and university cultures. The characteristics of these and other issues of context may be amongst the mechanisms from which TDG utilisation emerges across the system. The study is significant as there is an ever-increasing pressure on the country, the government and the education sector to deliver on the education outcomes which the TDG is meant to address (DoE, 2008b; DHET, 2013b).

The study is a qualitative study that aims to provide a better understanding of the factors enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success at South African universities. The investigation of factors that enable and constrain TDG implementation uses a depth ontology underpinned by Critical Realism, as is discussed in Chapter Two. The analytical tools are based on Archer's Social Realism and are aimed at teasing out the generative mechanisms underpinning the emerging phenomenon of TDG use across the sector. This analysis can inform future implementation of state support for

T&L. The findings of this study also contribute to the call for a more efficient and equitable higher education sector which minimises human and financial wastages[10].

1.4. Outline of Thesis Structure

The thesis has seven chapters. This first brief chapter has outlined the problem area that drives the study and provided the research question. Chapter Two introduces the philosophical framework underpinning the study. The philosophical framework that I have used in this study is Critical Realism (CR), which argues that in quest of the truth of what we as humans observe, feel and experience in the open world, a researcher should go beyond that which is observed and seek to uncover the generative mechanisms from which the observed phenomenon emerged (Bhaskar, 2008). A critical realist researcher is thus interested in going beyond the empirical or observed and experienced understandings of the world and seeks to identify the unobserved underlying generative mechanisms responsible for such events and experiences.

CR thus provides the appropriate ontological framework for this depth interrogation and an understanding of mechanisms shaping the TDG implementation. However, CR alone does not provide adequate explanatory tools of what is practised in the T&L environment at universities. I will thus draw on the tools provided by Archer (1995; 1996) in her theory of Social Realism (SR) to identify the generative mechanisms responsible for what has been observed in the TDG data. The explanatory tools provided by Archer (1995; 1996) enabled me to explain in detail the origin of some of the observed institutional practices, and their reproduction or elaboration. The justification for using CR's depth ontology and Archer's (1995; 1996) SR analytical tools are all covered in detail in this chapter. In particular, in Chapter Two I outline the morphogenesis framework which accounts for changes in the social world over a period of time. I also argue for the use of analytical dualism, whereby the effects of structural and cultural mechanisms are

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[10] Terminology such as 'human capital' and 'financial wastage' is widely used in State documents and policies and, given that this study is focused on the use of a national grant provided by the DHET, such terms will be found throughout the thesis. Such language is by its nature focused on large-scale quantifiable measures and economic aggregates. This language is important as it reflects the concerns of the State and it looks at higher education as a sector, but it is not unproblematic as it has a tendency to hide that within the numbers and generic terms are real people with individual experiences that are not fully captured by notions of efficiency and capital.

temporarily considered separately from the ways in which actors draw on their agency to interact with such structures and cultures.

Chapter Three provides a discussion of the methodology of the study in applying Archer's analytical tools to the data in order to answer the research question. The chapter thus discusses the research design of the study. This includes discussions of how I moved from the known to the unknown in quest of uncovering the generative mechanisms of what is observed or presented in the TDG documentation in the form of TDG proposals and annual progress reports. The chapter discusses how the data sources were identified, and how the data was treated and interpreted using Archer's (1995; 1996) SR theoretical frameworks of morphogenesis and analytical dualism. The chapter further looks at some of the limitations of the adopted framework, and provides my reflections upon the scope and nature of data. It also discusses the ethical considerations pertinent to the study that were addressed in order to avoid potential biases that could have compromised the credibility of the study.

Lastly, Chapter Three discusses the measures and steps that were taken to ensure that the results of this investigation are credible and also includes how I dealt with my positionality in this study given that I have worked for the department since 2008. My tasks in working for the department included the administering of earmarked grants from 2008 to the present period. One of these grants included the TDG, which I worked with from 2008 to 2016. My work with the TDG in the first place included assessing budget plans and institutional plans and making a judgement call using an internally developed set of criteria of what could be funded by the grant. After the identification of areas that could be funded from the budget plans, these were recommended for the Minister and Director-General to consider for approval. Secondly, my tasks included the assessment of annual progress reports. This included cross checking with budget plans to ensure that institutions had utilised the grant as had been originally approved by the Minister. This process included verifying that DHET and institutional polices and procedures had been adhered to in the implementation of the TDG by universities. Thirdly, I had to determine if the progress reports were satisfactory in the sense that they had met all criteria. These assessments mainly centred on the financial management of the grant. Once progress reports had been found to be satisfactory, recommendations were made to release further

funds to universities. For universities whose progress reports were found to be unsatisfactory, recommendations were made to the Minister and Director-General of the DHET to approve the withholding of the funds and in some cases the re-allocation of funds to other institutions or projects. Lastly, my tasks included various activities in policy development and implementation. The monitoring aspect of the grant included institutional visits to universities to engage on grant use and consult on policy inputs from universities. My job description is thus closely tied to the concerns addressed in this study. This is in part where my deep concern for and commitment to the development of teaching comes from, but it also brings possible constraints to the study (Trowler, 2011). The implications of researching within my area of work are discussed in Chapter Three.

Given that the current shape and status of the South African higher education system emerge from historical factors affecting the higher education environment (Bunting, 2002; CHE, 2016), Chapter Four is dedicated to describing the background of the study. As guided by the philosophical framework of Archer's (1995; 1996) morphogenesis, this chapter focuses on the historical period before the TDG was implemented, forming the context of the study and interrogating the structural and cultural conditions under which the TDG was implemented. Chapter Four thus functions both as the initial phase of the data analysis, which is known as T1 in the morphogenesis cycle, and also as the literature review of the study. Combining the literature review with the deliberations on the structuring conditions prior to the implementation of the TDG allowed me to attend to the requirements of the morphogenesis framework without having significant duplication across chapters.

As guided by the philosophical framework of the study, Chapter Four thus discusses the structural and cultural contextual factors that shaped the higher education environment and set the scene for the grant's implementation. This includes discussions on the pre-existing conditions which then served in either constraining or enabling ways once the TDG was introduced. As argued by Archer (1995; 1996), the identification of these conditioning factors is key as it enables the researcher to trace what enables or constrains transformation in a given social setting. Put differently, this enables the researcher to identify the mechanisms that are responsible for the origin, persistence and elimination of the identified phenomenon.

Chapter Five looks at the structural and cultural factors that were at play in the higher education environment when the TDG was introduced in 2004. This chapter focuses on factors external to the TDG that shaped the T&L environment. Social spaces are contested spaces where reproduction or elaboration of specific environments is a result of individual agents or groups of agents interacting with the structures and cultures. These structures and cultures then regulate such interactions in a given setting (Archer, 1995; 1996). It is these interactions that are studied by social realists within the morphogenesis framework to give explanations for observed and experienced phenomena in a given setting. Archer (1995) argues that as agents interact with the cultures and structures shaping their environments (as discussed in Chapter Four), they exercise their emergent powers to drive through or mediate their interests, projects and goals around the conditions presented by the existing structures and cultures. These exerted conditions may either present constrained or enabling environments for agents pursuing their goals. Chapter Five thus looks at the broader systematic elements that shaped each environment in either constraining or enabling agents in TDG implementation.

While Chapter Five looks at broad system-level issues, Chapter Six hones in to discuss TDG specific structures. Chapter Six thus particularly looks at how the TDG as a mechanism has shaped interactions in the T&L environment with regard to the emergence of activities and practices in the sector. Specifically, this chapter looks at how the TDG evolved as a structure and how this structural elaboration shaped agential interactions and T&L enhancement in the field. The separation of systematic factors in Chapter Five and TDG specific factors in Chapter Six was complicated as the distinction is not always self-evident, but it was an important analytical approach as it allowed for the delineation of factors that shaped TDG use.

The different contexts within which the TDG was implemented played a key role in determining whether the TDG realised its potential for adequate gains. Archer's analytical framework thus provided the appropriate excavation tools in the quest to uncover the interaction of specific factors that may have enabled or constrained its implementation. Thus, Chapters Five and Six present the analysis detailing how the data was applied in Archer's framework. Moving from the premise of the depth ontology, in

practice this involves using the CR lens on the data presented as institutional experiences and practices in the TDG documentation.

Chapter Seven constitutes the conclusion of this study and details a critical presentation of the results that have emerged from the study. These results are a presentation of the factors that have been identified in the study to have enabled or constrained the TDG implementation at all[11] South African public universities for the past 12 years. This study in many ways has been an attempt to do a depth analysis which can also been seen as a macro evaluation of the application of the TDG implementation from 2004/05 to 2016/17. The findings of this study present an overview of the implementation of the TDG both at national and institutional level, which will be useful information to take forward and consider in future government-funded T&L interventions.

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[11] As pointed out in Section 3.3, this excludes newly-established universities'.

CHAPTER TWO

PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

In researching any phenomenon, researchers do so from within particular paradigms underpinned by philosophical assumptions. Every research project is underpinned by the adopted or applied theory of truth (philosophy), which directs the kinds of considerations and arguments one employs in the scientific enquiry being conducted (Bhaskar, 2008). Oftentimes such paradigms are selected almost by default because they represent the accepted set of assumptions underpinning the discipline (Trowler, 2012). In many disciplines in the Natural Sciences, for example, there is little need for explicit discussion of paradigms and underpinning philosophies because these are an assumed given within the field. However, even in cases where the paradigm is assumed, it is open to contestation and critique (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). In the Humanities and Social Sciences, there is very little agreement about the nature of truth or the purpose of research and so it is perhaps unsurprising that we spend a fair amount of time explicitly discussing the ontological position from which we work.

The philosophical position taken in any research project should be that which will best explain the researched phenomenon and which will allow the researcher to arrive at a defensible, and thereby valid, set of conclusions. This chapter thus presents the philosophical assumptions which inform the research methodological approach, data collection process and analysis, discussed in Chapter Three.

As a reminder, this study is driven by concerns about persistent social injustices such as generally poor and racially-skewed outputs in the South African higher education system; I thus aimed to investigate the conditions and mechanisms that contribute to the persistence of the injustices, by looking at the use of the TDG. In the pursuit of identifying these conditions and mechanisms, I decided that Roy Bhaskar's (2008; 2011) Critical Realism (CR) and Margaret Archer's (1995; 1996) Social Realism (SR) provide the best fit philosophically, and furthermore that I could draw on their work for suitable methodological tools. The philosophical framework offered by Bhaskar (2008; 2011) and

research tools offered by Archer (1995; 1996) allow me to answer the main research question of this study, which is: What are the factors enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success? This chapter presents how Bhaskar (2008; 2011) and Archer's (1995; 1996) works are drawn on and applied in the attempt to uncover the conditions that led to how teaching development was conceptualised, planned and implemented in the TDG documentation from 2004 to 2015 at South African public universities.

In this chapter, I thus outline the ontological underpinnings of Critical Realism, where reality is argued to be stratified and where ontology is differentiated from epistemology. Cruickshank (2003) describes ontology as a branch of philosophy that is concerned with articulating the nature and structure of the world. Ontology may also be referred to as the form and nature of reality or the theory of being (Bhaskar, 2008; 2011). Epistemology is defined as the theory of knowledge or our 'limited' knowledge of the nature and structure of the world (Danermark et, al., 2002; Bhaskar, 2008, 2011).

The second part of this chapter provides discussions on the application of Archer's (1995; 1996; 2000) Social Realism (SR) theory, which is an extension of Bhaskar's (2008, 2011) CR theory, and how it provides the researcher with tools to burrow into the ontological sphere. I discuss how Archer's SR theory highlights the role of people through enacted agency, such that they interact in their given environments, comprising structures and cultures, and other agents. Through such interactions agents are able to reinforce or transform their environments, and we have the emergence of what we observe and experience (what is presented in the TDG documentation). The aim of this chapter is thus to introduce some of the tools, or a guiding map, informed by the CR philosophical underpinnings, that I will use in the following chapters to arrive at the answers to my research question. I will thus outline in detail the Morphogenetic/Morphostasis analytical framework (MM Framework) and the application of analytical dualism in an attempt to describe their use in this study to identify what has emerged in the TDG environment as portrayed in the TDG documentation.

2.2. Critical Realism: Philosophical Foundations

CR began from the premise that most scientific research is based on a tainted knowledge of reality, most of which has been acquired through perception, thought and language. Danermark et al. (2002: 39) argue that this acquired knowledge has been 'filtered through language and concepts that are changeable in time and space, thus casting doubt on the reliability of the generated knowledge that we hold of reality'. Bhaskar (2008; 2011), who is the main proponent of CR, argues that for us to understand phenomena in the world, we must understand the unobserved workings of this reality, which he argues are responsible for generating what we observe or feel or that which we are physically in touch with. He thus distinguishes between the readily accessible transitive reality and the difficult to access intransitive reality, which exists and has effects whether we are aware of it or not. Bhaskar's Critical Realism theory thus 'thoroughly de-couples and disambiguates ontology from epistemology, while making epistemology secondary to ontology' (Hedlund-de Witt, 2012: 4). CR is thus a philosophy that shifts the focus of scientific enquiry onto ontology, the nature of reality, as opposed to epistemology, the nature of our knowledge of reality, and within ontology it focuses scientific enquiry onto causal mechanisms as opposed to events (Danermark et al., 2002).

2.3. Stratified Reality

Against this background of differentiating between ontology and epistemology, Bhaskar (2008; 2011) explains that, in our pursuit of scientific discovery, we should begin with the premise that both reality and our conceptions or knowledge of reality are stratified as well as differentiated CR's transcendental realist position thus argues that there is a hidden world, composed of generative structures or mechanisms, which exists independently of human interpretation, knowledge, enactment or discourse. A researcher's goal is thus to identify the workings of this world in order to provide less tainted explanations of what we observe and experience of the manifested phenomenon being researched. Bhaskar (2008; 2011) argues that it is only through acknowledging and working with a structured or stratified approach that this reality can be identified. Bhaskar's (2008; 2011) emphasis on separating what we see, experience and understand (in the transitive sphere) from what is independent of our thoughts and experiences (the intransitive sphere) is particularly important in scientific enquiry, as it allows us to deduce the 'real' factors that enable and constrain the events and experiences being

studied, in this case the use of the TDG at South African universities. Such factors as explained by Bhaskar (2008; 2011) and Danemark et al. (2002) are, however, not immediately observable by simply reading the TDG documentation or using my observations, as a researcher, or experiences, as someone who has administered the grant at a national level. The emergence of a given social phenomenon, in this case the use of the TDG, cannot be understood by either observation or abstract thinking alone (Jespersen, 2009).

The attempt in scientific enquiry to arrive at conclusions that solely rely on the transitive faces the danger of excluding important causal intransitive mechanisms that should be included for sound research. In studying the TDG, I am thus not only concerned with determining the conceptions of the TDG as presented in the documentation, but I am also interested in uncovering the workings of mechanisms in the intransitive that have led to the manifestations of the TDG conceptions and the implications of such conceptions for the development of teaching in the South African higher education sector. As indicated above, Bhaskar's (2008) philosophical position is that epistemology is secondary to ontology, and that what we experience and observe (transitive) is a product of the unobservable and difficult to access mechanisms independent of human knowledge and discourse (intransitive). Thus, based on this understanding of the world, in my pursuit of answering my research question I should avoid using what I have observed from the TDG documentation as if it is the full reality of the 'TDG world'. I should be careful to avoid using the transitive data of events and experiences of TDG funding to explain the intransitive, or treating the transitive as the ultimate truth. As guided by Bhaskar (2008), my task is to determine the nature of the conditions in the intransitive South African higher education environment for the grant use to have manifested in the manner that it has or in the manner in which it has been presented in the TDG documentation that I will be analysing.

Such a process of moving beyond the transitive nature of the data to identifying the intransitive mechanisms from which the data emerges can be achieved through retroduction, which is a method 'for finding the prerequisites or the basic conditions for the existence of the phenomenon studied' (Danermark et al., 2002: 12). Mingers (2006: 13) explains this as 'a process where researchers take some explained phenomenon and

propose hypothetical mechanisms that, if they existed, would generate or cause that which is to be explained'. Thus, the critical realist view towards research methodology is that the researcher should be more focused on uncovering new knowledge that will explain the concerned phenomenon by revealing the causal mechanisms as opposed to a 'shallow' methodology that focuses on predictions, generalisations and one that is constructionist in nature (Bhaskar, 2008; Danermark et al., 2002).

In essence, Bhaskar (2008) warns researchers against conflating epistemology with ontology; the treating of our tainted knowledge of reality as if it is the ultimate truth. This is known in CR literature as the epistemic fallacy. The committing of the epistemic fallacy weakens the explanatory value of scientific enquiry as it erases the possibility of uncovering the causal generative mechanisms and workings in the intransitive which are responsible for the studied phenomenon. The application of CR methodology helps me to guard against committing the epistemic fallacy, but most importantly it provides an appropriate practical methodological systemic approach of making sense of what can be observed in the TDG documentation. CR methodology also guards against arriving at premature or conflated conclusions (that exclude causal mechanisms) based on transitive applications that may be flawed or contaminated with my thoughts and interpretations of what I have observed and experienced.

This is not to say that CR posits a possibility of arriving at a complete explanation of causal mechanisms. Because the researcher is a person with ready access to the transitive world of experiences and events captured in the data and only limited access to the world of mechanisms, CR accepts the effects of epistemological relativity (Archer et al., 1998; Danermark et al., 2002). Despite the application of rigorous methodologies and careful attempts at ensuring, using retroduction, that one moves beyond the world of the data, there will always be effects and limitations introduced by the researcher. For this reason, CR accepts that conclusions are always partial and that better and fuller accounts of causal mechanisms might be possible. There is thus an acknowledgement that while mechanisms are ontologically realist, our research of them is constrained by the relativism of epistemology (Archer et al., 1998; Danermark et al., 2002).

Accepting epistemological relativism is however not the same as calling for a notion of multiple truths where all accounts should be deemed worthy. It is our knowledge of the world that is relative; the nature of the world itself is real. We need, as researchers, to be able to weigh up various accounts of the mechanisms from which events and experiences emerge. We need to make judgements as to which accounts provide the most likely explanations of the workings of mechanisms, given our current knowledge of the world. The critical realist approach thus 'espouses judgemental rationality – the possibility of arriving at non-arbitrary views of the world' (Hedlund-de Witt, 2012: 8). The application of CR as a methodological tool in my research will thus enable me to identify the likely relations (mechanisms) between different social events leading to probable conclusions on what has emerged in the given period in the ever-changing social world.

Critical realists provide some broad outlines of a methodology as to how the reality that exists independently of our preconceptions can be analysed and how this reality affects events and experiences in society. Based on the precepts of CR, the information that universities have presented in their TDG documentation, which is the data for my study, is not sufficient for one to arrive at conclusions of what the conceptions and use of the grant really are. For a validated scientific enquiry process, I have thus applied CR-aligned methodology that allows me as a researcher to look beyond what has been presented in TDG documentation and begin to identify the mechanisms from which the content of this documentation has emerged. CR methodology allowed me to interrogate the workings that led to the conceptions of the TDGs. My research goal is not simply to determine TDG conceptions, but to identify the mechanisms and workings that have led to the manifestations of the conceptions, and what the implications of these are. The aim of CR research is not to determine direct cause and effect relationships but to determine an understanding of the underlying properties and mechanisms that are capable of generating events in the objects being studied (McKenna & Boughey, 2014). Because every social phenomenon emerges from the interplay of a myriad mechanisms, it would be impossible to establish direct causal relationships. CR is concerned with identifying as many of the mechanisms as is practically possible and establishing their tendency to enable or constrain particular events and experiences. Roy Bhaskar's (2008) Critical Realism theory thus provides a framing perspective which is a good fit for me to identify the

underlying mechanisms accounting for the manner in which the TDG is playing out in the university system as presented in TDG documentation.

Critical realists, in realising the potential strengths that CR provides as a research tool, are also mindful that CR does not hold the key to the 'ultimate truth', as the source of the truth is intransitive and conclusions are to some extent based on human interpretation and thus open to fallibility. Despite CR providing a strong methodological approach in the search for the reality, the fact that researchers do not have direct access to the truth is its weakness. Having argued for the need for researchers to move beyond the transitive empirical, CR acknowledges the difficulties involved in accessing the intransitive 'Real'. Its philosophical premise thus contains its own limitation (Cruickshank, 2003; Archer et al., 1998). While generalisations are discouraged in CR research, conclusions in a given study relate to the identification of mechanisms, or processes, that the researcher does not have direct access to. For CR critics, this characteristic of CR is problematic (Mingers, 2006). The question which some CR critics raise is in relation to the scientific enquiry process that critical realist researchers undertake (i.e. through processes such as retroduction) which suggests the possibility of unambiguously ruling out or ruling in particular mechanisms, particularly when such mechanisms may be unobservable and in some cases their powers unactualised. Critics further question the nature of accepted truth in CR and whether the process of validating such truth is not open to fallibility (Mingers, 2006). It is with these internal conflicts in mind that I embarked on this CR study, and which I return to in the conclusion of this thesis.

Further to the distinction between easily accessible transitive domains and less accessible intransitive domains, CR delineates reality into three layers, and at the deepest and most abstract layer there exist mechanisms and powers responsible for the emergence of our experiences and observations of events. Bhaskar (2008) names these three intermeshed domains: the Real, the Actual and the Empirical (see Table 5 below).

Table 5: Three Overlapping Levels of Depth in Critical Realist Ontology

Layered Ontology	Referent
The Real	Underlying generative (causal) mechanisms or structures that co-produce the flux of phenomena (events). These are themselves depth-stratified or layered and enduring (e.g., mechanisms of the inorganic world, the biosphere, and the sociosphere)
The Actual	Events (whether observed or not) (e.g., a human or organizational action, an event etc
The Empirical	Events that are actually experiences, empirical observations (e.g., what you see through microscopes or in historical documents)

Source: Table adapted from Hedlund-de Witt (2012)

Bhaskar (2008), Archer at al. (1998), Jespersen (2009), Hedlund-de Witt (2012) and others explain that the domain of the Real comprises the underlying generative (causal) mechanisms that interact to produce the events that occur in the level known as the Actual and how these are experienced in the level known as the Empirical. The mechanisms at the level of the Real might be not be actualised and so their powers might remain dormant until the right set of contexts comes into play. Mechanisms at the level of the Real do not act in isolation – there are always many mechanisms at play in the emergence of any phenomenon – so the constraining or enabling effects of a mechanism on the emergence of any event or experience can be mitigated or aggravated by the existence of other actualised mechanisms.

The Actual is the realm where events emerge. Not all events are observed by people, but they emerge from the interplay of causal mechanisms whether we experience them or not (Hedlund-de Witt, 2012). The Empirical realm is that level where we observe or experience what emerges in the Actual and which is to a greater or lesser degree measurable. The Actual and Empirical domains are thus located in the transitive domain, where all data pertaining to a study can be accessed, be it through observations, experiments, data application, interviews or documentation. According to this critical realist illustration, everything we experience and observe, in this case all that can be

observed in the TDG documentation, is in the Actual and Empirical transitive realms, which are the product of workings in the deeper most intransitive Real domain. According to Bhaskar (2008; 2011), the information and understanding obtained from the Empirical and Actual realms (transitive) is limited in explaining and bringing an understanding of the make-up of the studied reality, hence he recommends the focus of scientific enquiry to be in the Real domain (the intransitive) in order to come close to understanding the reality of a given phenomenon. The transitive is not discarded in CR methodology but is used in the process of uncovering the effects of mechanisms at the level of the Real, or as one moves from the transitive to the intransitive, so long as one guards against the epistemic fallacy.

The large downwards arrow in Table 5 illustrates that mechanisms at the level of the Real interact to enable or constrain events at the level of the Actual and experiences at the level of the Empirical. While events and experiences are fairly fluid in nature and regularly shift and change, mechanisms at the level of the Real are more resistant to change. However, the smaller arrow in Table 5 illustrates that events and experiences in the world have an effect on which mechanisms are actualised and are at play in any context.

My goal as a researcher was thus to look at what led to the various ways in which universities have spent the TDG (that is, the events in the level of the Actual), in order to establish from these events how universities conceptualise teaching and learning development, and what the mechanisms might be from which such conceptualisations emerged, and how these then in turn acted as mechanisms that enabled or constrained the development of teaching in the sector. My goal was thus to use CR (and SR, to be discussed below) to uncover the workings in the Real level that are responsible for the conceptions of teaching development and the manifestation of teaching development events.

2.4. Validation of Critical Realism in Research

As presented in Table 5 above, central to critical realist research is the attempt to establish and examine the workings of the underlying explanatory mechanisms that are responsible for shaping what is emerging in the Actual and Empirical domains (that is, how the TDG and its use has manifested), all of which pertain to the Real realm

(Jespersen, 2009; Hedlund-de Witt, 2012; Case, 2013). The focus of depth ontology by critical realists on the underlying causal mechanisms in the Real domain is to strengthen explanatory weight in the conclusions reached about the phenomena being researched. Thus, in arguing for the case of CR as offering stronger explanatory power of reality, Bhaskar (2008, 2011) discounts scientific approaches that are constructivist in nature and those which tend to understand and explain reality by exclusively using human experiences, knowledge, and perceptions, and which are content that constructions of reality on the basis of such experiences constitute reality. CR is equally critical of approaches on the other end of the spectrum, where positivist cause-and-effect relationships are ascribed on the basis of experiences and observations. In direct contrast to the extremes of approaches such as positivism and constructivism, CR through its 'sophisticated depth ontology' (Hedlund-de Witt, 2012) allows Critical Realists to not only be concerned with descriptions of social phenomenon but aim at uncovering the underlying mechanisms that lead to the emergence of observed or experienced phenomena. This 'sophisticated depth ontology is part of a realist philosophy of science called "transcendental realism" which goes beyond positivism and constructivism alike' (Hedlund-de Witt, 2012: 2).

Critical realists disagree with the positivist approach to research where the explanation of certain social phenomena is controlled in 'closed system' experiments where well-established connections or causality patterns are identified and generally applied. An example of such positivist applications is the economic theory that assumes that, all factors held constant, the increase in income results in the increase in demand for goods and services. Or the concomitant economic theory that, if the price increases, people will demand less quantity, with other factors held constant. However, such theories are regularly disputed as, in an open system, people do not always respond in the way that economic theory has generalised, constructed or predetermined (Jespersen, 2009). The impact that price or income increases may have on demand for goods is far more complex than such cause and effect explanations would suggest. There may in a given context be a number of other unexplained 'unobservable' mechanisms that cause consumers to respond differently. As illustrated in the economic theory example, positivists do not subscribe to the idea that social phenomena are produced by an underlying diverse set of causal mechanisms and that experienced or observed events are outcomes of unseen

interactions and activities of entities and systems that have causal effects or powers. Positivists only focus on the surface (empirical level, that is the observed or experienced) in trying to explain society or certain social phenomena and disregard the possibility of a stratified ontological approach in explaining the observed or experienced event or phenomena.

Critical realists criticise the manipulation of study environments by positivists and the generalisations they produce for explaining certain events or social phenomena. They also criticise the quagmire of much relativist research, which assumes individual constructions of reality. Both relativist and positivist approaches to research involve the reduction of the ontological sphere to the epistemological sphere, 'or misidentifying epistemology with ontology', and thereby commit the epistemic fallacy (Bhaskar, 2008: iv).

Given the explanatory strengths of CR, a number of researchers have used CR as a means to better understand events and experiences related to higher education in South Africa and as a means of identifying the underlying mechanisms and structures responsible for generating events and experiences (see, for example Mudziewelana & Maphosa, 2013; Case, 2013; McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Case, Marshall, McKenna & Mogashana, 2017). The quest to identify generative underlying mechanisms in the Real domain, to which I do not have direct access, requires tools that will allow me to interrogate this intransitive domain. Margaret Archer's (1995; 1996) Social Realism theory is drawn upon in this study to provide the appropriate tools through which the workings in the Real realm can be investigated and interrogated to arrive at understandings of how events pertaining to the use of the TDG grant emerged.

2.5. Analytical Framework: An Archerian Social Realist Framework

Bhaskar's (2008) work, discussed in the preceding pages, creates the philosophical foundation for 'a realist metatheory' that is in principle compatible with a variety of social science approaches since it can act as an underpinning philosophy (Archer et al., 1998; Danermark et al., 2002). Bhaskar's (1998) CR thus acts as an 'underlabourer' to inform the empirical research by supplying some ontological precepts such as that of the layered and stratified reality. Using Bhaskar's (1998) work as the 'underlabourer', Archer's (1995; 1996) theory provides an extension to Bhaskar's (1998) CR theory as she

provides a framework through which researchers can study how change or lack of it takes place in a given social setting or how different phenomena emerge in social settings.

It can be understood from the above discussions on CR that the T&L environment is stratified and differentiated, and that I now need to find a way to navigate through to the intransitive Real realm in order to come close to forming explanations for how the TDG has emerged in the Actual and Empirical realms, and why it has emerged in the way that it has. The adoption of CR/SR theory as the guiding framework in my study thus also dictates how the data will be viewed, arranged and treated in the study, or how the extracted data is understood within the framework.

Using CR as the bedrock theory, I intend to use the social realist Morphogenesis/Morphostasis (MM) framework developed by Margaret Archer as my analytical framework for teasing out how the workings of the Real realm have led to the emergence of TDG events in the Actual realm and how universities have presented their TDG experiences in the Empirical realm. Archer's (1995; 1996) framework allows me as a researcher to determine how elaboration (Morphogenesis) or reproduction (Morphostasis) in the conceptions of the TDG has occurred and also how these conceptions have emerged. The elaboration and reproduction of TDG conceptions and initiatives emerges from particular chains of socio-cultural interaction, as conditioned by a priori social contexts. The socio-cultural interactions of the identified entities are the core of Archer's (1995; 1996; 2000) Social Realism theory in explaining how the causal mechanisms in the Real realm lead to what is manifested in the Actual and Empirical realms. As guided by the methodological framework, it is thus my task to first identify the conditioning mechanisms of the context into which the social–cultural interactions related to the TDG take place. Data pertaining to the conceptions of the TDG is in the form of TDG documentation in the Empirical and Actual realms. The abstraction (making sense of the data) of information pertaining to events and tendencies, such as the actual spending of the TDG monies in various ways and the experiences by the universities in the receipt and use of the funds and the multiple, subjective ways in which the TDG proposals and reports are prepared, undertaken and experienced by universities, were then used to give light to the chains of socio-cultural interactions as per Archer's methodology. Archer's framework thus provides the tools through which the Real domain

can be explored for the researcher to explain what has been manifested in the Actual and Empirical realms.

2.6. Archer's Stratification of the Social World

Archer (1995; 1996; 2000) concerns herself with the social world (as opposed to the physical world) and accepts Bhaskar's (2008, 2011) CR assumptions of reality: that numerous mechanisms are at work in the generative Real realm. She argues that the social world is made of three intersecting aspects, namely culture, structure and agency, which are at work in and across the three levels of reality. Within the Real realm these three aspects of structure, culture and agency have independent emergent powers that, when activated, intersect to be variously responsible for different phenomena that may emerge in the given social settings.

The independent emergent powers that these entities possess means that the entities are irreducible to each other (they are causally not dependent on each other). Emergent powers are the causal abilities or powers that the entities possess, which translates into the ability of the entities to enable or constrain change within themselves and to exert some force on their surroundings that may contribute to change or lack of it (Archer, 1995). The identification of these entities and their emergent powers requires the researcher to interrogate each entity separately in order to deduce how its emergent powers contribute to what has emerged in the Actual and Empirical realms. The analysis of the roles that the three entities play is made possible by Archer's MM framework, where emergent powers can be delineated from the simultaneous interactions of the entities.

Archer's (1995) identification of the emergent properties of the three entities, structure, culture and agency, which are at play in the Real realm and whose interactions are responsible for what emerges in the Actual and the Empirical realms, is of particular importance to this study. This SR conception of the depth ontology suggests that the phenomenon, in this case the use of the TDG, needs to be considered to have emerged from the interplay of three kinds of mechanisms: the structural, cultural and agential. Several higher education studies focusing on teaching and learning development in South Africa have called for more nuanced understandings of current events and have alluded to the significant roles played by, inter alia, institutional cultures, national structures and the

actions of key agents (for example, Case 2013; Boughey, 2010; Mckenna & Boughey, 2014; Mudzielwana & Maphosa, 2013). Working from the foundation of the rich literature that has already been published on teaching and learning development, I thus aimed to identify the structural, cultural and agential mechanisms at work in the Real realm, from which the TDG documentation has emerged.

Structure and culture are collectively known as 'the parts' in the SR model and are said to be relatively enduring (Archer, 1995). These are then acted upon by 'the people' who exert their agency to achieve their personal projects. 'The parts', that is structure and culture, are characterised as being relatively enduring, because people who enter a given institution are confronted by parts which were constituted by previous occupants in that setting. For example, a lecturer who takes up a lecturing job does so within a university context that pre-existed him or her. While s/he may bring certain expectations, ideas and ambitions, s/he will be enabled or constrained in achieving them by the institution's norms and values, by its policies and processes, and by the colleagues s/he is joining, particularly those colleagues with power in the given setting.

If I take this example further and imagine that our new academic has been hired to teach in a programme that is extensively supported by the TDG through tutorial funding, s/he will benefit from the support of senior students who may or may not undertake their roles in the ways our new lecturer would like. Let's further assume that the TDG funding is only used for the payment of these senior student tutors, and not for their training or meetings; furthermore, that none of the TDG funds are allocated to support our new staff member in his or her own development, through formal and informal courses and workshops. The new lecturer is thus confronted with pre-existing structures (no funding to support staff or curriculum development) and pre-existing cultures (a student-focused approach to teaching and learning development) that existed in the institution before his or her taking up the post. If this staff member resigns from the post after a year and these cultures remain unchanged, the parts would have endured in their original form and will then condition the environment that a replacement staff member will be faced with. I now move on to unpack each of these three concepts in a bit more detail.

2.6.1. Structure

Archer (1995; 1996; 2000; 2007) refers to structures as resources and roles or relations amongst social positions, institutional and national arrangements and relative capacity. Structures are said to be relatively enduring, and to possess causal properties called structural emergent powers (SEPs). Examples of structures may include resources, policies, or offices that shape how people must operate or behave. Structures through their interactions with the emergent properties of culture and agency contribute to what emerges in the Actual and Empirical realms.

In the 'new lecturer' example illustrated earlier, examples of structures at a national level would include the funding agency in the form of the national ministry, the DHET, and the existence of the TDG as a redress and development structure; at an institutional level examples of structures would include the funded tutorial programme, the institutional offices that decide on use of TDG in the university, and the TDG funding itself (monetary value of the grant). The spending of the money on tutorial programmes presents the manifestation of an event in the Actual realm. The experiences by students in benefiting from the TDG-funded tutorial programme and the constraints on staff development from the TDG funding being used in this way is what is manifested in the Empirical realm. Thus, structures have emergent powers to constrain and enable particular events and experiences in the environment that the lecturer operates in.

2.6.2. Culture

In the MM framework, culture is referred to as the accepted and adopted ways of doing things, based on beliefs, ideas, discourses, ideologies, schools of thought or theories that direct action. Like structure, culture is also said to be relatively enduring and possessing causal properties known as cultural emergent powers (CEPs) (Archer, 1995; 1996; 2000; 2007). While ideas, beliefs and so on are always held by people, Archer (1995; 1996) calls for us to consider their role outside of the individuals that hold them. Ideas and beliefs can be expressed in discourses, which then have effects on how the world is viewed and interacted with by others.

Culture, like structure, has the ability to shape the contexts in which agents operate and thus culture has a bearing on whether pursued goals will easily be achievable by people or

not. In the earlier example, the new lecturer would be entering an institution which has a history of certain beliefs or accepted norms of behaviour. Views about what constitutes good teaching and how teaching can or should be developed would have implications for the use of the TDG in that university. The culture would have acted as a mechanism, possibly enabling the use of the funding on the provision of tutors and constraining its use on the development of academic staff.

Archer (1995) states that the ability of 'the parts' to shape contexts through the activation of their emergent powers will in turn be enabled or constrained by the actions of agents. The institutional culture, for example, will have an impact on whether the lecturer will achieve his or her goals or not. In summary, 'the parts' of structure and culture present enablements and constraints for 'the people' as they enact their agency to pursue their goals. The determination of enablements and constraints thus involves further interrogation of relational emergent powers within the studied context and environment. Constraints in one setting (university/study/scenario) could be enablements in another setting as these depend on relative emergent powers of the three entities identified by Archer as central to the manifestation of phenomenon.

2.6.3. Agency

Central to Archer's SR theory of the MM framework is the interaction of people with the structures and cultures within given social settings and how this leads to the emergence of events and experiences in the Actual and Empirical realms. Archer (1995; 2000) further explains that persons belong to collective groups that she terms 'agents'; the activities by agents are thus referred to as 'agency'. What has been referred to in the previous paragraphs as 'the people' is in SR terminology referred to as 'agents'. Agents exercise agency (powers to achieve their goals) as they interact with the structures and cultures in their setting.

Agency refers to the human ability to take action (Porpora, 2013), or the ability of agents to work with the given culture and structure to pursue their interests. Social Realism specifically refers to individual humans as persons who possess personal emergent properties (PEPs) 'as a consequence of their embodied nature' (Mutch, 2002: 489). In the MM framework, it is necessary to differentiate between people, actors and agents. As

mentioned, agents or persons have emergent properties and these emergent properties may differ in different social settings. For example, Archer (1995; 2000) notes that emergent powers or powers of influence differ in the strength of their contributions to what emerges. In the new lecturer example, the direction of action by the lecturer in engaging with the existing structure, culture and other agents in the institution for acquiring her/his goal will be influenced by the relative emergent powers of the three entities in the institution.

Furthermore, Archer (1995; 2000) advances the idea that a stratified distinction needs to be made between humans as individuals, as people with roles and positions, and as groups and collectivities who may be more or less influential in decision making (Horrocks, 2009). Agents are thus further separated into primary and corporate agents in order to highlight that emergent powers that agents possess differ according to social setting, in that some agents may be more influential in society given the positions they occupy or resources they have at their disposal. Archer calls those who hold little positional authority 'primary agents'. The new lecturer in this example can be a categorised as a primary agent as s/he is unlikely to have much say in how the TDG is spent or to occupy a position of power that can influence the management of the grant.

In SR terms, corporate agents are those that have more influential powers in driving goals than primary agents, as the latter 'lack a say in structural and cultural modeling and they neither express interests in or organise for their strategic pursuit, either in society or a given institutional setting' (Horrocks, 2009: 41). Corporate agency, in the illustrated example, might include the Deputy-Vice Chancellor Academic, the Director of Teaching and Learning and the teaching and learning development personnel (if they have influence over what gets funded by the TDG). The influential powers that corporate agents possess depend on how primary agents interact. Agents may be able to organise themselves in a manner that constrains or enables the achievement of goals pursued and driven by corporate agents. Primary agents influence the environments in which corporate agents advance their goals and corporate agents shape the contexts that primary agents operate in (Archer, 1995). Existing cultures and structures in a given setting thus also provide conditions in which agents may flourish or be restricted in the pursuit of their goals.

2.7. Analytical Dualism

Central to my study is the identification of the mechanisms enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success at South African universities. The identification of these mechanisms requires me to analyse the interaction of cultures, structures and agents in the utilisation of the TDG. Given that the parts and the people have independent emergent powers and are irreducible to one another, it is necessary for me to separately identify the role that each entity has played in the emergence of the TDG conceptions and utilisation. Although the roles or emergent properties of the three entities operate simultaneously, the separate analysis, or temporary separation of the entities for analytical purposes, is important so that the attributable emergent properties of the entities can be identified. This temporal separation of the entities for analytical purposes in a given open setting is termed analytical dualism (Archer, 1995;1996).

The MM framework provides a methodological approach through which the emergence of certain events can be investigated by separately analysing the interactions of structure and agency, and culture and agency in a given social setting. In the SR model the parts and their emergent properties are said to be dormant and their powers to exert causation are only activated by interaction with agents (Archer et al., 1998; Archer, 1995). The separation of entities allows the researcher to determine the generative contributions of each entity and allows for explanatory power as to how certain events and phenomena emerged. For example, analytical dualism allowed me to determine the role that the emergent powers of structures had in the TDG setting to result in the manner that the conceptions of the TDG have manifested. The same process was applied for culture and agency to determine the how the emergent powers of culture and agency contributed to how the use of the TDG has played out. The temporary separation of the entities also allowed me to study the connections and influences of the elements' relationships and enabled me to arrive at useful conclusions that can attribute certain observations to specific processes or relationships.

The separation of entities in the study avoids allocating generative/causal powers to one entity over the other, which can result in the 'erasure of distinctions that are analytically needed' (Porpora, 2013: 3). Archer terms this possible erasure of distinctions as

conflation. When structure is afforded power over agency this is known as downward conflation. In research that is guilty of downward conflation, all explanation for events and experiences is accorded to the constraints and enablements of structure alone as if people have no will or powers to affect their environments. On the other hand, upwards conflation accords all explanations to agency, as if people are able to determine their own paths in the world unfettered by structural and cultural constraints. Archer (1995; 1996) also critiques approaches such as Giddens's (1976) theory, which she says is guilty of central conflation whereby powers are accorded to both the people and the parts but with no ability to distinguish what power is exerted by which.

Given that my study is largely influenced by concerns for social justice and the need for equity in outputs, the identification of systematic factors that may contribute to the persistence of poor teaching outputs or ineffectiveness of interventions such as the TDG is important, as is an understanding of how agents might have drawn on the TDG process to fulfil their own projects. The understanding of what processes led to the emergence of the studied phenomenon of the TDG is the starting point in the attempt to understand what may contribute to the persisting bottlenecks such as poor teaching outputs.

2.8. Morphogenesis and Morphostasis in the MM Framework

The explanatory power of the MM framework lies in the manner in which 'the three elements [structure/culture/agency] emerge, interwine and redefine one another', in a given period of time and setting (Horrocks, 2009: 49). This interaction and what emerges from it is dependent on the emergent properties that the three elements possess, as these properties form constraints and opportunities for other entities (Jessop, 2005). The MM framework thus provides a structured way with defined or identified timelines through which the interactions of agents with the parts in given time cycles as defined by the problem can be studied. The framework provides a working map through which I interrogated these relevant emergent powers and which will be unsheathed from the identified interactions of the parts and agents.

2.8.1. Structural, Cultural and Socio-Cultural Conditioning

In keeping with the central tenet of analytical dualism, the morphogenetic approach starts by looking at a priori social context, which was created by previous agents in that society,

depicted as T1 in the diagram in Figure 4 below. T1 presents the antecedent circumstances, either structural or cultural or both, that present the conditioning mechanisms for current agents (Archer et al., 1998; Porpora, 2013). This is the focus of Chapter Four of this thesis. According to the morphogenetic framework, at T1 there are two sources of conditioning which are both structural and cultural (Porpora, 2013). As elaborated by Porpora, 'Structural motivations derive from the interests built into social positions, and cultural motivations derive from people's value commitments and ultimate concerns' (Porpora, 2013: 28). And according to Archer (1995; 1996), it is from the sources of these motivations that people are 'involuntarily' but non-deterministically conditioned at T1: we are born in families or environments which are not of our making (Archer et al., 1998; Horrocks, 2009). Chapters Five and Six then cover discussions on how these identified mechanisms enabled and constrained the conceptions of teaching development and use of the TDG over the period 2006 to 2016.

Based on this understanding, people always act within the constraints and enablements of the social structures and cultural circumstances which they face or are presented with and, given their allowable abilities, they are able to either maintain (sustain) or modify their circumstances or environment (Porpora, 2013). 'Allowable abilities' are affected by a lot of factors that come into play and that influence how agents react to the structured and shaped situations that they find themselves in (Horrocks, 2009). This may include life chances of their birth, capabilities accrued through education, and powers vested in their positions in society, amongst many other factors. Archer (1995) explains that agents mediate their path through the use of their reflexive powers or 'internal conversations' to pursue their projects as they negotiate their way through enablements and constraints presented by the structural and cultural conditioning. Through this process, structure and culture are altered, reshaped or sustained by human actions and these outcomes may happen simultaneously. Depending on the nature of interaction, some structures could be altered and some aspects of culture reproduced or vice versa, or both could be elaborated or reproduced.

People have reflexive powers, which means that 'conditioning is not a "law" or a "force" but a reason and that [agents] enjoy interpretative freedom in respect to this' (Horrocks, 2009: 41). Agents exercise their interpretative freedom in response to the directional

guidance that structural and cultural conditioning exert in a given setting, and interpretations, decisions and actions by agents are mainly influenced by vested interest and the opportunity costs that are brought into being (Horrocks, 2009).

To continue with the earlier example of the new lecturer, the lecturer enters an institution whose culture and structures are geared towards student interventions and where no support is provided for staff development. On entrance to the pre-existing social setting, known as T1, the new lecturer may not find his or her individual project of personal development being aligned to the context, and s/he may be frustrated with the lack of structural and cultural support for staff development in teaching and learning. According to Archer's (1995; 1996; 2007) theory, the institutional conditions that the new lecturer is confronted with at T1 may condition how s/he will interact with the given context in the environment at the given point in time. Being a primary agent, the new lecturer probably has little influence on the management of the TDG, though this too would depend on the institutional culture. If indeed, as a primary agent, the new lecturer is unable to simply bring about shifts in how the TDG is allocated, s/he has to make a decision whether to leave the institution, accept the status quo, or find some means to more gradually affect the structures and cultures in ways that might lead to achieving his or her personal project.

Figure 4: Illustration of a multi-dimensional cycle of change/reproduction for structure, culture and agency
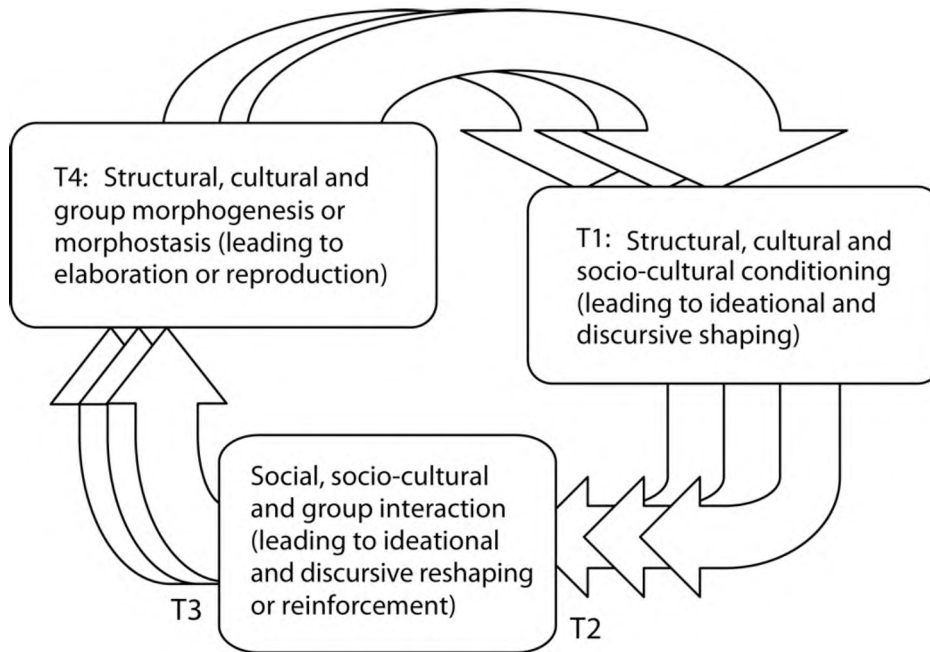
Source: Adapted from Horrocks (2009)

2.8.2. Social, Socio-Cultural and Group Interaction

According to Archer (2007), being a primary agent, and influenced by factors that mediate decisions and actions, the best bet for the lecturer in our example, to mediate his/her desired goals is to exercise his/her emergent powers and identify with a group of other lecturers and staff that hold similar views. The interaction of the lecturer with other agents is depicted as T2–T3 in the above diagram. Archer (2007) argues that as agents interact with the parts, they exercise their emergent powers to drive through or mediate their interests, projects and goals within the conditions presented by the existing structures and cultures. The emergent powers of the parts are said to be dormant and are activated by agential interaction; the CEPs and SEPs when activated thus present conditions that may frustrate or catalyse pursued goals by agents (Archer, 2007). As discussed above, the concept of analytical dualism dictates that the interactions of agents with other agents, with culture and with structure should be analysed separately, even though in reality the interplay is simultaneous, so as to allow for the study of emergent powers of each entity. The study of the interaction of the entities and how the emergent

powers are exercised gives sense to what is manifested in the Actual and Empirical realms.

The decision of the primary agent to interact with the parts and with other agents in the setting may result in the primary agents organising themselves in manners that constrain or enable the attainment of goals promoted by corporate agents depending on what they are mediating to achieve. As primary agents responding to their contexts they aggregately reconstitute the environment which corporate agency seeks to control, by unleashing a stream of aggregate environmental pressures and problems which may compromise the attainment of corporate agents' interests (Horrocks, 2009). Archer (1995; 1996) states that the reconstitution of the environment by primary agents is uncoordinated but its aggregate effect may present constraints or enablements for corporate agency. Thus, the influential powers that corporate agents possess depends on how primary agents interact or respond to the contexts that corporate agents have shaped for them (Horrocks, 2009). Given that the actions of primary agents are not as coordinated as those of corporate agents, and given that the powers of corporate agents may be constrained or enabled by primary agency, the ultimate aggregate outcome may not be what each had targeted. In the case of the lecturer example, s/he may be aiming for support funding to pursue her/his postgraduate degree; however, assuming that elaboration is achieved and there is a shift in the TDG funding to fund staff development, the supported staff development might not be in the form of funding for staff to acquire higher qualifications, but may be in the form of provision of informal courses such as workshops and short courses. For the corporate agents whose goal may have been the funding of tutorial programmes through the TDG, the outcome of T2–T3 interactions may result in a reduction of funding for tutorial programmes, and a decision may be made to scrap tutorials or to have to fund them from the institution's block grant.

2.8.3. Morphogenesis and Morphostasis

As illustrated above, the interactions of the agents and parts may thus result in the elaboration or reproduction of approaches to teaching development and the use of the TDG, depending on the relative emergent powers of the entities in the setting. The outcome of this interaction is presented as T4 in the above figure, and as explained above this outcome is dependent on the relative emergent powers of the agents and parts;

outcomes may thus not necessarily represent the individual goals of agents. T4 thus represents the elaboration of structure and culture and may also represent the transformation of primary agency. In my example, the empowering of primary agents by organising themselves into powerful groups of influence can be seen to have transformed them into corporate agents.

For the determination of whether elaboration or reproduction of the parts and agency has taken place, the three interrelated stages, conditioning/emergence–interplay/outcome, presented a need for separate analysis (as presented in Figure 5 below) depending on the phenomenon being researched and accompanying periodisation (Archer, 2007; Horrocks, 2009). In linking this statement to the new lecturer example, the determination of whether elaboration (implementation of staff development support by the TDG) has taken place or whether reproduction (no support for staff development, ongoing use on tutorials only) has taken place at T4, culture, structure and agency have to be separately analysed. As per the illustrated example, the aim of the researcher would be to determine if there have been any changes in the structure (TDG policy or use), culture (beliefs about teaching and learning development) and agency (transformation of primary agency into corporate agency), which in turn affects what emerges in the Actual (the funding, part funding or lack of funding for staff development) and Empirical (the experiences of staff as a result of funding or lack of funding).

Figure 5: The Morphogenesis/stasis of Structure, Culture and Agency

The Morphogenesis/stasis of Structure

Structural conditioning (leading to ideational and discursive shaping)

T1 ———————————▶

Social interaction

T2 —————▶ T3

Structural elaboration/reproduction

————————————▶ T4
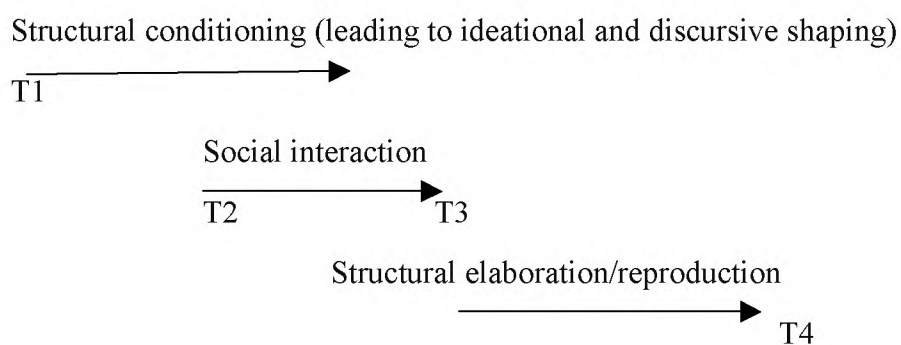
The Morphogenesis/stasis of Culture

Cultural conditioning
————————⟶
      T1

          Social–Cultural interaction
            ————————⟶
     T2   T3

              Cultural elaboration/reproduction
                ————————⟶
                      T4
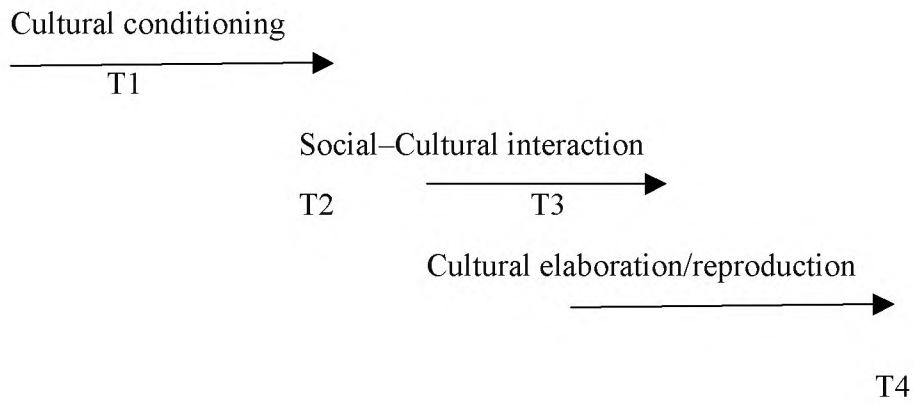
The Morphogenesis/stasis of Agency

Social–cultural conditioning of groups
      ————————⟶

     T1

          Group interaction
          ————————⟶

     T2   T3

             Group elaboration/reproduction
            ————————⟶

                  T4
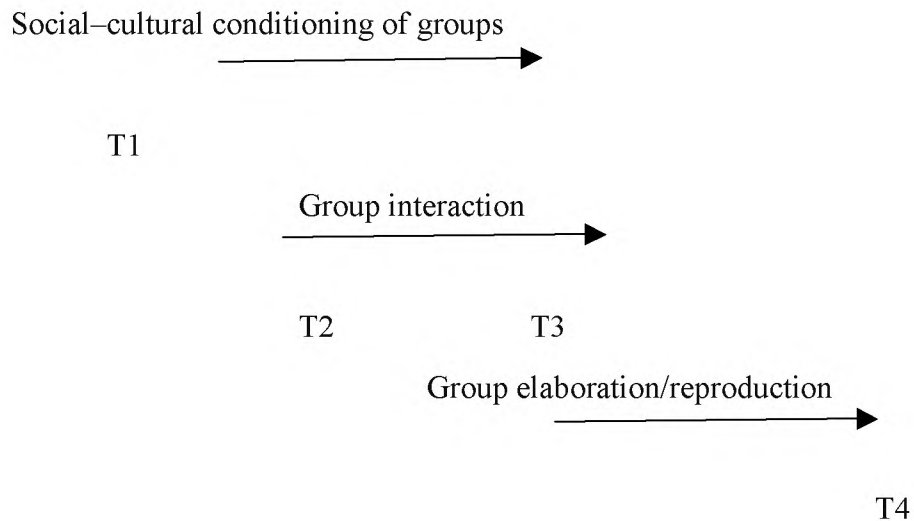
Source: Archer (1995; 1996)

Archer's SR (1995; 1996) thus provides a framework that can help researchers to arrange extracted data and explain how historical conditioning, change (elaboration) or lack of change (reproduction) occur. Archer (2007) explains that elaboration can occur if conditions in the given setting provide a platform for agents to pursue their goals. With reference to the illustrated example of the new lecturer, if the primary agents are able to collectively mobilise such that their voice is to be loud enough to be successful and if

structures such as the faculty TDG bidding and budget processes allow them to voice their opinion for the need of TDG staff support, this may empower them to transform into corporate agents that may in turn influence or become a powerful group in the implementation of the TDG in their environment. The primary agents may also flourish if the culture in the university, such as an inclusive management approach, allows junior and senior lecturing staff to make contributions through processes such as faculty meetings. Thus, in exercising their emergent powers, agents may take advantage of structural and cultural enabling conditions to pursue their goals. In such a case elaboration may occur at T4 whereby we would see the manifestation of the TDG supporting staff development. This elaboration would have been possible as the structures and cultures in the institution enabled the primary agents to flourish and pursue their desired goals. However, if the university, for example, has a culture of a bureaucratic centralised top-down approach to the management of the TDG, this in some cases could be enabling or constraining depending on the cultures and structures shaping corporate agency. Archer (1995) explains that the reproduction of environments may have been as a result of structural, cultural and agential emergent powers that constrained the new lecturer in the pursuit of his/her goals.

The interaction that took place at T2–T3 and what emerged from it at T4 is dependent on the emergent properties that the three elements possess as these properties form constraints and opportunities for other entities (Jessop, 2005). T4 thus represents morphostasis or morphogenesis, which then forms the conditioning factors at T1 in the next MM framework process that agents will face. T4 comprises of structural and cultural characteristics that will be responsible for conditioning 'new' agents or agents re-entering the given environment. It is thus the preconditioning or 'pre-structuring of actor's contexts (environments) and interests that shapes the pressures for transformation by some and for stable reproduction by others in the present (or given point in time)' (Archer, 1995: 152). The MM process of the three cycles is a continuous process. In all, Archer's MM framework allows the researcher to 'set out the conditions under which change or reproduction is likely to occur in social/structural/cultural contexts and produce an analytical history of this without having to resort to a deterministic approach' (Horrocks, 2009: 40).

2.9. Situational Logics in Mediating Agential Action

Archer (2007) further refines explanations of how morphogenesis and morphostasis are achieved by the interactions of the parts and agents. She states that the outcome of cyclical interactions and mediatory process in the MM framework can be explained by the concept of situational logics. The notion of situational logics is a method that Archer provides to explain how change or lack of change may take place as a result of agential actions shaped by presented conditions necessitating certain actions in different situations. Situational logics suggest the ways in which interactions of mechanisms result in morphogenesis or morphostasis. The situational conditions adopted from Luckett (2012) shown in Table 6 below present multiple mediatory actions that can be taken by agents given the structural and cultural properties in a given context. This tool provided by Archer (1995; 1996) is also used in my study as an explanatory tool that may have shaped agential action leading to various ways that led to the manifestation of the TDG conceptions.

Table 6: Possible Situational Logics in the Parts (Structure and Culture)

	Contradictions		Complementarities	
	Necessary	Contingent	Necessary	Contingent
Situational logic	correction	elimination	protection	opportunism

Source: Adopted from Luckett (2012)

Situational logics look at whether there is alignment between structures and cultures, in which case they are complementary, or whether there is a clash between them, in which case they are contradictory. These situational logics are in many ways just a heuristic because there is never only one structure or culture at play and so the 'logic' of their interplay is always far more complex than simply contradictory or complementary. The notion of situational logics also considers whether the structures and cultures are necessary, meaning that one cannot exist without the other, or whether they are contingent, meaning that they simply happen to co-exist. It should be noted that Archer distinguishes in terminology between situational logics related to structure and culture, but, following Luckett (2012), I have elected to use a more simplified version as per Table 6 to look at how the situational logics played out in the TDG data.

The likely consequence of particular situational logics should also be considered heuristic rather than deterministic (Archer 1995). Where there is a necessary contradiction between mechanisms, Archer suggests that there is likely to be correction – that is, something will have to change to address the contradiction. Where such contradiction is simply contingent, then the likely outcome is elimination, where some aspect will be brought to an end. Where there is a complementarity between mechanisms and such complementarity is necessary, then the likely outcome is protection, whereby there will be an attempt to sustain the status quo. Where the complementarity is contingent, then there is a situational logic of opportunism for agents to achieve their projects through various means.

None of these logics is absolute, and all are affected by myriad mechanisms at play at any moment. This is one of the major critiques of situational logics: that it reduces the complexities of the MM to a set of direct relationships which are often perceived to be deterministic (Cruickshank, 2003). I have borne this in mind in my 'light' application of these logics to the data. I have used these ideas as points of deliberation rather than as direct conclusions about what effects the mechanisms have on the conceptions and use of the TDG funds.

Thus, within the MM framework, Archer (1995) states that culture and structure provide directional guidance to agents. Existing structural and cultural properties and powers create directional pressures that direct different forms of strategic action and modes of interaction (Horrocks, 2009). In the example of the new lecturer, s/he faced a contradiction between his/her personal project and the ways in which the TDG was currently being used. The existing cultures and structures influenced the agent's action to that of challenging the status quo through collaboration with other agents with common goals. If the structures and culture of the institution included support for staff, the course of action that the parts would have influenced the agent/agency would have been that of reinforcing, protecting and reproducing the status quo.

The CEPs and SEPs act as mediatory mechanisms for agency that may result in different responses (as a result of causal powers that they both possess) depending on the situation.

Archer states that these mediatory mechanisms come about as effects 'of holding theory or beliefs which stand in particular logical relationships to other theory or beliefs' (1995: 230). The logical relationships to other beliefs and theories is also termed as relations of contradiction and complementarity by Archer (1995). The relations of contradiction and complementarity guide a certain course of action by agency. Archer (1995: 230) argues that 'these effects shape the context of cultural/structural action and in turn condition different patterns of ideational/structural development'.

2.10. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the CR philosophy of a layered ontology that is realist while accepting the relativist nature of epistemology. This philosophy serves as the study's underlabourer. It is not directly invoked in the methods used but rather provides the notions of reality and truth underpinning this study. Aligned to the CR philosophical underpinnings, the study draws on SR concepts that are instrumental in conducting the analysis of the extracted data to answer the research question of my study. In the following chapter, I present how I have applied Archer's SR theory and the concept of analytical dualism in the MM framework to the data in order to try to identify the mechanisms at play. I also provide an overview of the methodological decisions undertaken in the study.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Rudestam and Newton (2015) refer to methodology as the 'plan of enquiry', and argue that the word 'method' focuses on the procedure rather than on how a researcher thinks about the question. I attempt to avoid this dichotomy in this chapter by providing information on the methodological steps I have taken, while also considering how these relate to the philosophical underpinnings. Building on Bhaskar's (2008) and Archer's (1995; 1996) theories, presented in Chapter Two, this chapter shows how these theories have framed the study's approach to addressing the research question. Theories are premises to account for data or, put differently, they offer an explanation of how things work based on data (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). This chapter shows the steps of how I worked with the data to explain how the HE environment led to the emergence of the use of the TDG. As presented in Chapter Two, CR conceptualises social reality as stratified. In these social domains, the deepest and most abstract domain comprises mechanisms responsible for the emergence of our experiences and observations of events in the Actual and Empirical realms. This chapter thus focuses on how I attempted to move from an observation of the TDG documentation as a set of experiences and events to identify the responsible causal powers in that intransitive, abstract domain.

I thus start off the chapter by detailing how I went about accessing the data in the transitive world of what we readily see and know. Following these discussions, I further detail how I went about identifying the generative mechanisms in the intransitive realm responsible for what emerged in the TDG documentation. The identification of these generative mechanisms is key to my addressing the research question. This chapter also outlines the rationale for the methodology or plan of enquiry applied in this thesis. Other areas that are addressed in this chapter include an introduction to the research setting, a reflection on my positionality, and a consideration of constraints and enablements of the study. The chapter closes with a deliberation of the ethical considerations in the study.

3.2. The Research Question

Since its inception, the TDG has been implemented in a highly differentiated landscape where universities operate in different contexts shaped by different conditions. My study aimed to answer the question:

> What are the enabling and constraining factors in the use of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success by South African universities?

The notion of 'enabling and constraining factors' in the research question is drawn from the underlabouring depth ontology of CR, which posits that researchers are required to identify mechanisms at the level of the Real. Furthermore, the research question requires an interrogation of the introduction of the teaching development grant, an analysis of its use, a consideration of the notion of 'enhancement of teaching and student success', and a consideration of the context of 'South African universities'.

3.3. Research Sites

The study aimed at investigating how TDG practices have emerged at 23 public universities in the South African higher education system, listed in Table 7 below. There are, at the time of writing, actually 26 public universities in South Africa as three additional universities were established after 2014. These new universities have however not been included in the study as the focus of the analysis in this study is from 2003 to 2015; also, of these three new universities, only one receives the TDG as an earmarked grant, as it was delinked from an existing institution in 2015. The other two receive general operational funds from which T&L development is funded. Private higher education institutions were also not included in the study as they do not receive the TDG or indeed any form of government funding.

The decision to undertake a broad HE study as opposed to an in-depth study of just one or two universities is in part in response to the National Research Foundation's (NRF) concerns about the predominance of small-scale studies in education research (Deacon et al., 2009). This approach was also motivated by the lack of analytical study that has looked at the implementation of the TDG from a system-wide perspective. Given that over R5.5 billion has been spent on the TDG within a system that awards severely limited funding to the sector (DHET, 2013c; 2013d), there is a need for such scrutiny. The #feesmustfall movement, most explicitly evidenced by student protests of 2015 and 2016,

raised significant questions about State funding of higher education (Badat, 2016) and called for increases in funds alongside careful scrutiny of the use of existing funds (Calitz & Fourie, 2016). In this context, a broad study of the use of the TDG across the sector as a whole seemed appropriate.

Furthermore, the motivation for a wider sample in this study was based on the understanding that any research about a particular funding mechanism that only considers a few universities will undoubtedly not be able to take into account the complexities of the system as a whole, particularly those that exist in South Africa. The adoption of an in-depth case study approach, with a focus on only one or two universities, would have been in danger of suggesting shallow generalisations that would ignore the complexity and even apparent contradictions within the system as a whole. The South African HE landscape is fraught with difficulties and demonstrates a variety of experiences, which would have made generalisations hazardous (Morrow, 2008). A qualitative study should ensure that the data collected for the study is adequate and appropriate, and analogous to ensuring sufficient power by insisting that there should be an adequate number of subjects in a sample and that the chosen data purposefully meets the theoretical needs of the study (Morse, 1998).

This PhD study is part of a bigger project that considers differentiation in the South African HE sector. The project brings together six supervisors and seven PhD scholars, each of whom is looking at some aspect of higher education across the sector. The project is funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF Grant 87646). It is anticipated that the phenomenon of differentiation will be better understood through the collective studies that straddle the sector. Each PhD study interrogates a different issue across the sector, for example one is looking at the production of research, and another at the development of student writing and the issue of plagiarism, etc. By focusing on the use of the TDG across 23 universities, rather than honing in on one or two sites, my PhD contributes to the broader project aims of cumulatively making sense of differentiation in the sector.

Table 7: Universities Included in This Study

	Universities	Institutional Type	Restructured*
1.	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	University of Technology	Merged Institution
2.	Central University of Technology	University of Technology	HAI
3.	Durban University of Technology	University of Technology	Merged Institution
4.	Mangosuthu University of Technology	University of Technology	HDI
5.	Nelson Mandela University	Comprehensive University	HAI
6.	North West University	Traditional University	Merged/HAI
7.	Rhodes University	Traditional University	HAI
8.	Tshwane University of Technology	University of Technology	Merged Institution
9.	University of Cape Town	Traditional University	HAI
10.	University of Fort Hare	Traditional University	Incorporation/HDI
11.	University of Johannesburg	Comprehensive University	Merged Institution
12.	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Traditional University	Merged/HAI
13.	University of Limpopo	Traditional University	Merged/HDI
14.	University of Pretoria	Traditional University	Incorporation/HAI
15.	University of South Africa	Comprehensive University	Merged Institution
16.	University of Stellenbosch	Traditional University	HAI
17.	University of the Free State	Traditional University	Incorporation/HAI
18.	University of the Western Cape	Traditional University	Incorporation/HDI
19.	University of the Witwatersrand	Traditional University	HAI
20.	University of Venda	Comprehensive University	HDI
21.	University of Zululand	Comprehensive University	HDI
22.	Vaal University of Technology	University of Technology	HAI
23.	Walter Sisulu University	Comprehensive University	Merged/HDI

Table 7 above lists the 23 institutions that were included in this study. It indicates what type of institution each is: traditional university, comprehensive university or university of technology. These distinctions of institutional type are discussed in more depth in Chapter Four, as the existence of different institutional types is one of the conditioning structures in T1 into which the TDG was introduced. Table 7 also indicates whether each institution is considered to be an HAI, that is an Historically Advantaged Institution, or and HDI, that is an Historically Disadvantaged Institution. These terms indicate another form of differentiation, that of history. This form of differentiation is also discussed in Chapter Four, as the existence of different institutional histories is also a conditioning structure in T1 into which the TDG was introduced. Column 3 of Table 7 in some cases indicates 'merged' because the higher education sector was significantly restructured between 2004 and 2005 whereby a series of mergers reduced the number of public universities from 36 to 23. By virtue of such mergers, some institutions cannot be neatly categorised into historically advantaged or disadvantaged. This issue of institutional mergers is discussed in Chapter Four as well, as it also conditions the context into which the TDG was introduced.

In addition to the focus on these 23 universities, the DHET is also considered in the study. As explained earlier, this department had been known as the Department of Education (DoE). In 2009, the department was restructured and the restructuring included the dissolving of the old Department of Education and the creation of two new departments, namely the Department of Basic Education to deal with primary and secondary education and the DHET to deal with post-secondary education.

3.4. Data Collection

A qualitative study was undertaken as the most appropriate design for this study, given that the research focused on the social interactions of agents with structures and cultures in the use of the TDG as indicated in a range of documentation. The data sources for this study comprised all the TDG documentation from 2006 to 2015, which included annual progress reports and budget plans from each of the 23 universities. The annual progress reports are documents that universities have submitted throughout the implementation of the TDG to account on the use of the funds to the DHET. From 2006 to 2010 universities

submitted unaudited progress reports, and from 2010 to 2013 universities were required to submit externally-audited progress reports due to concerns by the DHET about the quality of the reports that some universities had been submitting. With regard to TDG budget plans, from 2006 to 2013 universities submitted two-year budget plans, and in 2013 three-year budget plans were submitted. In some years a number of universities did not submit progress reports and budget plans as they did not qualify for the grant. A total of 164 TDG budget plans and progress reports submitted by 23 universities were utilised as data in this study.

In addition to this, other documents that were analysed included TDG related documents, such as correspondence between DHET and universities, Ministerial Statements, various Ministerial Task Team Reports, TDG criteria and policy utilised over the years and the 2008 TDG Review Report. Table 8 below presents all documentation that was utilised. The decision to use TDG documentation as the source of data was motivated by the fact that the budget plans and annual progress reports provide rich detailed data as to both how the TDG was used and how the notion of teaching development was understood within the universities. The use of TDG annual documentation was also suited for the chosen analytical morphogenesis/stasis framework as it allowed me to track elaboration or reproduction of TDG approaches over time at specific universities and across the sector. There are of course a range of additional potential data sources such as interviews that I could have used to collect the data, however, given the already large data set provided by the documents, I determined to consider only documentation. In addition, given that the submitted TDG documentation is the only way that the DHET has evaluated and monitored the use of the TDG funds, my interest was to investigate how the documentation 'speaks' for an institution's plans and goals in regards to teaching development.

Table 8: Analysed Documentation

Budget Plans (Proposals) (2006 to 2015)
Annual Progress Reports (2006 to 2015)
2008 TDG Review Report
Ministerial Statements on Higher Education Funding (2003 to 2016)
DHET Annual TDG Overview Reports (2012 to 2015)
2012 Criteria for the Allocation of TDG
2013 TDG Policy Statement Workshop Version
2012 TDG Ministerial Statement
Higher Education Act 101 of 1997
1997 White Paper
2001 National Plan
Report of the Ministerial Committee for the Review of Funding 2013
Ministerial Statement UCDP 2017
UCDG Operating Procedures 2017
UCDG Plan Template 2017
Post School White Paper 2012
DHET Differentiation Policy Framework 2014
DHET TDG Internal Analysis 2012
Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation 1996
2011 Student Housing Report
Institutional submissions to the 2008 TDG Review
2016 Cohort Study Report
DHET University Annual Budget Reports (2010-2016)
Annual TDG payment letters

All the TDG documentation used in the study is not public documentation but is under the custodianship of the DHET. All documents were accessed with permission from the DHET, as is discussed in Section 3.8, Ethical Considerations, below. The TDG documentation was submitted by universities in different formats as there had been no specific template that the universities were required to use for the submission of the reports and plans, and in the early years of implementation there was an especially open set of requirements. I converted all documents into MS Word and PDF formats and renamed each file by year and university and type of document. The documents were then imported into Nvivo data management software for data organisation and coding. Nvivo is a software platform that is designed to assist in organising and analysing qualitative data.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

It is key that a qualitative study's data sources are reliable and verifiable for the findings of the given research to be credible and trustworthy and for the study to make a notable contribution to the field. All the institutional TDG data in the form of progress reports and budget plans had been through the relevant university's internal quality checks before they were submitted to the DHET. For the entire period of TDG implementation, all TDG documents had to be signed off by the accounting officers of the relevant university, such as the Chief Financial Officer, and by the Vice-Chancellor and/or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Documents that were submitted to the DHET without being signed off by the accounting officers were sent back to the university.

In addition to the aforementioned internal checks, given that the TDG were not university council controlled funds, the grant had to be earmarked for the purposes of accountability through reporting. As from 2011, an audit sampling methodology of not less than 60% of expenditure was required to be conducted by external auditors for all reports. In the attempt of reducing auditing costs incurred by universities a 100 % audit was not required by the DHET (DHET, 2011d). Universities were further required to adhere to the Standards on Auditing to ensure that a given university's use of the TDG funds was as per the approved budget plans. The selection of the 60% sample was independently undertaken by the auditors according to the standard auditing guidelines. The auditing by external auditors was thus a meticulous process that verified whether all transactions had

been conducted as per the given university's procedures and policies. The auditors also checked that what was captured in the progress reports was an accurate presentation of how the TDG had been carried out. In cases where irregularities were highlighted by the external auditors[12] or picked up by the DHET, universities were required to explain the irregularities.

With these internal and external system checks of TDG documentation, the data used from the TDG documentation captures a trusted and accurate presentation of the practices and experiences in the use of the TDG at universities. Given the reliability of the data and the rigorous application of the analytical framework, the findings and conclusions from this study are presented with a fair degree of confidence.

3.6. Data Analysis

As presented in Chapter Two, Archer's morphogenesis/stasis framework dictates that before a researcher begins to probe the mechanisms that are responsible for the emergence of an investigated phenomenon, the nature of the conditions shaping the investigated social environment need to be established. Thus, before I embarked on the actual analysis of the data, I identified the historical conditions responsible for shaping the South African higher education environment in 2003. Specifically, this involved the establishment of the research context, in particular the T&L environment prior to TDG implementation, which is presented in the next chapter.

These historical factors are the conditioning factors whose workings shaped the context in which the social–cultural interactions took place in the T&L environment at T2–T3. As discussed in Chapter Two, these conditioning factors are located at T1 in the morphogenesis/stasis framework. In my study T1 thus presents the antecedent cultural and structural circumstances that conditioned the potential for action by the agents that occupied the space in the study period (Archer et al., 1998; Porpora, 2013). As discussed in Chapter Two, Archer (1995) argues that the cultural and structural conditioning circumstances were shaped by agents from a historical period and the current agents are

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[12] Despite the DHET putting in strengthened measures for improved accountability, irregularities in the use of the funds persisted at some universities. Examples of these irregularities are explained in Chapter Five.

involuntarily presented with those conditioning factors shaping their decisions and mobility for action. At T1 these agents had no immediate power to change their conditions or contexts; it is in the second phase of the MM framework where agents exercise their reflexive powers to pursue their interests as they work around the cultures and structures in their environments which may either be constraining or enabling. The analysis on which the structuring conditions of T1 was undertaken entailed a consideration of the existing literature and policy documentation. By reviewing the available literature on higher education in South Africa, particularly that pertaining to institutional differentiation, funding of higher education, and the development of teaching, I was able in T1, Chapter Four, to outline the core enabling and constraining conditions into which the TDG was introduced.

In determining what constitutes an enablement, I turned to both international and local literature to ascertain which formal T&L interventions are likely to enhance teaching and learning (Boughey, 2012a; Boughey, 2013; D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005). Both international and local literature has provided critique of activities that are less likely to add any value to the enhancement of teaching and learning. For the purposes of this study it was important to identify interventions, activities and events that have the potential to add value to teaching and learning and why this is so, and which T&L activities are considered to be constraining (Boughey, 2012a).

In SR terms, a constrained T&L environment would be an environment with structural and cultural factors that lead to the emergence of events (in the realm of the Actual) that add little or no value to the enhancement of T&L. Thus, in a constrained environment, the TDG funds would be less likely to lead to the emergence of formal interventions that resulted in the enhancement of teaching and learning conducive for improved student success. Similarly, an enabled TDG environment would be an environment that has structural and cultural conditions which shape agential direction in ways that lead to the emergence of events and experiences likely to enhance teaching and learning.

The identification of conditioning factors at T1 is important as according to Archer (1995) it is these factors that conditioned whether the TDG environment was constrained or enabled from 2004 and that shaped the course of action of agents in the T&L

environment. These conditions set the context for TDG implementation at the various investigated sites. Archer (1995) explains that the parts are particularly enduring, and hence their conditioning powers require (collective) human will and capability exercised through reflexivity (PEP) to activate the CEPs and SEPs of the parts to either reconfigure or protect a given environment in line with agential interests, projects or goals.

Having established T1, the core conditions at play at the point of the introduction of the TDG, the analysis moves on to the T2–T3 period, where the TDG data is analysed. SR theory dictates that scientific enquiry should be premised around the understanding and meaning-making of social relations of agential interactions with the cultures and structures in a given social environment.

Within this framework, the first point of my enquiry entailed reading and re-reading the copious TDG documents, which included literature, grey documents and other related higher education documents as presented in Table 8. The second step was to observe what was presented by agents from universities as TDG experiences, activities and practices in the TDG budget plans and annual progress reports. The purpose of this process was to establish a broad understanding of how TDG use had emerged at universities.

I then began coding the data in Nvivo. At this initial stage I consciously avoided the imposition of the framing theory on the data. Coding is described by Rudestam and Newton (2015) as a process that consists of deconstructing the data by identifying and assigning labels to the concepts and constructs that overtly present in the data. The intention of this process was to establish whether the observed data was showing specific themes or patterns which could be linked to the problem statement. This first process thus involved the coding of the data into a broad set of nodes of what was emerging: examples of the nodes are presented in the table below. At this stage, I was engaged in 'soft eyes' analysis (Maton & Chen, 2015) of identifying nodes. Nodes can be understood as descriptions of topics or themes from the source material. Nodes can thus be used to gather related interconnected material in one place so as to identify emerging patterns and ideas. Nodes can further be used to collate evidence about the relationships between entities and subjects in a study.

Table 9: Broad Nodes

Name of Nodes	Description of Nodes
TDG Conceptions	Descriptions of TDG activities and utilisation
Approach	Descriptions of T&L interventions related to TDG use
Management	Descriptions of management activities, structures and processes
Other Uses	Descriptions of TDG uses different from other coded uses
Processes	Descriptions of processes in TDG implementation
Submitted by	Office, unit or agent submitting the reports and plans
Prepared by	Office, unit or agent preparing the report and plans
Teaching and Learning Office	Describing the existence and role of T&L units
Equipment and Infrastructure	Descriptions of TDG use on infrastructure and equipment
Lecturer or Academic Staff Support	Descriptions of support for academic staff
Other Staffing Support	Descriptions of support for staff other than teaching staff
Institutional Related Supports	Descriptions of support directed at institutional development
Student-Focused Initiatives	Descriptions of support for students
Other	Descriptions of other areas not fitting in the above nodes but seemingly relevant to the study or requiring further consideration for classification

The use of empirical evidence for answering research questions may be flawed as this is open to our human biases, interpretation and thought process, which weaken our ability to understand reality (Bhaskar, 2008). CR as the quest of scientific enquiry advocates for the de-coupling and disambiguating of ontology from epistemology, while making epistemology secondary to ontology, since knowledge of the world depends evidently on

the nature of the world (i.e. what the world is like in that domain) (Hedlund-de Witt, 2012).

As a researcher, I was also mindful of the epistemic fallacy of not answering ontological questions with epistemological questions, as the adopted theoretical framework demanded that I use a stratified depth ontology approach in answering my research questions. Besides, from the data extracted in the Empirical realm (what is experienced), there is an unseen (intransitive) world that is responsible for the way and manner that the data has been presented or emerged in the documentation (Actual and Empirical realms). The theoretical metatheory of CR thus required me as a researcher to go beyond the Empirical and the Actual and dig deeper in the Real realm to uncover the generative mechanisms at work (the intransitive). Thus this required me to use both the transitive and intransitive to answer the research question of my study. Since I did not have direct access to the intransitive realm, I employed the analytical and explanatory tools provided by Archer (1995; 1996) to understand the mechanisms at work in the Real domain.

In the second phase of data analysis, I thus began to more formally use the theoretical lens which framed the data coding process and guided the creation of more refined nodes which were aligned to the analytical framework. Examples of the nodes that were created as part of this data analysis process have been presented in the table below.

Table 10: Theory Aligned Nodes

Name of Nodes	Description of Nodes
Structure	Descriptions of structures as per CR theory
Culture	Descriptions of values and beliefs
Agency	Descriptions of actions or decisions by agents
Primary Agents	Agents whose actions generate aggregate effect in a setting
Corporate Agents	Agents with emergent powers to reconstitute a setting within which primary agents operate
Constraining Factors	Factors flagged as challenges to TDG use and/or T&L enhancement by universities
Enabling Factors	Factors that enabled implementation of T&L activities

In the process of creating such nodes I was conscious of the research question and the theoretical concepts of CR and SR of depth ontology framing the study. As framed by Bhaskar (2008) and Archer (1995; 1996), the diagram below presents a visual presentation of the process for accessing the Real realm with Archer's tools in the quest of investigating the mechanisms that shaped the decisions, experiences and practices by agents presented in the budget plans and annual progress reports.

Table 11: Application of CR and SR Analytical Framework

Empirical (Experiences & Observations)	The multiple, subjective ways in which the use of the grant is documented and experienced by universities. This includes the data on the universities' conceptions and experiences extracted from the TDG progress reports and proposals. An example of this could be the experiences by the lecturers, academic development practitioners, managers of the TDG and students involved in access to and use of the grant.
Actual (Events)	An event could be the sequence of activities by which universities deploy, get and utilise the TDG/ actual spending of the funds. These may include tutorials and workshops, purchasing of vehicles and use of funds on infrastructure.

Real (Relatively Unchanging Generative Mechanisms) – the workings of these mechanisms are responsible for the emergence of the events in the Actual realm. These structures have generative mechanisms that can be activated by agents or can remain dormant. Using Archer, I was interested in the SEPs, CEPs and PEPs from which the events at the level of the Actual and experiences at the level of the Empirical emerged.		
Structural Emergent Properties	Cultural Emergent Properties	Agential Emergent Properties

Adopted from Hedlund-de Witt (2012)

The process of identifying the causal mechanisms involved answering the question: what must the world be like in the Real domain for the phenomena in the Actual and Empirical realms to emerge and be experienced in the manner that they do? This process was achieved through retroduction, which is a method 'for finding the prerequisites or the basic conditions for the existence of the phenomenon studied' (Danermark et al., 2002: 12). Or, as expressed by Hedlund-de Witt (2012), this is a process of moving from a manifest phenomenon to an idea of a generative mechanism, which if it were real would account for the phenomenon in question. In this process, I thus took on what emerged and what I observed in the data and proposed hypothetical mechanisms that would have been responsible for generating the observed in the TDG budget plans and progress reports. Thus, Bhaskar's (2008) CR provided the appropriate methodology for uncovering new knowledge and understandings of the observed phenomenon by allowing me to confidently arrive at possible causal mechanisms as opposed to 'shallow' methodologies that focus on predictions and generalisations, and that are constructionist in nature (Bhaskar, 2008; Danermark et al., 2002).

The shaping of the environment by these factors is what shaped the degree of freedom by agents in implementing the TDG in ways that may have enabled or constrained the enhancement of T&L. Put differently, the way in which the identified conditioning factors shaped the HE education landscape at each university played a role in whether effective TDG implementation was enabled or constrained. Effective implementation of the TDG in this study meant the ways in which the TDG led to adequate gains in the form of the enhancement of T&L through the supported intervention programmes.

The process of excavating the Real realm, with the purpose of generating explanations of the workings of the mechanisms, was done using tools provided by Archer's (1995; 1996) SR theory because Bhaskar's (2008) CR theory does not provide comprehensive methodological tools to navigate the Real realm. The application of Archer's (1995; 1996) morphogenesis/stasis framework enabled me to access the intransitive realm. Using analytical dualism, I was able to single out the potential generative mechanisms that through their interaction may have shaped the T&L environment in ways that were constraining or enabling. In this manner, the role of each entity in the T&L environment

was identified, thus enabling me to explain how certain phenomena were elaborated or reproduced.

At the outset of data analysis, the concepts of concrete objects (parts and people) were likely to be superficial or chaotic, and thus in order to identify, understand and explain their diverse workings it was necessary for me to abstract them systematically within the morphogenesis/stasis framework (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Although the focus of the study was on how the whole T&L environment works, the singling out of the objects from their constituents was key as it enabled the characterisation of their attributes and their role in shaping the environment. Social objects are usually constituted by a combination of diverse elements or forces. Thus, the abstraction of the objects enabled the identification of their emergent properties that provided explanatory power of their contributions to what emerged in the TDG budget plans and progress reports.

In my quest to comprehensively answer the research question I did not only identify the factors that conditioned the HE environment, but I also went further to interrogate how these factors shaped interactions of agents with the cultures and structures at individual institutions and in HE as a whole. This process thus included examining how these factors evolved through the study period, by looking at whether agents reproduced or elaborated these factors or the environment. This process of the study is the analytical part of the study, also known as T2–T3, the analytical period that is discussed in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

3.7. Research Limitations

One of the restrictions in this study is related to my positionality: as I discussed in Section 1.4, I have worked for the DHET since 2008 administering the TDG. This in many ways privileged me with insights on the workings of the TDG and it drove my interest in the topic. My positionality also meant that data accessibility was a relatively easy process as the data was readily available and I was able to attain permission to use the data relatively easily as I was trusted to be able to do so with care. However, my positionality in the study may also have been a constraint in some ways as it may have given rise to potential biases given the personal exposure that I had to the data source and work. Inevitably, my involved history meant that I came to the study with a variety of assumptions and

understandings that could be contested (Trowler, 2011; 2012). It was thus important for me to remain conscious of my position as an insider and as a researcher when conducting the analysis and to be on my guard against potential personal biases that may have emerged from my experiences of working with the TDG. Chavez (2008) offers a practical device which I adopted and applied whereby an insider must consistently advocate for vigilant critical reflection on the effects of insiderness. In the process of writing the thesis, numerous narrations although truthful and key to the study had to be deleted if they appeared to be based on my personal knowledge rather than being substantiated by the data being used. The application of CR also helped to mediate between the two positions of DHET staff member and PhD researcher as the focus of CR methodology is on the intransitive, where the object of scientific enquiry is on the structures and mechanisms of the real which normally exist and act independently of people and their imposed biasness (Bhaskar, 1998).

Furthermore, another potential constraint with the study was the size of the selected sample, which was large as the study focused on 23 public universities. Although I have argued the rationale and justified the decision to investigate a large sample in Section 3.3, this wide scope of the subjects posed a risk of the study losing out on depth. It was this scope, for example, that largely made it impossible to include interviews and other forms of data.

Lastly, although I have also argued for the strengths that CR adds to qualitative studies and scientific enquiry processes in general, as discussed in Section 2.3, CR is open to a weakness in the form of judgemental rationality, in that there is no absolute account of reality; that in the CR investigation process we are adopting an account of reality that best explains the world until it can be refuted (Bhaskar, 2011). This process, although it may be done with appropriate tools to discriminate appropriate theories, is still based on human judgment and thus has the potential of being fallible (Danermark et al., 2002).

3.8. Ethical Considerations

In order to ensure that the rights and dignity of individuals, organisations and institutions are protected and respected, a researcher needs to ensure that ethics are observed throughout the study (Trowler, 2012). This process must not only include the bureaucratic

requirements pertaining to the acquisition of informed consent and ethical clearance and so on: it must also include a continuous reflection on the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the discussions and conclusions of the study do not bring harm or indignity to the research subjects.

With this understanding, ethical clearance was obtained from the Education Higher Degrees Committee of Rhodes University (see Appendix A). I then sought and obtained permission to utilise the TDG documentation from the DHET's senior management.

Identities of each university and individuals within each university have been concealed throughout the study to ensure respect for and dignity of the study subjects. At times this required some redaction of identifying details from data quotes. This also meant that at times some information simply could not be used as it would immediately identify the individuals or institutions. I had to weigh up the need for an extensive and thorough analysis of the use of the TDG against the need to ensure the study did not reveal any identities. Some conclusions are made on the basis of an institutional type, for example, but none are made in ways that reveal issues pertaining to one identifiable institution.

Transparency and honesty have been observed throughout the study. To ensure that I did not divert from what had been presented in the documentation, I have inserted quotes from the data to substantiate my claims about findings from the data. And where there had been alterations, which were for protecting the identity of individuals and institutions, this has been indicated in the thesis.

I have also ensured that the integrity of all people and institutions linked to the study in any way through the used documentation has been maintained. The motivation for this study also arose due to ethical concerns to attend to the improvement of the sector. Furthermore, all discussions of stakeholders and conclusions made in this study have been made with the aim of contributing ideas and knowledge to its improvements. This study and its findings are not an attempt to ridicule or judge individual institutions or people, but rather it is an evaluative study that focuses on how the system can effectively use the TDG lever to enhance T&L. A study that reflects on its use to date is an important

ethical contribution to the discussion, considering the investment of R5.5 billions of taxpayers' money into this grant.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methods of enquiry that have been applied in the study in the quest of explaining how T&L has been conceptualised and how TDG use has emerged at South African universities. The chapters that follow present the data analysis process or, put differently, cover the implementation of the morphogenesis/stasis analytical framework.

CHAPTER FOUR
T1 – STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL CONDITIONS

4.1. Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Two, events and experiences are understood in this study to emerge from the interplay of mechanisms at the level of the Real. To make sense of my data from the period 2003 to 2013, I began in the years preceding this, known as T1, where I reviewed the key structural and cultural conditions under which the Teaching Development Grant was introduced. This chapter focuses on the preconditioning mechanisms before I look at the data in subsequent chapters in order to examine how these mechanisms shaped the implementation of the TDG in either constraining or enabling ways. T1 was a complex time of change for the South African higher education system. While T1 is taken as 2003 in order to trace the conditions into which the TDG was introduced in 2004, it is difficult to paint a definitive picture of the sector at this time as it was in significant flux.

The differentiation of the higher education sector prior to 2003 was twofold. There was apartheid differentiation of both race and type whereby institutions were designated for certain groups of people and whereby they were distinguished as universities or technikons. The differences between these institutional types will be unpacked in the following paragraphs. Furthermore, these two forms of differentiation were both undergoing changes in an attempt to expunge our racist history. One of the methods used to redraw the higher education landscape was the introduction of three institutional types, traditional universities, universities of technology and comprehensive universities, in 2004 and 2005 (Ntshoe & De Villiers 2008). The other method of undoing the apartheid structures of HE was through a series of institutional mergers between 2002 and 2005. These shifts were all still in progress in T1, and thus are discussed to some extent in this chapter as a set of conditioning mechanisms, but they were also ongoing into T2–T3, the focus of subsequent chapters in this thesis.

4.2. The Power of Past Policies

At T1, 2003, the South African Higher Education (SAHE) system was differentiated in form, purpose and make up. The differentiated nature of the system translated into different environmental contexts that can be traced in this study to shape the emergence of teaching development interventions. Linked to this typology, institutions were also starkly differentiated according to their geographical location, culture, language of instruction and type of student bodies that the institutions enrolled as per their previous apartheid[13] structure categorisation (Bunting, 2002; CHE, 2017).

T1 was characterised by an inefficient, fragmented system differentiated along the lines of class and race, with stark differences between institutions. The system-wide differences in universities had implications for quality and standards, and student and staff experiences (Suransky & Van der Merve, 2014), and indeed, as will be shown in this study, for the TDG implementation processes. These differences emanated from how the South African higher education institutions were established, managed and funded under the ideology of separate development enacted through apartheid policy. Racial discrimination under British colonial rule and then under apartheid distributed the spoils of economic growth along racial lines, which laid the foundation for patterns of further development and privilege in a society stratified by race (Heleta, 2016). Under this discriminatory policy, the universities that were designated for the white population groups were relatively well funded in comparison to universities that were created for other population groups, that is African, Mixed-Race and Indian (Bunting, 2002). In the 1980s, the government of the day invested significantly more in institutions that catered for White people than those that catered for Black people, whereby for every 10 Rand that was spent on a white student, 1 Rand was spent on a Black student (Crouch, 2005).

Under apartheid, the institutions that were designated for the White population, which are now known as the Historically Advantaged Institutions (HAIs), were financed through the South African Post-Secondary Education (SAPSE) system. The institutions which were designated for the other races, which are now known as Historically Disadvantaged

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[13] Apartheid legislation through a series of laws institutionalised racial segregation and the dominance of white people over other races, which ensured the emergence of a hierarchy of social and financial privilege along lines of racial category.

Institutions (HDIs), were funded in accordance with the Extension of University Act of 1959 (Subotzky, 2003: 549). However, with the demise of the apartheid state, from 1994 all institutions were funded under one SAPSE system.

Provisions for a restructured funding framework were provided for in policy in 2003, but the implementation of the framework was only initiated in 2004. Thus, at T1 in 2003, the system was under the old SAPSE subsidy system which was implemented from 1983 to 2003. By 2003, 10 years after apartheid's eradication, there had not been any national interventions in the form of funding to correct structural inequities (DoE, 2001; Boughey & Bozalek, 2012). The introduction of a performance-based funding framework is discussed in Chapter Six as it was implemented in 2004. Under this funding framework, the state subsidised performance at universities according to certain components, including student throughput rates, level of study, enrolment in the natural and human sciences, research outputs in the form of published articles in accredited journals and completed master's and doctoral degrees (Ntshoe & De Villiers, 2008). While this new framework was meant to address structural deficiencies of the old SAPSE framework, it has been critiqued for system distortions and for perpetuating apartheid-based inequities and ignoring institutional contexts (Quinn, 2012; McKenna & Boughey, 2014; CHE, 2016).

In addition to the funding differentiation under apartheid, institutions were also differentiated through the distribution of and access to operational resources and physical capital (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012; McKenna & Boughey, 2014; CHE, 2016). The material-based differentiation of institutions at T1 will be shown to have had a conditioning effect on the implementation of teaching development interventions and so I move now to a brief discussion of this. As discussed in Chapter Two, Archer (1995) explains that structure is made up of material resources, such as wealth, and systems of interaction and expertise that condition human behaviour and relations.

The material-based differentiation in the sector marked continuing levels of inequality for students and differences in the quality of education within the sector, with some institutions focused on investments and increasing institutional infrastructure where others were barely breaking even and were battling to stay afloat (CHE, 2016; Boughey,

2010; McKenna & Boughey, 2014). The persistence of apartheid legacies was so deeply entrenched in the higher education structures that they were evidenced in matters as diverse as management styles, socioeconomic class and race of staff and students, and purpose of institutions. These characteristics very much defined the higher education system at T1 almost a decade after apartheid was dismantled (Bunting, 2002; Morrow, 2008; CHE, 2017). These constraints at T1 had enduring conditioning effects on the emergence of teaching development activities. This resulted in experiences of teaching and learning in the Actual and Empirical being severely constrained at sites that were characterised by extreme material inequities discussed in detail in section 4.2.1. These norms at T1 all have implications for the events that followed.

Furthermore, a key feature at T1 was that higher education institutions were in a differentiated landscape of an urban and rural divide between HAIs' and HDIs' campuses [14] (Carolissen & Bozalek, 2016; McKenna & Boughey, 2014). This geographical division had implications for how teaching development occurred at T1 (Ndebele, Muhuro, & Nkonki 2017). Rural universities that were established in formal 'homelands', which were under-developed, impoverished rural areas with little economic infrastructure (McKenna & Boughey, 2014), struggled to attract and retain staff, and this instability in staffing further constrained the possibilities for staff development efforts. Ndebele et al. (2017) further argue that rural institutions[15] typically had higher workloads that severely constrained the time staff could spend on staff development.

The attracting of top talent at institutions is key in the reputation and sustainability of the academic enterprises because structures such as resourceful alumni and networking have the potential to strengthen a university's operational standing. Structural constraints, such as low morale of staff (McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Ndebele, 2016) and an instrumentalist ideological underpinning (Bunting, 2002) provided constraints for many universities at T1 and conditioned the implementation of the TDG, as will be shown in subsequent chapters.

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[14] After the refiguration of the SAHE landscape, there are two exceptions to this 'HAIs are urban and HDIs are rural' divide. The University of Western Cape is urban and enjoys the best throughput and retention rates and best research output of all HDIs and Rhodes University, while an HAI, is rurally based.

[15] Their definition of rural institutions excluded Rhodes University, the HAI that is rurally based.

At T1 institutions were categorised into ten HAIs, consisting of English and Afrikaans medium universities, and eight HDIs linked to the development of Bantustans[16] and two urban universities for Indian and Mixed-Race communities (Ntshoe & De Villiers, 2008; Helata, 2016). While the designation of institutions for particular race groups was scrapped in 1994, demographic changes came much quicker in some institutions than in others, to the extent that 'some institutions remain largely homogenous in terms of race of their student body, with poorer students continuing to attend HDIs' (CHE, 2016: 154). Under the apartheid system, Black students were almost exclusively enrolled at HDIs and did not have a wide choice of where to study. Under this system these students did not have access to the same high quality of education as their White counterparts (Bunting, 2002; Ntshoe and De Villiers, 2008). The quality of education at HDIs was generally 'low quality, partly intrinsically so, and partly because the educational deficits of the students – almost always from township and homeland schools – made it difficult for them to engage with what was on offer' (Morrow, 2008: 265). For HDIs, their role was to basically produce graduates that would work in the apartheid administration system of the homelands (Bunting, 2002).

Apartheid government policy had determined when and what students should study at HDIs (Bunting, 2002; Ntshoe and De Villiers, 2008). African students were largely excluded from studying medicine and engineering (Ntshoe & De Villiers, 2008); only the formal Medical University of South Africa produced medical doctors, who were expected to attend to the medical needs of the Black population. HDIs did not produce engineers, veterinary surgeons, architects, or accountants as these and other professional programmes were not offered to their students:

> This illustrates the lasting impact of the apartheid vision of a black
> population organised in hierarchical rural societies, requiring the services

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[16] Bantustans were rural areas created by the apartheid state to accommodate Blacks who lived in those areas, those who originated from those areas but worked in the cities of 'White South Africa', and those that were forcibly removed to these Bantustans from various places. According to South African policy, these were semi-independent 'homelands' but such independence was never recognised by the international community.

of administrators and of the caring professions and sending labour to the major urban centres, but excluding black people from the commanding heights of South Africa's modern economy (Morrow, 2008: 268).

These universities were aimed at suppressing Black intellectuals by developing citizens who would serve society in the limited ways deemed appropriate for them, and were thus generally not institutions of choice for either staff or students and, in many ways, this limited these universities' potential of attracting and retaining the best talent in the country, further compromising the academic enterprises at these universities. McKenna and Boughey (2014: 2) argue that 'institutions established in rural "homelands" or on the fringes of urban settlements with minimal resources, continued to be the only option available to many black students for whom higher education offers a route out of poverty'. Thus, at T1 the distinction between prestige HAIs and the HDIs was stark.

These institutions also had very little autonomy in terms of how they spent their funds. They were allocated an annual budget and expected to spend it within the year. They were prevented from accruing any funds through investments and so on. This led to a 'use it or lose it' mentality that saw the bulk of funds being spent in a rush towards the end of the academic year to prevent the money having to be returned (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). This resulted in the nurturing of particular institutional cultures and in the lack of strong institutional financial management structures, both of which conditioned the implementation of the TDG.

At T1, the shape of the HE landscape was still representative of the apartheid plan and ideals in its curriculum, its management structures, its staffing, and its student bodies (Carolissen & Bozalek, 2016; McKenna & Boughey, 2014). Table 12 below presents the shape of student and staffing at South African institutions at T1, reflective of the apartheid design of a differentiated higher education system based on race. Student numbers in Table 4.1 show that at T1 some universities still largely served only certain racial groups as per the apartheid design. For example, in 2003 HDIs continued to largely cater only for African students, Mixed-Race students and students of Indian descent. The majority of the HAIs, on the other hand, show universities that had diverse student

bodies, apart from the historically Afrikaans universities that largely served white students as per their apartheid design (Morrow, 2008).

With regard to the number of staff employed in the system, Table 12 below shows that the distribution of staff employed in the sector at T1 was racially skewed, with Whites making up a bulk of the employment in academia in HE, and was not representative of the country's demographics. In addition to this Table 12 shows that the demographic staff compositions were representative of the apartheid design, with HAIs mainly employing White staff. White staff in HDIs had under apartheid mainly been employed from Afrikaans universities (Bunting, 2002; Morrow, 2008).

Table 12: Staff and student compositions at each University in 2003

Institution Name*	Full Time Equivalent Enrolments (%)				Number of Staff Employed (%)			
	White	Indians	Coloured	African	White	Indian	Coloured	African
Cape Peninsula University of Technology	3,7%	0,8%	22,3%	3,6%	3,4%	1,5%	26,1%	0,9%
Central University of Technology,	1,2%	0,1%	1,2%	2,0%	1,5%	0,1%	0,7%	1,3%
Durban University of Technology	1,0%	10,8%	1,0%	4,8%	2,2%	17,7%	1,1%	2,6%
Mangosuthu University of Technology	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,7%	0,3%	2,0%	0,3%	2,5%
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	3,5%	1,0%	6,1%	2,4%	4,8%	1,5%	4,6%	1,4%
North West University	7,0%	0,6%	2,2%	3,6%	5,5%	1,1%	1,5%	5,3%
Rhodes University	2,0%	0,9%	0,7%	0,5%	2,6%	0,6%	0,9%	0,8%
Sol Plaatje University, Northern Cape	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Tshwane University of Technology	4,3%	0,7%	1,1%	13,0%	5,6%	2,4%	1,3%	8,7%
University of Cape Town	6,2%	3,2%	8,4%	1,3%	6,4%	2,8%	9,0%	1,7%
University of Fort Hare	0,0%	0,0%	0,1%	1,5%	0,9%	0,6%	0,7%	3,8%
University of Johannesburg	9,2%	5,3%	2,9%	5,4%	6,9%	4,5%	3,0%	5,1%
University of KwaZulu-Natal	3,5%	32,0%	2,4%	4,5%	6,8%	36,0%	4,1%	6,8%
University of Limpopo	0,1%	0,6%	0,1%	4,6%	2,2%	4,9%	1,3%	13,9%
University of Mpumalanga	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
University of Pretoria	15,0%	3,6%	1,3%	2,8%	13,9%	3,5%	3,2%	3,9%
University of South Africa	22,6%	26,8%	18,9%	20,8%	10,0%	4,1%	3,8%	7,6%
University of Stellenbosch	10,0%	0,9%	7,1%	0,4%	7,0%	0,6%	8,2%	0,5%
University of the Free State	5,0%	0,5%	2,3%	3,1%	5,1%	0,2%	0,8%	2,4%
University of Venda	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	3,0%	0,3%	0,7%	0,0%	6,5%
University of Western Cape	0,1%	2,9%	19,2%	1,6%	2,0%	2,5%	24,6%	2,0%
University of Witwatersrand	4,9%	8,9%	1,6%	3,5%	8,7%	7,4%	2,9%	5,7%
University of Zululand	0,1%	0,2%	0,1%	3,1%	0,8%	1,1%	0,3%	3,4%
Vaal University of Technology	0,6%	0,1%	0,6%	4,4%	2,1%	1,4%	0,5%	2,5%
Walter Sisulu University	0,0%	0,3%	0,2%	7,5%	0,9%	2,8%	1,2%	10,7%
Grand Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

*Although the merger process was finalised in 2005, for referencing purposes, some HEMIS data tables, such as the one presented above, use post-merger institutional names. For this reason, it includes the two new universities, Sol Plaatje University and University of Mpumalanga, which did not exist at this time.
Source: DoE HEMIS (2004)

The employment of African staff at HDIs, as shown in Table 12, was a reasonably recent shift that emerged in the early 1990s. In essence, at T1, race remained a differentiating factor of South African universities whereby the academic workforce was predominantly

made up of White males. Despite policy stipulations on transformation (DoE, 2001), there had been no formal interventions put in place to address these disparities. The structural disparities that preserved the apartheid-imposed inequities and differences shaped the environment and conditions under which teaching development work was implemented at T2–T3. Of significance is that the environment within which the teaching development grant was implemented was still reflective of the past with regard to who participated in HE and who it served.

The above discussion on the racial differentiation of universities at T1 draws on two different sets of terminology widely in use, both of which are problematic. In some of the literature, the distinction is termed 'Historically Advantaged' versus 'Historically Disadvantaged', while in other literature the distinction is termed 'Historically White' versus 'Historically Black'. The entire apartheid system was based on ensuring that advantage and disadvantage were accorded directly along racial lines so the distinction in terminology can generally be considered to be insignificant. However, in both cases the word 'historically' assumes that the matter is resolved and that differentiations of advantage and/or race are a matter of the past. However, at T1, these distinctions were very much still in evidence, and later chapters in this thesis raise questions about whether the word 'historically' is appropriate right up until T4, in 2017.

The patterns of advantage and disadvantage (between HDIs and HAIs), however, were not simply historical: they continued to condition the capacities of institutions to achieve excellence, to provide high quality learning and research experiences and equity of opportunity, and to contribute to economic and social development at T1 (Badat, 2007). In the early 1990s, after the release from apartheid control and structuring and moving towards 2003 at T1, most HDIs 'went through a period of extreme financial instability and crisis, often with inexperienced and poorly managed administrative staff unable to keep the institutions on an even keel' (Morrow, 2008:272). At the same time, the perhaps naïve ambitions of the universities to become important intellectual centres grew. Large overdrafts accumulated, and institutions, 'lurched from crisis to crisis, most eventually becoming insolvent' (Morrow, 2008: 272). This status of HDIs represented the constrained environment within which the TDG was expected to flourish and yield results.

4.3. Limited and Skewed Distribution of Staffing Expertise

Institutions that were well resourced were in a much better position to effectively deliver and establish their academic project, because one of the prerequisites for the sustainable offering of academic programmes is resourcing to cover all necessary operational costs. A central operational cost is staffing and years of uneven funding had huge effects on the sector in this regard. At T1 the distribution of expertise was thus thinly and unevenly distributed in the sector, with some universities having a poor distribution in comparison to their counterparts, and this had the potential of impacting on teaching development programmes (Bunting, 2002; Boughey, 2010; Quinn, 2012; Luckett, 2012). At T1, institutional differentiation included the qualifications of academic staff and the ability of institutions to manage and govern the academic enterprise within their institutions. Of relevance to this study is that at T1, the historical control of institutions in areas such as curriculum development and autonomy in financial management shaped the uneven distribution of expertise in these professions across the sector:

> It must also be recognised that access to educational expertise and resources in South Africa is highly uneven across institutions, because of historical inequalities, and to some extent across disciplines, because of different traditions of educational involvement. In fair measure, this unevenness derives from the historical approaches to academic development[17] in higher education. (DoE, 2008)

The geographical location of some of the institutions, compounded with poor resourcing that translated into poor salaries and working conditions for staff, also often meant that staff turnover was rife at institutions bearing the brunt of inequalities.

4.4. Binary Differentiation

Alongside the differentiation of race in the apartheid higher education landscape, at T1 the South African higher education system was also divided into a binary system of

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[17] Teaching development is a component of academic development, which is discussed in detail in Section 4.12.2.

technikons and traditional universities (CHE, 2016). Technikons were institutions focused on vocational programmes, and they offered diplomas rather than the formative and professional degrees offered at universities (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). The distinction of technikons and universities was also based on the apartheid thinking that as different races had different intrinsic characteristics, purposes, ability and properties which distinguished them entirely, so did institutions (Bunting, 2002). Under this ideology, universities were designated to focus on science and the development of new knowledge while technikons were to focus on technology and the application of knowledge (Bunting, 2002). Knowledge is indeed differentiated (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Maton, 2007), and there are strong arguments in favour of having different types of universities focused on developing curricula that pay particular attention to such differences (Shay, 2012; Winberg, 2005; Singh, 2008). However, it needs to be noted that this binary divide of institutional types was never tied to the kinds of arguments underpinning calls for differentiation (Singh, 2008), such as the need for broad access or for the development of both industry- and discipline-specific curricula. The purpose of the binary divide in apartheid South Africa was rather to promote societal hierarchies (Bunting, 2002). Furthermore, the differences were not simply in terms of the types of qualifications offered, but extended into the ways in which different institutions were managed and the extent to which the state had power to intervene in its practices.

While both institutional types were differentiated into racial categories and had their academic freedoms constrained by the apartheid state, such constraints were far more explicitly experienced by the technikons (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). Technikons were expected to offer a national qualification which was centrally designed within the convenorship system and for which the syllabus structure, content and key texts were approved centrally (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012; Powell & McKenna 2008). While all technikons offering that particular diploma were able to offer some input into these national diploma curriculum documents, they could not design their own curricula and were thus not in a position to develop general curriculum expertise.

Since 1988 technikons were also subject to centralised quality assurance through the Certification Council for Education/ Sertifiseringsraad vir Technikononderwys (SERTEC) system at a time when universities undertook their own internal individual

quality assurance (CHE, 2000). This was another mechanism whereby the state could ensure fairly tight control over the teaching and learning processes in the technikon sector. Finally, technikons did not offer postgraduate studies and their academics were not expected to have higher-level qualifications or to do research. The basis on which technikon staff were hired was primarily related to their industry experience, and teaching was focused on the development of industry skills (Gumbi, 2017).

This apartheid-based structure thus had implications for the development of T&L in the system. These implications were felt long after the restructuring of the system as these past identities of institutions were embedded in the structures and cultures of the 'new universities' (Gumbi, 2017). Like HDIs, technikons were largely centrally controlled with the then government determining what would be taught at these institutions, whereas the HAIs had a fair amount of autonomy over their curricula. This has served as a conditioning mechanism on the identities of technikons and has had effects on the distribution of personnel with expertise in areas such as curriculum development and T&L development at these universities (Kraak, 2004).

Both the differentiations of race and the differentiations of the binary technikon–university divide are major conditioning mechanisms in existence at T1. Differentiation itself is often a lauded and important feature in the higher education landscape in that it allows for multiple entry points into higher education, it allows for articulation between pathways, and it ensures that the sector as a whole can attend to a nation's needs (Singh, 2008), but at T1, the two forms of differentiation in South Africa were ideologically problematic and had led to an uneven and disparate sector.

4.5. Overall Implications of Apartheid Differentiation

The role and impact of the historical inequities in expertise distribution at institutions cannot be overestimated and have been widely raised in literature as a major conditioning factor (Quinn, 2012) Capacity constraints as a result of apartheid-generated inequities at T1 were not limited to teaching development expertise only, but also manifested in a wide range of areas such as financial management, institutional planning and human resource management expertise. Capacity in these fields which are key to the healthy management, functioning and sustainability of the academic enterprise were also thinly and unevenly

distributed across the system, with some universities being better capacitated than others (Bunting, 2002; McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Leibowitz, 2014).

In addition to this, the 2013 Ministerial Committee on the Funding Review singled out some institutions as being 'plagued by governance and management challenges, under-resourcing and unacceptable high levels of inefficiency' (DHET, 2013c: 7). Bunting (2002) explained that at the fall of apartheid, a lot of experienced administrators left these universities and most of these institutions become the sites of chronic student protests, management inefficiencies and corruption, and administrative bottlenecks. This further weakened management and governance structures at the affected universities. In the post-apartheid era, the balance of power shifted to some extent from university management to student leaders and unions, which left some of these universities with weak administration and management structures and cultures in their academic affairs (Bunting, 2002; Leibowitz, 2014; Leibowitz et al., 2014).

The status of capacity of universities at T1 had conditioning implications for the management and administration of and accountability for project funds, such as the TDG, thus having the potential to constrain or enable the rolling out of T&L interventions. Based on the biased apartheid support that universities received, some institutions were able to establish capacity over the years to manage funds as they had been allowed to manage and invest unused state allocated funds for decades (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012), whereas other institutions such as HDIs were tightly managed and had no freedom in managing and investing unused funds as at the end of each financial year these funds had to be returned to the state (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). This limited these institutions' autonomy and limited their ability to develop strong financial management structures.

4.6. Policies to Transform the Higher Education Landscape

In the interest of social justice, the status quo of a fragmented and untransformed HE system in South Africa at T1 could not continue and there had to be a shift towards a unified, fair, equal and efficient system (DoE, 2008b; Heleta, 2016; CHE, 2016). The TDG was thus implemented in a sector which was under immense pressure to transform

and which also faced resistance to change by strong agents that had found it in their interest to maintain the status quo (Heleta, 2016; Luckett, 2012).

One of the transformation goals of the 2001 National Plan was to widen access into higher education. The attempt to widen SAHE access after the 1994 political transition was met by increased enrolments which saw the student body almost doubled by T1 in 2003. The 2001 National Plan also cautioned that the HE system had grown more rapidly than the available resources permitted (DoE, 2001). Between 2000 and 2003, student enrolment growth exceeded the provision in terms of Rands of government subsidy allocations to the higher education system (DoE, 2005). The numbers of disadvantaged students in the HE system increased over this period at a higher rate than those of students from advantaged backgrounds. This has important implications for the kinds of teaching required, the need for physical resources and the need to keep class sizes at a reasonable level. Given the financial constraints, none of these implications were attended to by the system.

The provision of academic staff grew at less than one third of the rate of the increase in student enrolments (DoE, 2005: 10). A large part of this growth also took place in the HAIs, which began to serve more diverse student bodies: this posed new challenges for teaching development work for universities to respond to new challenges and roles in responding to macro goals such us equity in access and success, as is usually the case when a higher education sector starts to serve a wider socioeconomic profile (Trow, 1973). Despite the system's increase in enrolments, there were no significant infrastructure expansions of laboratories, classrooms and accommodation or interventions that attempted to address apartheid-induced backlogs. This severe demand for infrastructure and personnel led to severe pressure on the system's ability to discharge its academic mandate.

4.7. Mergers and the New Institutional Types

Although the need for change was clear and had been articulated by policy such as the 2001 National Plan, some sites were not readily equipped for change, given the constraining cultures and structures of the fragmented nature of HE. The problems and weaknesses of the higher education system thus required intervention as these could not

be overcome by the institutions themselves (Hall et al., 2004). The CHE therefore recommended that a more interventionist attitude by the Ministry was required to restructure the higher education system (Hall et al., 2004). This required a political will at system level that had not been forthcoming at the institutional level. A state-led restructuring process was signalled and stipulated in the 2001 National Plan, which included mergers, incorporations and closures of HE institutions.

The National Plan indicated that the number of public higher education institutions would be restructured through the merger process from thirty-six to twenty-three, whereby eleven institutions would be traditional universities and six would be universities of technology (formerly technikons), and there would also be six comprehensive universities (CHE, 2004a; Arnolds et al., 2013). The table below presents a summarised presentation of the restructured institutions.

Table 13: Institutional Restructuring[18]

Mergers		
New institutional Name	**Previous institutions**	**Date of merger**
Durban University of Technology	Natal Technikon and M. L. Sultan Technikon	2002
University of KwaZulu-Natal	The University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville	2004
North West University	The Potchefstroom University of Christian Higher Education and the University of the North West	2004
University of South Africa	Technikon South Africa and the University of South Africa	2004
Tshwane University of Technology	Technikon Northern Gauteng, Technikon North-West and Technikon Pretoria	2004
Cape Peninsula University of Technology	Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon	2005
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (Further changed to Nelson Mandela University in 2017)	University of Port Elizabeth and Port Elizabeth Technikon	2005
University of Johannesburg	Rand Afrikaans University and Technikon Witwatersrand	2005
University of Limpopo (In 2015 the former Medical University of South Africa was demerged from the University of Limpopo resulting in the creation of a new university called Sefako Makgatho University)	University of the North and the Medical University of Southern Africa	2005
Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science	University of Transkei, the Border Technikon and the Eastern Cape Technikon	2005

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[18] Other notable structural changes in the landscape of universities included the incorporation of universities and technikons from the former TBVC States (four of the previous South African Bantustans – Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) into the RSA university system in 1995, the amalgamation of the Veterinary Science Faculties of the University of Pretoria and Medunsa in 1998 and the establishment of two National Institutes for Higher Education in Mpumalanga and the Northern Province in 2006.

Incorporations	
Incorporation of the East London Campus of Rhodes University with the University of Fort Hare	2004
Incorporation of the School of Dentistry of the University of Stellenbosch with the University of the Western Cape	2004
Incorporation of the Port Elizabeth Campus of Vista University with the University of Port Elizabeth	2004
Incorporation of the East Rand and Soweto Campuses of Vista University with the Rand Afrikaans University	2004
Incorporation of the Sebokeng Campus of Vista with the North-West University	2004
Incorporation of the Mamelodi Campus of Vista with the University of Pretoria	2004
Incorporation of the Bloemfontein Campus of Vista University with the University of the Free State	2004
Incorporation of the Welkom Campus of Vista University with the Technikon Free State	2004
Incorporation of the Mamelodi Campus of Vista with the University of Pretoria	2004
Incorporation of the Uniqwa with the University of the Free State	2004

Source: DoE and DHET External Reports (2010-2016)

The policy on restructuring and mergers in the White Paper was mainly informed by the notion that higher education should be planned, governed and funded as a single national co-ordinated system (Hall et al., 2004; CHE, 2016). In cases where a historically advantaged campus was merged with a historically disadvantaged campus, the aim was to dilute the inequities, whereby resources such as infrastructure, expertise and other capital would then be 'equally' distributed to areas that were insufficiently resourced, and to

improve efficiencies through cost reductions and financial prudence (Arnolds et al., 2013, CHE, 2017).

Although the merger process was aimed at streamlining the HE system, it was accompanied by a number of structural challenges which had to do with institutional cultural and structural adjustments. These can be seen to later condition the implementation of teaching development initiatives under the Teaching Development Grant. The restructuring of institutions was accompanied by changes in management and operational systems, change in institutional mandates and the addition of sites that were often both geographically and culturally apart. The merger process faced strong resistance from some stakeholders as it unsettled academic identities and it drew together very different institutions and rearranged disciplinary and programme configurations (CHE, 2017). The restructuring bred a lot of anxiety, unhappiness and resistance from many staff (Arnolds et al., 2013; CHE, 2016). This conditioning of the sector at T1 thus created a volatile environment within which teaching development work had to be undertaken.

There were a lot of changes in the form of disruptions in the cultures and structures of the affected sites and these had major implications for T&L as they challenged the administration processes and management approaches of the academic enterprise at the affected universities (Gosling, 2004; Leibowitz et al., 2014 Arnolds et al., 2013, alongside challenging issues of what teaching is for and how it should be developed. In conclusion, although the policy-driven restructuring process had the aim of enabling a reconfigured HE system for the purposes of transforming the sector, the process also had constraining structural effects in most sites.

Despite the stated goal of the mergers to re-align the unjust higher education landscape, the merger process has also been criticised for reinforcing apartheid legacies with its new forms of categorisation of institutional types, and for leaving the most privileged institutions untouched (Kraak, 2004; CHE, 2016). Stellenbosch University, Pretoria University, University of Cape Town, Rhodes University and University of

Witwatersrand were not affected by mergers[19] and so were able to continue with their activities without the major disruptions such institutional shifts bring. While it was argued that the country could not afford to destabilise these institutions, which were responsible for the bulk of the postgraduate and research output, the effect was to entrench their positions of privilege (Jansen, 2004).

There were also questions about a lack of political will to close down institutions that were barely functioning at the time. Earlier proposals to dismantle the University of the Transkei, for example, were disbanded with the formation of Walter Sisulu University (Sehoole, 2005). There was also a concern that in some cases institutional campuses of the newly merged institutions were so far apart that attempts at developing a unified university were doomed to failure. In the case of Walter Sisulu University, to continue that example, the campuses span an area of over 1 000 kilometres, making coherent governance and teaching development exceptionally difficult.

In some restructured institutions, especially in the case of incorporations rather than mergers, the additional campuses were further neglected and marginalised and remained 'unequally resourced with the potential of being ghettoised through the placement of only certain kinds of courses on such campuses, such as the first year of so-called foundation programmes' CHE, 2016: 152). The same cultural foundations that led to the marginalisation of these campuses seemed to be perpetuated after the mergers at some universities.

The new categorisation of institutions that came about as part and parcel of the restructuring process included the reconfiguration of the purpose of institutional type, particularly looking at the programme type mix that the 'new' institutions would offer. This structural change had directional implications for teaching and learning at T1. The reconfigured institutions were meant to re-examine at their curriculum and modes of

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[19] Apart from being shifted from the TBVC (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) states to the RSA university system, the HDIs of University of Venda and the University of Fort Hare were also not affected by the mergers. The University of Zululand was also not affected by the mergers, though it was required to change institutional type from being a traditional university to becoming a comprehensive university.

delivery based on their new institutional type, and this resulted in a lot of challenges and pressures on cultures and structures insofar as teaching and learning development was concerned.

In some cases where institutions were, for example, restructured from being traditional universities, which were expected to offer formative and professional degrees, to being comprehensive universities, which were expected to offer a mix of programme types with a focus on diplomas, challenges emerged as no special support was provided. In some instances, it was a case of universities being expected to venture into uncharted territory. Traditional universities which were reconfigured into comprehensive universities were expected to develop and offer a programme qualification mix of both formative university type programmes and practical technical type programmes, even though these universities had no experience or expertise in offering technikon type programmes. The absence of professional assistance constrained these universities from achieving the desired shapes. There seemed to be an understanding that new forms of curriculum could simply be developed without any expertise within the specific professional field, and there seemed to be an assumption that academics could simply teach on any version of programme. Literature on issues of curriculum structure and academic identity, however, very clearly illustrates that academic identities are strongly formed by disciplinary home and are closely attached to teaching approaches (Trowler & Cooper, 2002; Becher & Trowler, 2001), and so curriculum shifts cannot simply be implemented by decree.

This constraint has exacerbated institutional drifts of some institutions taking up shapes that do not represent their 'designated' institutional types (Kraak, 2004; CHE, 2016). Without a clear sense of academic identity, and the lack of clarity of institutional differentiation, the nature of the academic project can remain vague with consequent negative effects on teaching and learning (CHE, 2016). This had potential implications for T&L, as the shapes that institutions took on had effects on the curriculum content, methods of delivery and assessment, and the quality of what was taught. Some of these challenges emerged as a result of sites with different backgrounds, different status, and different levels of preparedness for the newly defined roles being combined by policy decree and expected to operate as one entity.

4.8. Steering Mechanisms

In line with the need to transform the South African higher education sector from a fragmented system to an efficient system providing equal opportunities for access and success, the 2001 National Plan made provision for levers to achieve the HE policy goals, as was described in Chapter One. The three main levers identified were planning, funding and quality assurance processes. While there have been numerous policies related to planning to bring about a changed HE landscape between the end of apartheid in 1994 and the T1 period of 2004, the use of mergers, discussed above, was key. The planning process was seen to be effective as a steering framework only if it was aligned to the funding of higher education and to an appropriate regulatory framework of quality assurance.

4.8.1. Quality Assurance

One of the mechanisms identified by the 2001 National Plan to steer and achieve transformation in the form of improved outcomes was quality assurance (CHE, 2017). Although the extent to which quality assurance is implemented in relation to T&L varies across the sector (Boughey, 2010), it is meant to be key in achieving transformation by ensuring the strengthening of T&L processes and outcomes in the system (DHET, 2013a). Of relevance to this study was that national uniform quality assurance structures were not established at T1. T1 thus presents a period before the establishment of the national policy-related structures such as the Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF), which was gazetted in 2007 with institutional audits for all but one public university being completed in 2012 (CHE, 2017). Another important structure for quality assurance is the Higher Education Qualification Committee (HEQC), which is provided for in the 1997 White Paper.. The HEQC, through its Directorate for Quality Promotion and Capacity Development is the only statutory body with an explicit mandate to improve teaching and learning in higher education. Specific focus areas that the HEQC had responsibility for encompassed quality-related functions that included (a) institutional reviews, (b) programme accreditation, (c) national reviews, and (d) capacity development (CHE, 2017).

These structures had a direct impact on formalising ways in which the implementation of teaching and learning was accounted for by universities (Maphosa, 2014). In the absence

of national T&L related structures such as the HEQC at T1, the system had few accountability structures (CHE, 2004b). While quality assurance was becoming ubiquitous internationally, in respect of public financing, trends towards mass participation and greater stakeholder scrutiny of education and training processes and outcomes, it was only during the T2–T3 period that such processes were implemented in South Africa (CHE, 2004b). Prior to the establishment of the HEQC, the ways in which institutions assured themselves varied, with the old technikon system having the system known as SERTEC, mentioned earlier, and the old university sector undertaking its own systems of internal quality assurance alongside self-imposed systems of external examining and benchmarking. There was thus, at T1, no uniformity as to what constituted quality or how it should be assured (CHE, 2016).

4.8.2. Funding, Planning and Steering

The nature and form by which the government has steered the sector in the quest for National Policy goals has had a conditioning effect on the type and form of teaching development practices that have emerged in the sector. As detailed in Chapter One, government uses funding (e.g. the earmarked TDG) in conjunction with enrolment planning, institutional academic planning and quality assurance to steer, drive or direct the university sector towards achieving certain goals. Most of these goals are specified in numeric form, such as the teaching output targets for the specific universities and for the sector as a whole. The policy-driven goals of the 1997 White Paper and the 2001 National Plan have created pressure on the system to deliver on improved teaching outputs given the poor teaching outputs that existed at T1 (DoE, 2006; Scott et al., 2007; DoE, 2008b).

The political impatience at the lack of transformation in the system grew as the goals of the 1997 White Paper and 2001 National Plan were far from being achieved at T1. This policy-driven pressure conditioned how the National Department envisioned the state funded T&L intervention programmes through policy, as discussed at T2–T3. This increase in pressure resulted in the focus of these interventions being on increased efficiency and standards in the form of measurements of success rates or teaching outputs of planned enrolments by universities. There was thus a move towards increased accountability with an emphasis on measurable outputs (CHE, 2016). There is significant criticism in the literature, both locally and internationally, on the use of numeric

measurements only in evaluating teaching and learning (see, for example, Luckett, 2007; Boughey and McKenna, 2015; Shore & Wright, 1999).

4.9. Declining HE Funding

Against the background of a constraining funding framework at T1, HE funding was facing a declining trend. The declining fiscal environment at T1 constrained the academic enterprise in the SAHE system. This structural constraint often translated into the marginalisation of teaching development against other competing demands in the system (Boughey, 2013). A 2013 Funding Review Report indicates that 'government funding per full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolled student fell by 1.1% annually between 2000 and 2010' while student tuition fees per FTE increased by 2.5% per year (DHET, 2013c: 31). The 2013 Funding Review Report also highlights that South Africa's public higher education funding is only 0.75%[20] of the Gross Domestic Product. While this is in line with other African countries, it lags greatly behind the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (at 1.21%) and the rest of the world (at 0.84%) (DHET, 2013c).

The declining funding trend at T1 as a structural conditioning factor in the sector drove universities to implement cost-cutting measures, which has had implications for the academic enterprise (McKenna, 2016). Cost-cutting measures affected how teaching and learning enhancement work was undertaken at T1 in a space of multiple pressing institutional priorities and demands. The severe effects of a shrinking fiscal environment were more prominent at universities that solely relied on government funding with limited third-stream income.

Figure 6 below presents the declining trend in the SAHE system, in particular in public funding. The figure presents the proportions of the different streams of income making up higher education funding in South Africa. This figure shows that the public portion of higher education funding has decreased from 49% in 2000 to 41% in 2010. Private 'third

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[20] This is an indicator used by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to compare countries' expenditures on education

stream' and student fees sources of income increased from 27% to 30% and 24% to 30% respectively between 2000 and 2010[21] (DHET, 2013c)

Figure 6: Income Sources of Public Higher Education Institutions (2000–2010)
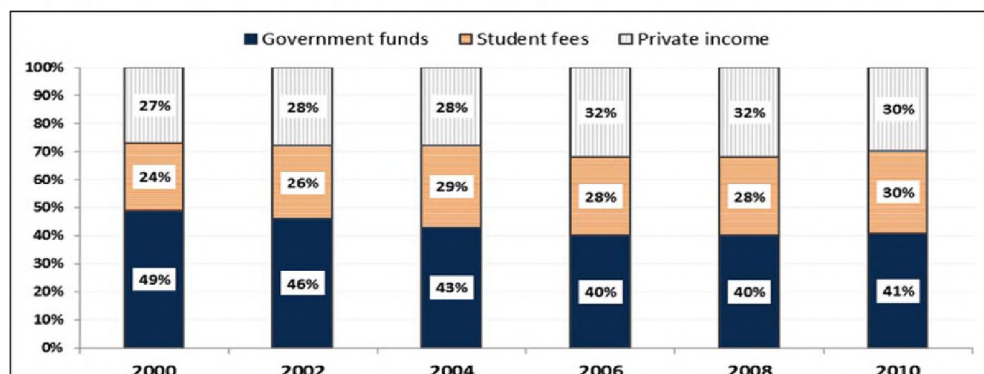
Source: DHET (2013c)

4.10. Absence of Dedicated Teaching Development National Funding

In addition to the shrinking of the broader HE funding, at T1 there was no dedicated state funding for teaching development work. All state funds that universities received were used as per each institution's council's discretion. The allocation of state funds for teaching development was thus dependent on institutional cultures and structures and the extent to which these were complementary to such work. There were also no national monitoring processes in regards to teaching, and even national reviews of cohort throughput and retention were only recently being documented at T1. Thus, while there was a burgeoning concern about poor throughput and retention, this was not a significant aspect of the national higher education discourse (culture), and the extent of responses to such figures was not a national consideration (structure).

The implementation of state funding reforms only emerged after 2004 when the new performance-based funding framework was implemented, where earmarked grants such as the TDG, Research Development Grant (RDG) and Foundation provisioning grant[22]

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[21] This has played a major role in the rise of student protests in the #Feesmustfall protests of 2015, 2016 and 2017.

[22] Earlier versions of the 'Foundation funding' had been in place earlier (McKenna, 2012) but clarity as to its requirements were only established over the years.

were introduced to support teaching development work (DoE, 2008b; Luckett, 2012). Before that, at T1, T&L activities that were practised at universities emerged in various forms, and there was a great reliance on soft funding such as that administered by the Independent Development Trust (Boughey, 2010). Such funding meant that projects had to meet the ideological framing and concerns of the funders, and they were only for specific projects which engaged staff on short-term, externally-funded contracts. Furthermore, a great deal of effort needed to be put in by these AD practitioners to raise funding (Boughey, 2010; Luckett, 2012). Thus, T&L funding support structures varied across the sector depending on the accessibility of the soft funding and decisions by university councils of what should be funded from the block grant. In many ways, this led to the varying implementation of T&L development work from disparate ideological positions.

Given the absence of nationally earmarked funding structures, it was the prerogative of each institution to decide whether funds would be allocated for T&L interventions or not and also the size and nature of such support. At T1, some universities had put in place teaching development structures in the form of units or centres and they had also established personnel to undertake teaching development work, whereby there were specific agents in the institution tasked with supporting such work. On the other hand, other universities had constrained environments where this work enjoyed minimal agency and structural support. This once again points to the uncoordinated nature of how teaching development practices emerged in the South African higher education system (Niven, 2012; Boughey, 2010; DoE, 2008b).

The absence of policy regulating T&L at both national and institutional level at T1 has been identified to be a key constraint in the effective implementation of teaching development work. Maphosa (2014) identifies the necessity for policies and procedures in Schools and Faculties that would show how academic support initiatives are implemented. This would ensure the efficient implementation of T&L interventions as it would also allow their successful monitoring and evaluation on their effectiveness to 'buttress on strengths and ameliorate deficiencies' (Maphosa, 2014: 17).

4.11. Teaching–Research Nexus

The focus of this study is on the use of a grant designated specifically for the development of teaching with the goal of enhancing throughput and retention rates. However, teaching never occurs in isolation of other university activities. Universities are expected to undertake community engagement, to produce new knowledge and to attend to an ever-increasing list of responsibilities (Wright & Rabo, 2010). While there is contention as to what is of necessity within the purview of the university and what should differ according to institutional type (Singh, 2008), there is general agreement that research is a central facet of university life.

At T1, however, many universities in this study were emerging from a system which had actively constrained the development of expertise in research and which had forbidden the offering of most postgraduate study. It is thus unsurprising that the technikons/ universities of technology and the historically disadvantaged universities of all types produced extremely little research. As Table 14 below indicates, research at T1 was unevenly produced by the institutions in the sector and, despite increases across all universities, the uneven nature of the output has remained true to date.

It is generally agreed (see for example, Singh, 2008; Ntshoe & Selesho, 2016), that a differentiated system means that not all universities should be expected to contribute equally to a nation's research output. The White Paper of 2013 indicates that in 'a differentiated university system, it is unrealistic for all universities to have similar research goals' (DHET, 2013e:35), but it goes on to point out, 'However, all universities must be research-active' (DHET, 2013e: 35). There is thus a national drive to increase research output by all universities, regardless of the constraints on this in the past.

The differing attitudes towards research and teaching, where teaching was often given an inferior status to research, has also been argued in literature to be reflective of the ambivalent attitudes towards teaching and learning across the system (Boughey, 2012b; McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Luckett, 2012). The prevailing discourses that favoured research at T1 shaped corporate decisions on how resources were allocated between research and teaching. Given that research capacity and output for individuals (and

institutions) led to higher marginal financial and profile gains, research was commonly privileged over teaching across the sector (McKenna & Boughey, 2014).

Table 14: Research Outputs (2003 & 2015)

Name of University	Research Outputs 2003	Name of University	Research Outputs 2015
Research Totals for Universities	**13 950**	University of Pretoria	1837.00
University of Pretoria	1 651	University of Kwa-Zulu Natal	1763.25
University of Natal	1 273	University of Cape Town	1653.45
University of South Africa	1 323	University of the Witwatersrand	1554.64
University of the Witwatersrand	1 113	Stellenbosch University	14616.64
University of Cape Town	944	University of South Africa	1328.6
Stellenbosch University	955	University of Johannesburg	1279.8
Unversity of Potchefstroom	664	University of the North West	1250.25
University of the Orange Free State	646	University of the Free State	711.24
University of the Western Cape	586	University of the Western Cape	497.21
Vista University	538	Rhodes University	487.21
Medical University of South Africa	516	Nelson Mandela University	398.5
Rand Africans University	509	University of Fort Hare	336.56
Universiy of the North	428	Tshwane University of Technology	301.86
University of Durban Westville	431	University Limpopo	276.48
Rhodes University	364	University of Venda	271.63
University of Venda	335	Durban University of Technology	235.62
University of Port Elizabeth	310	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	212.57
University of Venda	335	University of Zululand	130.40
University of Zululand	303	Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University	110.39
University of Fort Hare	283	Central University of Technology	106.48
University of Bophuthatshwana	230	Vaal University of Technology	76.16
University of Transkei	213	Walter Sisulu University	49.41
Research Totals for Technikons	**1 824**	Mangosuthu University of Technology	18.64
Durban Institute of Technology	272	University of Mpumalanga	16.77
Technikon Pretoria	263	**System Total**	**16320.76**
Cape Technikon	166		
Witwatersrand Tecknikon	192		
Vaal Triangle Technikon	154		
Technikon Port Elizabeth	124		
Technikon North Gauteng	114		
Peninsula Technikon	102		
Technikon South Africa	88		
Eastern Cape Technikon	87		
Border Technikon	73		
Mangosuthu Technikon	71		
Free State Technikon	69		
Technikon North West	49		
System Total	**15 774**		

Source: DHET, 2010b; DHET, 2015 b & DHET, 2016c

A key driver to increase research output was the introduction of the new funding formula in 2004, as discussed in Chapter One. This funding formula made explicit the rewards that would be received for postgraduate enrolment and graduation, and for the publication of research in accredited journals. The formula did not, however, differentiate between

institutional types or histories in the allocation of funding, driving an inevitable privileging of research over teaching, even where capacity for undertaking research was very low (Cloete, et al., 2015).

In many sites, resources in the form of funds, offices, functions, management positions, and personnel were clearly defined for the support of research in comparison to support for teaching at universities (Quinn, 2012). It can further be argued that nationally, research activities at T1 were supported by multiple institutes that focused on the advancement of research development and output (DoE, 2008b), but there were no similar support structures for teaching. Such national research support structures included the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and the National Research Foundation (NRF), and significant funding from international donors and corporate funding from the private sector was reported in institutional annual reports.

As indicated, one of the few significant funding sources for teaching development work prior to T1 was the Independent Development Trust (Boughey, 2012a), but this was ad hoc in nature and not part of the mainstream university budgets. The limited sources of funding and ad hoc nature of grant-based funding targeted for teaching and learning enhancement shaped how this work would be approached at universities at T1–T2 (Luckett, 2012; Boughey, 2010; Boughey, 2012b. As argued by Volbrecht and Boughey (2004), the grant-based funding for AD stifled growth and development in the field as the extent of implemented programmes was limited by how far the funds could be stretched. This had far-reaching implications for the form and type of teaching development interventions that the institutions embarked on, and also for how the intervention programmes were conceptualised, planned and implemented (Leibowitz, et al., 2014, Boughey, 2013; Volbrecht & Boughey, 2004; Boughey, 2010).

The relationship between teaching and research was not well articulated in policy or in literature at the time of T1. Research and teaching were often seen to be competing activities, with research being more financially desirable and accruing better personal rewards in the form of promotion. The idea that there is a nexus between teaching and

research which works to the benefit of both and which underpins a strong university was not directly addressed in any national documentation at the time.

Brew (2010) indicates that an understanding of the teaching–research nexus is central to the development of both spheres of academic work. She indicates that academia should be thought of as communities of practice where research-active academics nurture a culture of enquiry for students. This was a challenging idea for the South African higher education sector, given that many academics did not themselves have postgraduate qualifications and did not engage in research at T1. Gumbi (2017) shows how academics in universities of technology, for example, were hired on the basis of industry expertise, and many resisted urges from institutional management to upgrade their qualifications from the T1 period onwards.

Boughey (2012b) has critiqued common understandings of the teaching–research nexus. She argues that it is difficult to infuse research into a curriculum where almost all programmes are at undergraduate level and many of them are very structured and focused on workplace skills. She also argues that being a research-active academic does not necessarily have the benefit of improving one's teaching. High-level disciplinary expertise does not necessarily equate to understandings of how knowledge is structured or how pedagogy can enable learning (Trowler & Cooper, 2002).

Boughey (2012b) is also critical of the idea that the teaching–research nexus is most productive in the field known as the scholarship of teaching and learning. While ideally this would mean that academics are able to reflect on the effects of the norms and practices of their discipline (Muller, 2006; Muller, 2009; Trowler & Cooper, 2002), and thereby teach in ways that make them more accessible to their students, this assumes a strong culture of teaching development that equips academics to research their own teaching practice in a theorised manner. At T1, the culture of teaching development in South African higher education was uneven and oftentimes absent from institutions, as is discussed in the next section.

4.12. Academic Development in South Africa

While teaching development can occur in a great variety of forms and be driven by a number of different structures, a key player in this area in the South African sector has been the field known as academic development. This field is often known as education development in other countries (see, for example, Clegg, 2009), where it is generally understood to focus mostly on the development of academic staff. In South Africa, it has generally been known as academic development and has always included a strong focus on student development, alongside a focus on staff development.

Given that this study is focused on how teaching development has emerged at the different institutions, it is important to look at how the conceptualisation of interventions on T&L enhancement have developed and evolved in the sector. The history of Academic Development (AD) work in South Africa is central in this endeavour as this is the field within which much of the teaching development work has been undertaken. In South Africa:

> … academic development is a generic term given to the field of teaching and learning support and enhancement; professional development, when the focus is on the formal opportunities to which academics have access; professional learning or learning to teach, when the focus is on the role of the lecturer as learner; and teaching, when the focus is on conditions that enable and constrain good teaching – and thus, indirectly, learning to teach well (CHE, 2017: 18).

Elsewhere in the world, this work is has mainly evolved around three broad areas focusing on staff development, the institution and the sector (Fraser et al., 2010). An important distinction between South Africa and many other countries is the focus on student development, which has long been a central part of academic development and which has encompassed everything from the provision of language courses, to extra tutorials, to the offering of an extended curriculum (McKenna, 2012).

Volbrecht & Boughey (2004) and Boughey (2010) trace the history and development of AD in South Africa up to the T1 point at which this study begins. They identify three phases of development, namely, 'Academic Support', 'Academic Development' and

'Higher Education Development'. This history on the development of AD work in South Africa is key in setting the scene at T1 of the conditions shaping what emerged in the use of the TDG between T2 and T3. Each period emerged as a result of different environmental factors and dominant discourses and understandings of what T&L enhancement should entail.

Boughey (2010) explains that although the development of AD in the T1 and early T2–T3 phase can be separated into these three phases with identifiable dominant discourses in each phase, these discourses did not emerge and cease in a distinct period but have rather been practised in a mixed mode, with various degrees in their dominance in the system over time. Furthermore, the dominance and endurance of each phase is strongly affected by the structures and cultures of each university.

In the field of work, AD practice at a few universities in South Africa is also seen as that work that has involved research aimed at the enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education and the professionalisation of T&L in HE and has also widely covered policy development related to T&L (Volbrecht & Boughey, 2004; Maphosa, 2014). However, the specific AD practices of each institution vary in nature, form, depth and quality across the system, depending on the contextual factors from which they emerge (Niven, 2012; CHE, 2017).

The differences in how AD was practiced at T1 varied from such work being offered through a centralised unit to its being decentralised and offered by individuals spread across all the faculties. It also varied in being staffed by permanent staff, which was unusual at T1, to being undertaken by contract staff. It also differed in whether AD staff were considered academics, academic support staff, or administrative staff, with implications for their roles and credibility within the institution (McKenna, 2012). The extent to which undertaking research was seen to be a relevant activity for those working in academic development also varied greatly, as did the qualifications expected of such personnel. Lastly, there were also great discrepancies in the ideological understanding of AD work at the different universities (Niven, 2012; Leibowitz, 2014); this can be seen within the phases of AD up to and including T1 as outlined in the literature discussed below.

4.12.1. The Academic Support Phase

Boughey (2010 and 2012a) and McKenna (2012) term the early conceptualisations of AD in the 1980s the Academic Support phase, and indicate that it aimed at assisting students from disadvantaged backgrounds who had gained access into the predominantly White liberal universities in the dying stages of the apartheid era. These early interventions were equity driven by AD practitioners, given the political system of discrimination against Africans, people of Indian descent and Mixed-Race people (collectively known as Black people). The focus of the early conceptions in AD work was to correct the student deficiencies caused from such exclusions. This phase tended to be characterised by a remedial focus on the student as having gaps that required fixing outside of mainstream academia (Volbrecht & Boughey, 2004; Boughey & McKenna, 2016). These early discourses in T&L of locating capacity to learn and succeed in HE on the individual's ability, motivation and intelligence have been critiqued as a misunderstanding of learning as socially disembedded (McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Fraser et al., 2010; Boughey & McKenna, 2016). These early discourses were prevalent at T1, conditioning approaches to teaching development intervention at T2–T3 (Boughey & McKenna, 2016). In the early T&L discourses, the learning process was seen to be independent of the contexts within which the learning took place (Quinn, 2012). Such approaches removed consideration of the role that mechanisms such as institutional and broader societal contexts played in student success or failure. In CR terms this amounted to upward conflation (Archer, 1995; 1996), whereby all causal powers were understood to be located in the agents[23], thus excluding the roles of cultures and structures in the learning process.

The focus on Black students with disadvantaged backgrounds in these early approaches resulted in conceptualisation of the phenomenon of 'disadvantage' and 'under preparedness' as a minority problem specific to this group of students. As Boughey (2010: 5) puts it:

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[23] This understanding of student success and failure as emerging primarily or only from attributes inherent in the individual student is not only guilty of upwards conflation by ignoring the role of structures and cultures: it is also guilty of identifying the student as the only agent, with little consideration of how the attributes inherent in other agents, such as lecturers, might also play a role.

> ... widely held conceptions of disadvantage or "under preparedness" tended to rely on common sense assumptions in construction students as (i) lacking skills; (ii) experiencing gaps in conceptual knowledge areas; (iii) in need of language development and (iv) lacking the ability to think critically....

Most of these elements of 'disadvantage' were then addressed through various forms of interventions such as additional classes, tutorials and additional courses (Boughey, 2010 & 2012a).

Although these practices emerged in the early days of AD in the 1980s, the discourses that led to the emergence of these practices very much shaped most AD work that continued at T1 (Boughey & McKenna, 2016). The shortcoming of these types of interventions is that they did not address the institutional constraining cultures and structures in the advancement of teaching and learning (Volbrecht and Boughey, 2004; Quinn, 2012; Maphosa, 2014). The dominant assumptions were that the student problems could be addressed independently of mainstream teaching or curriculum (Boughey, 2010).

4.12.2 Academic Development Phase

Given that the early practices in AD were critiqued for not addressing systemic issues such as the under preparedness of these environments in dealing with diverse student bodies, some institutions within the system shifted, at least in part, into the Academic Development phase (Boughey 2010; Boughey, 2013 McKenna, 2012). In the Academic Development phase, which occurred in some institutions from the early 1990s, there were 'attempts to embed AD in faculties and departments in an attempt to bring about change in mainstream practices related to teaching and learning' (Boughey, 2013: 15). These initial shifts to the Academic Development phase (Boughey, 2012a) were informed by theories that understood learning and teaching as 'social practices and not socially and culturally dis-imbedded and as learning and achievement in learning being dependent on factors inherent to the individual such as intelligent and skills' (Boughey, 2013: 8). Under the second phase, which co-existed with the first phase, the concept of 'disadvantage' and

'under preparedness' was beginning to be differently understood, with a shift from it being a minority problem to a majority problem.

The increased enrolments of students led to the widening of diversity in student bodies, thus pushing a call for institutional and system-wide interventions. All these developments in AD theorisation later influenced how the TDG would be implemented and undertaken at universities where this was in evidence. The improved understanding of AD work in parts of the system emerged in the realisation that poor teaching outputs could not only be located in the 'unprepared student' but also in the learning environments' structures, which also required attention, such as teacher under-preparedness, curriculum constraints and the limitations of modes of delivery.

The consolidation of advances in the cultural domain of how T&L was becoming theorised and conceptualised was not uniform across the SAHE due to constraints across the system, which included but not was not limited to AD staffing related matters and resources necessary to undertake AD work (Boughey 2010; 2012a; Niven, 2012). The constraining structures in some sites shaped environments in ways such that advances in AD theorisation could not be taken up, thus leading to the continuation of common sense approaches typical of the academic support phase (Boughey, 2012a; Boughey & McKenna, 2016).

The shifts in AD work from one phase to another emerged as a result of the interplay of a number of mechanisms, including structural factors, such as the enrolment of more disenfranchised groups into both HDIs and HAIs, and cultural factors, such as the shifts in theorisation of T&L work through research and practice. Furthermore, there were organisations such as the South African Association for Academic Development and the South African Journal of Higher Education, whose work shaped the practices that began to emerge, and agential work by the practitioners at both HDIs and HAIs who were part of these structures and who published and applied the new practices in their given spaces (Boughey, 2010; 2012a).

These shifts were in some contexts complemented by structural developments whereby practitioners were beginning to get involved with course content and academics were

getting involved in the T&L activities such as staff development (Leibowitz, 2014; Case, 2013). In studies by Boughey (2012a) and Leibowitz (2014), several institutions were identified to have had enabling structures and cultures that allowed for AD work to be embedded into mainstream academia and started to prepare the learning platform for the demands of a changing student body. Although this remained a challenge, with some resistance, and was fragmented, nevertheless this shift allowed practitioners the opportunity to work with pedagogy and curriculum structures and teacher preparedness. The CHE (2017) notes that at this time the system had been receiving skills development funding from the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) as per the 1998 Skills Development Act 97. These funds were used in various uncoordinated ways; for example, a few universities utilised them for staff development though most universities put these funds in university general budgets. It can be argued that although there had been some shifts in teaching development work, varied structural factors constrained the form it could take.

In addition to the changes in institutional structures and cultures, transformation in external cultures and structures in the political sphere also had implications for shifts in T&L conceptions at universities at this stage (Boughey, 2010). Such developments included shifts in political ideology of the country at the dawn of democracy. This resulted in the development of structures in the form of policies that pushed for wider access and success in higher education. An example of such a structure was the Report on Post-Secondary Education (NEPI, 1992) that pushed for equity in disadvantaged communities and founded HE policies post the democratic era. These transformations emerged as a result of cultural shifts in thinking and ways of doing things such as discourses and accepted general practices based on unifying beliefs in the system, whereby there was ideological and policy push towards a heightened focus on equity in access and success. The shifts also created new spaces within which agents in the AD environment could advance their work and projects, which largely a result of the shifts from the early practices of the Student Support phase to the practices defining the Academic Development Phase. As the Academic Development phase was emerging in some institutions, and bringing with it an understanding of teaching and learning as social practices, there began a third phase, identified in the literature as the Institutional Development phase.

4.12.3. Institutional Development Phase

The third phase of AD work, as described by Volbrecht & Boughey (2004), Boughey (2010; 2012a) and McKenna (2012) was the Institutional Development Phase, which had a strong focus on the emerging efficiency discourse. This phase focused on the development and strengthening of structures that ensured proper and efficient implementation of AD work. The discourses underpinning this phase also conditioned how the TDG was implemented. These discourses of an efficient academic enterprise shaped the conceptualisations of teaching development interventions and were in turn shaped by the new national government policy, steering and monitoring tools in the system. 'Critical to this phase was the construction of the work of AD movement as a resource for institutional efficiency in relation to teaching and learning' (Boughey, 2012a: 23). Maphosa (2014) states that the institutional development discourse was instrumental in the establishment and in some cases the strengthening of T&L centres, and in the introduction of Deputy Vice–Chancellors' portfolios responsible for teaching and learning in the early days of T2–T3.

AD work has been the driving force of the T&L work taking place in South Africa through multiple structures. In many ways T&L has emerged in ways that resemble elements and characteristics from the above-presented three phases of the AD movement. This has meant that in some cases T&L work has emerged in a sporadic manner in different forms and degrees at different universities (McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Boughey & McKenna, 2016).

The influence that AD units carry at different universities and faculties in the sector varies depending on the dominant cultures and structures within institutions (Luckett, 2012). Some units are well staffed by people who have doctoral qualifications pertaining to higher education and who produce research in the area, while other units are staffed by people on contract who have limited or no higher education expertise (Quinn, 2012). These differences then lead to differences in the extent to which these structures are able to provide strategic guidance to the university regarding teaching development.

4.13. Conclusion

Chapter Four has presented several conditioning factors in the structural and cultural realms that shaped human agency at T1. I have drawn on the literature and the national documentation to develop, as best I can, an overview of the central conditions for teaching development up to 2003 when the system was about to have the TDG introduced.

The focus and purpose of Chapter Four has also been to establish whether the institutional configurations in the form of environmental contexts at the different sites created situational logics complementary or contradictory to the goals set out for the TDG. It has been identified that the existence of largely constraining structures in the form of historical policies, post-democratic policies, funding and the distribution of human and physical capital, and in the existing cultures all conditioned the environment within which teaching development was undertaken at T1.

Having introduced the key conditions at T1, the study now moves to an analysis of the TDG documentation in T2–T3 to discuss the key findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

A CONSTRAINED TEACHING & LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

5.1. Introduction

As presented in Archer's SR theory, period T2–T3 is a period where structural, cultural and agential mechanisms interact, where agents through such interaction activate structural and cultural emergent properties to either elaborate or reproduce their environment (Archer, 1995; 1996). This period moves out from T1, where the teaching development environment was conditioned and the direction of action or lack of it is now shaped by the structural and cultural emergent properties as agents pursue their projects using their reflexive abilities (Archer, 1995; 1996). While both Chapters Five and Six consider the data analysed from the T2–T3 period, this chapter focuses specifically on factors that are not directly part of the TDG, or can be considered in some way external to the TDG, that nonetheless shaped the T&L environment. While Chapter Five looks at broad system-level issues, Chapter Six, which follows, will hone in to discuss TDG specific structures. This division of the discussion into mechanisms that are system level, in Chapter Five, and those that are directly related to the TDG itself, in Chapter Six, is in many ways a stylistic decision. The interplay of multiple mechanisms means that it is difficult to untangle mechanisms into the linear format required of a thesis.

The aim in this chapter was to answer the research question: What are the factors enabling and constraining the implementation of the TDG to enhance teaching and student success at South African universities? This chapter traces events that may have led to transformations or stasis in the wider T&L environment. As indicated by discussion of T1 in the previous chapter, one key conditioning factor shaping the teaching environment across the sector was the uneven distribution of human and physical capital. The first part of this chapter thus looks at how the distribution of physical capital shaped agential actions. The second part of this chapter looks at the shaping effect of the distribution of teaching and learning expertise and general HE expertise on what emerged in the T&L setting. The chapter also looks at how agency was shaped at universities and how this affected TDG implementation. The last two sections of the chapter look at how the nature of institutional systems, processes and agency, and the restructuring of the HE system have shaped TDG implementation.

5.2. Overview of TDG spending

Before moving on to discuss what the data analysis shows us about how the conditions into which the TDG was introduced constrained or enabled its use, I will briefly outline a few details as to the how the TDG was calculated, the allocations to universities over the years and a summarised analysis of the areas for which the TDG was commonly utilised in the system.

From inception, the TDG was calculated and distributed to universities based on poor teaching outputs. This method of distributing funds meant that all universities which had success rates[24] below a Ministerial determined system norm of 80% qualified for funds and all performing universities with success rates above 80%[25] did not qualify for funds (DHET: 2013b). The TDG funds were thus allocated based on a sliding scale whereby the closer the institutional success rates were to the 80% national norm, the smaller the share of the funds generated was available to the university, and the further the particular institution's success rates were from the national norm, the bigger the share of funds generated for the institution. Thus, if a university's teaching output improved, this translated to a university generating smaller amounts of TDG funds. If success rates increased above the 80% norm this translated in the university not qualifying for the grant.

This approach in the allocation of funds could be seen to be a perverse incentive where poor teaching outputs may be punished within the performance-linked block grants but then be rewarded through the ring-fenced TDG. However, the amount allocated to TDG funds was never close to the amount that would be allocated within the block grant for improved teaching outputs. The formula assumes an institutional ability to hold these complexities in place and make institutional plans accordingly.

The 2008 TDG Review Report recommended a move away from the exclusive allocation of funds to those universities with outputs below the norm as it argued that this system

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[24] Success rates are calculated by full-time equivalent (FTE) degree credits divided by FTE enrolments. These calculations, for a course or programme, for an institution as a whole, or for the university system as a whole, produce weighted average success rates for the course or group of courses.
[25] The 80% norm was determined by the Minister as the custodian of the TDG funding.

encouraged the rewarding of underperformance (DoE, 2008b). Thus, from 2013 there was a shift to allocate funds to all universities, and this is discussed in Chapter Six. As indicated in Chapter One, the TDG-allocated funds had to be ring-fenced for use on approved budget plans. Table 15 below presents the total funds allocated to universities from 2006/07 to 2016/17.

Table 15: TDG Allocations to Universities from 2007 to 2017 (in thousands)

Name of Institution	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
Cape Peninsula University of Technology	0	0	0	0	0	5 606	12 918	19 513	19 432	19 702	15 468	92 639
University of Cape Town	0	0	0	0	985	4 053	7 992	11 392	11 345	11 503	9 032	56 302
Central University of Technology Free State	0	0	0	0	3 966	7 260	11 302	14 337	14 277	14 476	11 363	76 981
Durban University of Technology	12 600	13 600	0	596	0	5 753	13 259	20 027	19 943	20 221	15 876	121 875
University of Fort Hare	0	0	4 276	7 962	3 232	4 701	6 409	7 452	7 421	7 524	5 906	54 883
University of Free State	11 900	5 900	15 740	15 378	14 623	19 851	25 725	28 775	28 655	29 054	22 812	218 413
University of Johannesburg	10 900	5 000	9 919	12 211	25 546	33 605	42 725	46 533	46 338	46 984	36 888	316 649
University of KwaZulu-Natal	5 900	0	3 059	215	8 702	14 267	20 964	25 667	25 560	25 916	20 349	150 599
University of Limpopo	31 800	38 700	0	7 374	8 441	9 746	10 902	10 649	10 604	8 292	6 508	143 016
Mangosuthu University of Technology	7 200	7 100	7 884		14 640	13 677	11 473	7 236	7 206	7 306	5 738	89 460
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	5 500	0	0	5 722	4 553	9 848	16 462	21 727	21 636	21 938	17 223	124 609
North West University	15 200	0	0	0	0	4 751	10 949	16 538	16 469	16 698	13 112	93 717
University of Pretoria	0	0	3 797	616	8 122	13 972	21 077	26 238	26 128	26 492	20 798	147 240
Rhodes University	0	0	0		0	1 069	2 463	3 721	3 705	3 757	2 948	17 663
University of South Africa	157 600	199 400	228 730	261 462	226 500	217 425	190 933	132 245	131 691	133 526	104 805	1 984 317
University of Stellenbosch	1 600	0	0	2 204	119	4 095	9 274	13 926	13 867	14 061	11 042	70 188
Tshwane University of Technology	32 500	15 600	12 815	12 098	9 474	26 391	47 848	65 743	65 468	66 380	52 117	406 434
Vaal University of Technology	26 300	18 200	13 154	11 493	13 984	16 861	19 710	20 131	20 046	20 326	15 978	196 183
University of Venda	11 400	24 700	26 171	18 419	2 184	4 288	6 892	8 905	8 867	8 991	7 058	127 875
Walter Sisulu University	30 900	38 500	47 700	37 846	29 146	32 669	35 379	33 346	33 206	33 669	26 433	378 794
University of the Western Cape	8 000	9 100	7 361	9 170	10 328	11 310	11 923	10 888	10 843	10 994	8 629	108 546
University of the Witwatersrand	8 000	9 300	4 932	8 830	21 190	22 560	22 977	20 097	20 013	20 292	15 932	174 123
University of Zululand	600	6 500	1 694	4 735	14 186	15 242	15 703	13 939	13 880	14 074	11 052	111 605
Sefako Makgatho										2 460	1 933	4 393
Collaboration								30 475	43 400	64 960	51 000	189 835
TOTAL	377 900	391 600	387 232	416 331	419 921	499 000	575 259	609 500	620 000	649 596	510 000	5 456 339

Source: Table Developed from DHET annual Ministerial Statements (2003 to 2016)

In total, over R5.5 billion Rands of state funds have been allocated to universities for teaching development (DHET, 2016b). The allocated funds presented in the above table were utilised in a wide range of areas. It is extremely difficult to produce an analysis of how this money was spent as oftentimes the description of the project could be categorised in multiple ways. Table 16 below presents examples of some of the areas that the TDG was spent on from 2007 to 2016 I have produced this table by analysing all the relevant documentation and attempting to draw up general categories.

In the first six years of TDG implementation as an earmarked grant from 2007/08 to 2011/12[26], the TDG was utilised in a wide range of areas encompassing operational costs, infrastructure and equipment, and student- and staff-focused activities. In the period

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[26] The South African state financial year runs from the 1st of April to the 31st March of each given year.

2011/12 to 2012/13 some TDG criteria were developed which saw a shift in use of the funds. During this funding period, very little infrastructure and equipment funding was approved by the DHET.

Table 16: TDG funded areas from 2007 to 2016[27]

2006-2012			
Infrastructural and equipment costs	**Operational costs and other**	**Staff development initiatives**	**Student focused initiatives**
Teaching and learning equipment and aids	Laboratory consumables	Induction workshop for new lecturers	Student writing development workshops and courses
Equipping lecture halls with data projectors and computers etc.	Software licenses	Workshops for academic staff	Establishment of writing centres
Construction and refurbishment of lecture halls	Database licenses	Academic staff development programmes	Language proficiency programme
IT hardware (computers, laptops etc.)	Purchase of books	Research methodology courses	Language testing
Video conferencing equipment	Office stationery	Bursaries for staff for further studies	Mathematical literacy testing
Buses and vehicles to transport students	Electronic scanning and marking of assignments	Appointment of post-doctoral fellows (other universities specified that the post-docs were to supervise and mentor students but the 2006 DoE criteria and other universities did not specify what the post-doc fellows were for.	Modules focusing on numeracy and reading

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[27] The items here have been loosely categorised to give an idea of how the funds were spent and are not presented in order of amounts spent.

		Appointment of professors on contract to undertake unspecified research and hold unspecified workshops	e-learning based tutorials
Purchase of off road vehicles for experiential learning activities	Setting up of student email addresses		
Online student management system	Electronic security systems	Academic staff sabbaticals	Student mentorship programme
Furnishing of libraries	HEQC institutional audit (no specification apart from that the funds covered operational costs)	Teaching and Learning fellows (capacity building and undertake T&L research. This project was undertaken at one HAI and was not evident system wide)	Training and supporting student consultants
Expanding bandwidth access	HIV and AIDS programme implementation		Programme for creating reading culture
Purchase of a learning farm and farm machinery and equipment for practicals	Teaching material development		Practicals and laboratory experiment activities
Purchase of library equipment	Tutorial material development		Student counselling and advising
Purchase of laboratory equipment	Assessment systems		First year experience initiative
Upgrade and repair of laboratory equipment	Curriculum development		Identification of 'at risk' students for intervention
Refurbishing Teaching and Learning Centres	Software Licences		Student tracking system
Purchase of servers	Appointment of replacement lecturers (for study leave)		First time entering students' support programmes
Construction of Laboratories	Appointment of AD staff		Bursaries to students
Garden Landscaping	Appointment of lecturers		Laboratory assistants
Equipment for differently abled students	Appointment of tutors		Appointment of additional tutors
Inter-campus connectivity	Appointment of teaching assistants		Strengthening of tutorial systems
Computer cabling and maintenance	Appointment of instructional designers		

The integration of technology into T&L	Consultants for workshops		
	Hotel venues and catering for 'internal' workshops		
	Travel, subsistence, accommodation for various externally offered workshops		
	Travelling costs		
	Corporate clothing		
	Cell phone costs		
	Symposium registration		
	Gifts and donations		
2012-2014			
Infrastructural and equipment costs	**Operational costs and other**	**Staff development initiatives**	**Student focused Initiatives**
IT hardware (computers, laptops etc.)	Software licences		
Creation of a T&L unit (renovations, furniture and office equipment)	Curriculum development and renewal (educational advisors, development of new tutor, programmes, development and revision of e-learning course materials, facilitation of structured curriculum review activities, appointment contract staff to allow time for senior staff to develop curricula and support material for extended programme)	Induction workshop for new lecturers	Restructuring of existing tutorial system
Teaching equipment (e.g. data projectors and whiteboards)	Library services (hiring of additional staff for extended hours and student services of library use)	Workshops, conferences and seminars for academic staff	Focus on students' ability to use English adequately for learning

	Stakeholder partnerships (This included external stakeholders such as other universities and CHE. This also included internal role players on matters pertaining to T&L. Funds were used on workshops, meetings travelling etc.)	Academic staff development programmes	Improving student learning outcomes
	Appointment of replacement lecturers (for study leave)		Mentoring and student support
	Appointment of AD staff		Digital literacy for 1st year experience
	Appointment of lecturers	Training of teaching and research assistants	Admission tests to inform and improve teaching and learning of first year mathematics students
	Appointment of tutors	next Generation Academic Programme (nGap)	Student at risk interventions
	Appointment of teaching assistants	Training of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching staff	Delivery of tutorials
	Appointment of instructional designers	Industry exposure and skills development for lecturers	Writing Development for students
		Normalise teacher workload	Just-in-time numeracy development
	Addressing student staff ratios	Targeted staff professional development and pedagogic enhancement	Student counselling, career and academic development
	Language laboratory development	Competence in curriculum development, teaching assessment and moderation (workshops)	Language laboratory

	Maths Centre	Incentivising and rewarding excellent teaching	
2014-2016			
Infrastructural and equipment costs	**Operational costs and other**	**Staff development initiatives**	**Student focused Initiatives**
Equipment spending was limited in this 2014-2016 period whereby DHET only approved equipment linked to pilot projects that would improve T&L.	Appointment of administrative staff	Staff mentoring projects,	
	Appointment of AD staff	Targeted staff professional development and pedagogic enhancement	Mentoring and student support
	Operational costs for T&L centres (i.e. office costs, travelling, workshop and seminar costs)	next Generation Academic Programme	Strengthening of tutorial system
	Management of TDG (staffing costs)	Workshops, conferences and seminars for academic staff	Institutional support structures for students (such as the establishments of writing centres, enhanced services of counselling centres)
		Formal academic staff development programmes	Development of support courses for students (such as academic literacy development courses, blended learning development opportunities)
		Bursaries for staff for further studies	Tutorials and mentorship programmes (such as hiring and paying of tutors, training of tutors, supplemental instruction programmes, student peer mentoring initiatives, residence mentoring projects)

		Competence in curriculum development, teaching assessment and moderation (workshops)	Developmental opportunities for postgraduate students (SI Train the Trainer)
		Incentivising and rewarding excellent teaching	
		Lecturer exchange programme (capacity development)	

Source: Table developed from TDG annual progress reports

Given the wide range of TDG use over the years, and the lack of shared terminology, it is impossible to present the exact spending of the grant within categories over the study period. However, it is clear that the bulk of the R5.5 billion designated for the development of teaching over 10 years in a highly differentiated and uneven system was in fact spent on attending to infrastructural gaps, particularly in the early years of implementation.

Notable in the spending patterns over the years is that there was a significant decrease in the funding on infrastructure and equipment in the later years after the 2013 TDG policy was implemented. The policy from that point stipulated that:

> TDG funds can only be utilised to fund teaching infrastructure, equipment and resources when these are linked to a pilot programme that is being tested or researched with a view to large-scale implementation at the university if it proves to be successful. The university must thereafter take responsibility for large-scale roll-out, utilising other funding sources (DHET, 2013b: 10).

This shift was aimed to refocus the TDG intervention onto formal T&L areas and to prevent it being used on all manner of institutional infrastructural needs. It is clear why this was necessary, given the specific focus and aims of the grant, and this functioned as a significant enablement in the use of TDG funds on activities related to teaching

development. However, this shift in the use of the TDG left an unaddressed funding gap for infrastructure and equipment shortages which other funding sources have not adequately addressed to date at some sites (DHET, 2013b). This is problematic in a highly resource differentiated sector where such differences undoubtedly have teaching and learning implications.

The second largest category of spending was on initiatives directly faced towards the student. Indeed, in some universities this comprised the biggest TDG use. These took the form of payment to senior students to act as tutors or mentors, and a number of other student-focused initiatives.

> By far the largest proportion of any funding would be allocated to tutors and supplementary teaching support. The University believes in the efficacy of small group teaching as a means of improving student throughput and success, and modules in all Faculties are underpinned by an extensive tutorial system. (HAI 8)[28]

Some examples of such initiatives included add-on English courses, compulsory language testing and development, mathematical literacy, student reading and writing skills development, tutorials and supplementary teaching, digital literacy, creating a reading culture, academic advising and student counselling. This category of TDG spending on student initiatives can be seen to be problematic for two reasons, as will be discussed in more depth in this chapter. Firstly, the inconsistent nature of the TDG allocation made these student-focused initiatives unsustainable and mitigated against the potential for them to be seen as a central aspect of the university's approach to teaching and learning. These interventions were organised year by year, dependent on the TDG funding received

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[28] Data quotes come from the range of documentation listed in Chapter Four. These include individual institutional proposals and progress reports. In such cases, in order to ensure institutional anonymity, I have numbered the institutions from 1 to 23 and also included a general indication of institutional type in the form of 'HDI', for historically disadvantaged institution, 'HAI', for historically advantaged institution, and 'Merged Institution' in cases where the particular merger process meant that the institution now straddles the previous two identification categories. Where the institutional type, University of Technology, Comprehensive University, or Traditional University is pertinent to the point being made, this is clarified in the body of the text. Quotes are amended using square brackets where identifying issues needed to be redacted in the interests of anonymity. Apart from such amendments, data quotes are inserted verbatim.

that year, and would by this very nature remain ad hoc and external to the ongoing block grant funded mainstream activities. And secondly, the understanding of the student as 'the problem' which needed fixing through add-on interventions such as these allowed teaching and curriculum matters to continue largely un-critiqued. The structure of the TDG was thus complementary to an institutional culture that saw the poor throughput problems as inherent in the student body. This situational logic led to what Archer (1995; 1996) calls 'protection', whereby the culture and structure enable the protection of the status quo.

The third largest category of spending was that focused on academic staff. This took a number of different forms. The main use of the funding was for lecturer replacement so that academics could improve their qualifications, and for covering costs of academics' postgraduate study. South Africa's academics have very low levels of qualifications, with only 39% of academic staff having doctorates (Cloete et al., 2015), and this being very unevenly spread across the system. The average percentage of academics with doctorates in traditional universities is 48% but the average in Universities of Technology is 17% (Cloete et al., 2015). The National Development Plan (2011) sets the target of 75% of academics having doctorates by 2030. There is thus a strong argument to be made that improving staff qualifications should be a focus area with potential benefits for teaching. But, as discussed in Chapter One, there has also been a Research Development Grant over this time period which has been specifically focusing on this. Furthermore, the benefits of improved staff qualifications for teaching require theorisation of the teaching–research nexus, as will be discussed in Section 5.3.2.

Other use of the TDG for staff-focused initiatives included capacity-related interventions such as induction workshops and mentoring programmes for new lecturers, workshops for academic staff development, competence in curriculum development workshops, industry exposure for academic staff, incentivising and rewarding of excellent teaching, short courses on T&L, and formal teaching qualifications in higher education. While some of these were fairly extensive and ongoing, many of them took the form of once-off one-, two- or three-day workshops. It is beyond the scope of the data to analyse the extent to which such events have indeed led to systemic and continued development of teaching in the sector, but the academic development literature (McKenna, 2012) suggests the need to question whether millions of Rands being spent on consultants, often external to the

higher education sector, is likely to ensure sustained improvements. Furthermore, even where such ad hoc external interventions provide individual participants with improved skills, these individuals will not necessarily have the agency within the institution to implement changes if they contradict the structural or cultural conditions (Archer, 1996; Motshoane & McKenna, 2015). The data also indicates that many, if not most, of these hundreds of workshops over the years have been held at hotels rather than on campuses. This no doubt ensures better attendance and greater focus on the workshop activities but has to be challenged in the context of a financially unstable sector where many students are poverty stricken.

The TDG funds were also utilised to hire T&L specialists and for the development and strengthening of AD units at some universities. The inconsistent nature of the TDG funding had constraining effects here too, as will be discussed later.

The data shows only some evidence of TDG funding being used for curriculum development and renewal. From 2007 to 2012, only five universities utilised the TDG for curriculum development[29] related areas, for example:

> Greater infusion of technology into the curriculum (HAI 8)

> [Analysis on] the current state of the curriculum/programmes and supervision practices and the content of their supervision models (HAI 5)

From 2013 to 2016, there was some increase in the number of projects undertaken in curriculum development related areas. These included the appointment of curriculum development officers; a 'curriculum renewal and learning material' project; short courses for staff on curriculum development; seminars and workshops targeted at curriculum development capacity building; development of tutorial programmes; and the development of professional development courses for lecturers.

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[29] It needs to be borne in mind that the TDG proposals and reports did not have set categories and so these claims are based on my analysis of the documentation. For example, it is possible that an institution undertook curriculum development work within a project that they described as 'lecturer development workshops'.

Curriculum development can be understood in narrow terms as the content of the syllabus, or very broadly to encompass areas such as disciplinary knowledge content, modes of delivery and assessment approaches, and even to embrace questions of what is knowledge, and who is understood to be a legitimate knower (Vorster & Quinn, 2016). The historical lack of engagement in curriculum development activities no doubt constrains the sector's ability to engage with deliberations about curriculum in this broader sense. In institutions where there was a national curriculum, as had been the case for the Technikon sector, curriculum development capacity had been severely constrained. And in all other universities, the constraints of state interference, and the instrumentalist approach to education fostered in the era of apartheid, undoubtedly also restricted capacity in this area.

From 2013, there was a specification that the TDG could only fund 'curriculum development to support teaching development activities, for example the development of tutorial programmes, the development of professional development courses for lecturers …' (DHET, 2013a: 10). The 2013 TDG statement documents further stipulated a move away from funding 'curriculum development renewal' to a focus on 'development of (academic) staff in curriculum development' (DHET, 2013c: 18).

It is not completely clear from the data what this instruction intended or how it was interpreted, but it would seem that it was directed at ensuring the sustainable development of curriculum practices rather than the funding being used to develop only a few specific programmes. There is very little documentation outlining what is meant by the key terms, such as 'curriculum' or 'curriculum development', and there is no indication in the DHET or institutional documentation as to what theory or ideology of teaching development determined what would constitute an appropriate use of funds.

The overlapping nature of T&L work makes it impossible to separate out how each university directed its funds, and some universities used TDG funding to run their AD/T&L units, which were responsible for leading curriculum development and renewal in the institution by providing advice, training, planning, research, and other related areas.

> [The TDG will fund] Primary support processes for the Directorate for
> Curriculum and Learning Development. (Merged Institution 15)

The Teaching and Professional Development Unit will foster the development and professionalization of teaching within the institution as well as capacitate the academic staff by providing professional services to them in areas such as curriculum development, assessment, learning materials development, e-learning, peer-assisted learning and the integration of technology in teaching. (HDI 10)

This budget is concluded by encompassing the self-explanatory academic training centre which will support the roll out of the curriculum and learning development strategy. (Merged Institution 15)

I have thus far in this chapter provided a broad brush-strokes overview on the use of the TDG across the sector, in the absence of specific categories of spending in the data, and with the awareness that most initiatives would straddle multiple categories. I now move on in my analysis of this spending in the T2–T3 period to look at the key conditions that emerged in the analysis as constraining or enabling the use of the TDG.

5.3. Diversion of TDG Funding

In Chapter Four, it was identified that the differentiated nature of the HE system conditioned the sites where the teaching development grant was implemented. At period T1 the socio-economic and politico-geographical reality of apartheid continued, with higher education institutions existing in a differentiated landscape with an urban–rural divide between advantaged (HAIs) and disadvantaged (HDIs) campuses (Morrow, 2008). Apartheid policies had translated into under-resourcing, shortages and constraints in areas such as basic operational funds, library resources, land and buildings, established operational systems, inhumane accommodation for students, and poor-quality lecture venues and laboratories, particularly at HDIs (DHET, 2011b; 2013c). The study data shows that all of these factors impacted on TDG implementation during the T2–T3 period. The data had extensive examples of fundamental gaps in basic provisioning. For example:

The TDG plays an important role for the capital acquisition plan and teaching equipment maintenance … Landscaping, regional mobile libraries, Technology Centre, Multimedia Benchmarking Satellite mobile units, Student email addresses, computer hardware and software, furniture, library upgrade, electronic security database and laboratories. (Merged Institution 15)

In the absence of postmortem and laboratory facilities at the [health related faculty], we are obliged to outsource the teaching of some of the undergraduate courses to the [nearby historically advantaged university]. The university thus requests funding for the enhancement of University-wide Teaching & Learning infrastructure. (HDI 19)

The rollout of eLearning, i.e. the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning, which was identified as a key focus area in the [institution's] Strategic Plan 2009-2016, has been hampered by inadequate technological infrastructure, as well as insufficient audio-visual and technological equipment. (HDI 5)

[name of university] relies to a large extent on the annual earmarked funds from DHET to acquire and maintain capital equipment and educational technology. (Merged Institution 17)

The TDG funds were thus seen by many institutions to be a key source of funding for upgrading and maintaining basic infrastructure. Resource-based differentiation in the system constrained the possibility of T&L development at the affected campuses. The implication of these resource inequities across the system meant that many resorted to utilising the TDG to fund infrastructure and equipment funding gaps:

The factors impacting on the teaching and learning environment in the institution and that have caused instability include numerous human resource inequities which have not been harmonised, the unequal teaching and learning infrastructure and unequal service provision on the different sites … in order to address this challenge the TDG grant was utilised

mainly for providing equity on all learning sites in terms of computers in laboratories, laboratory equipment, audio visual technology, minimum standard in classrooms …. (Merged Institution 17)

In the course of the Faculty relocation exercise occasioned by the merger, an in-depth audit of teaching space on the [removed/former HDI campus] Campus has revealed that many lecture theatres are inadequately equipped and in urgent need of upgrading. It is estimated that an amount of R1.5 million would be required to bring equipment in lecture theatres on all campuses to an acceptable standard, the bulk of this being required for the [removed/former HDI campus]—Campus. In our view, teaching development funds in 2007 could legitimately be applied to this purpose, to the benefit of both staff and students. (HAI 8)

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Department of Education for making the Teaching development grant available to our university because this enables us to purchase important equipment and materials critical in the improvement of the quality of teaching, learning and research on campus. I am confident that the continued support from DoE will enhance our stature and ability to favorably compete within the higher education landscape both nationally and regionally, and to meet our target of improved throughput rates and increased graduation rates. (HDI 19)

The School has utilized funds for computer equipment and has requested to purchase vehicles for experiential learning submitted to DoE. Funds were used for computer and laboratory equipment. (Merged Institution 15)

Funds have been utilised to purchase assistive devises and improvement of infrastructure for the Unit. (HDI 19)

[The TDG was used for] Purchasing of training equipment (88 data projectors, 12 OHPs, 4 TV combo, 4 Video cameras and 4 digital cameras), 490 desks and 490 chairs for 4 seminar rooms and lecture halls/refurbishment of e-Learning Centres. (HDI 20)

Some expenses had to go to new office equipment and furniture, which is reported under the section on Resources Centres as part of the Education Technology and Innovation Unit. (HDI 20)

The findings throughout the data present a rather grim status on the use of the funds at campuses with resource constraints. In many cases, due to the effects of chronic and historically-based poor resourcing, funds were being used very loosely, and often in ways that had only tenuous links to the grant's primary purpose of improving teaching in order to enhance learning outcomes. Resources allocated for T&L were not utilised on interventions that would directly enhance teacher and learning development, particularly in the early days of implementation when the parameters for TDG were not clarified. These approaches often left formal academic development work untouched and did not address teaching *development* directly at all. It emerged from the data that these practices were far more prominent at HDI institutions and former HDI campuses that had merged or had been incorporated with HAIs. The provision of reasonable quality infrastructure is a necessary precondition of good teaching and so it is difficult to argue against the use of the funds on such items, however, infrastructural requirements are not a sufficient condition for good teaching and nor are they the purpose of the grant as set out in the documentation. This practice in responding to inadequate resourcing in the system effectively led to T&L bottlenecks not being adequately addressed.

Poor resourcing in higher education was evidenced in the data not only in regards to lack of physical capital equipment – it was also evidenced in the form of general financial constraints. The following extracts from rural-based HDIs point to the dependency on government funding with limited access to other sources of funding to augment T&L operational costs:

Prior to the teaching development grant, [university name] could not make clear commitment to the roll out of the [academic development centre] plan due to general limited funding constraints facing [university name]. (HDI 20)

[University name] has always acknowledged the profound contribution made by tutors and student mentors in this regard, the institution has been hamstrung by limited financial resources and hence has been unable to extend these facilities to all the schools and faculties of the University. (HDI 19)

The general limited funding in the system severely constrained T&L development. Although underfunding affects all universities in South Africa, institutions are highly differentiated in this regard, as established in Chapter Four. McKenna and Boughey (2014) argue that the differentiated resourcing in the South African higher education system had effects on the culture within which staff undertook T&L, where staff experienced an overwhelming sense of despondency in environments with extreme resource deficiencies.

On the other hand, as highlighted in Chapter Four, some universities, in particular the HAIs, have had structural enablements in the form of the capacity to generate significantly more revenue from all higher education streams of income, and in particular from third-stream income (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). As evident in the data extracts below from HAIs, this enabled them to counter some of their own financial constraints and instability by augmenting their TDG allocations, thus further enabling the T&L environment:

> Based on an Academic Monitoring and Support Report tabled at Senate in 2009, the University Teaching and Learning Office resolved that notwithstanding the reduction in funding from DHET, the Monitoring and Support systems had developed to a point where Faculties would suffer a huge setback in their efforts at improving student retention and graduations, if the systems were abandoned as a result of diminished funding. In response, the university executive approved a special appropriation from the university's Main Fund to complement the DHET Grant in order to sustain the programmes, and to build on the success achieved to date. (HAI 8)

... the investment in teaching development initiatives by the [university] exceeded the R5 912 000 TDG to the amount of R16 753 000. (HAI 6)

The University's proposal for the Teaching Development Grant (13 November 2008) specified that the grant would be used to contribute to the running costs of our dedicated Teaching and Learning Development Centres. However, the University has [also] allocated R5 550 million to the running of the centre. (HAI 22)

As we explained in our original proposal, the university funds a T&L centre which works extensively with academic staff on the development of their capacity as educators in higher education. Our request therefore is not for staff development funding but for projects which will complement the work already being done by the centre. (HAI 14)

[the university] believes that its actual teaching output totals[30] are likely to be 3% to 3,5% below its normative total, resulting in an estimated teaching development grant of between 1,7 to 2,0 million Rand per annum in 2007 Rand values ... [the university] annually spends well in excess of R12 million per annum on teaching development. The 2006 budget for the Centre for Teaching and Learning alone amounts to R7 803 651. (HAI 6)

The combined expenditure for the three Teaching Development Centres amounted to R23 million which is R14 million in excess of the Teaching Development Grant of R8 830 million. (HAI 22)

The university of [removed] was awarded a Teaching Development Grant amounting to R616 000 for the 2009/2010 academic year ... The funds allocated by the Department [DHET] were used for Student Academic Support within the university and the Student Development Support Excellence Model that is briefly outlined in section 2.2 of this report. A

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[30] As discussed in Section 5.2 the amount awarded for the TDG is based on the institution's teaching outputs and the gap between actual outputs and national benchmarks for such outputs.

total amount of R4 194 359 of university funds was spent on student academic support for 2009/10. (HA1 13)

The data indicates that only HAIs topped up their TDG. As evident in the data extracts above, for universities with enabling financial structures, established T&L committees and processes, and corporate agency supportive of T&L work, the impact of inadequate and declining HE funding on T&L was to some extent mitigated. These enablements also allowed for more comprehensive and sustainable programmes to be implemented, which would not have been possible using only the TDG funds. These structural conditions thus put some universities in a better position to implement teaching development programmes than other universities that did not have access to additional financial resources.

Although the 2008 TDG Review Report recommended that the TDG should be paid to all universities, the evident differentiated financial capacities of institutions and resource inequities across the sector begs the question of whether the TDG should indeed be allocated to all universities. Given that some HAIs were found to significantly invest more of their own funds on teaching development than that provided through state allocations, this may suggest that HDIs should be allocated significantly more funds than HAIs. However, as will be shown in Chapter Six, the provision of funding alone may not address constraints to improved throughputs, and, as will be shown in this chapter, if institutions have challenges in managing such monies as are already allocated to them, then providing more money may not be the answer.

The differentiated capacity of the sector to generate third-stream income is largely dependent on historical underinvestment and factors such as the location of institutions (Morrow, 2008). Other factors include the perceived status and prestige of universities, the ability to manage and market the institutional brand and the appropriate staff complement and capacity to run and own income-attracting and -generating projects (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012; Leibowitz et al., 2014). But funding inequalities were not only in the form of opportunities for third-stream income. Given the differentiated nature of South African universities' geographical location and the demographic make-up of their student bodies, not all universities have been able to respond to a declining HE funding through fee increases and the collection of student debt. The ability of universities to deal with student debt and other context cost-related factors through the

increase of student fees to counter higher education inflation[31] is strongly linked to the socio-economic status of the students that each institution serves (CHE, 2016; Cloete et al., 2015).

> Given the University's rural location and the socio-economic background of the majority of its students, the institution will, for a long time to come, depend on similar grants from Government to maintain and sustain this lifeline of support to the majority of our students. (HDI 9)

Using the TDG funds to address infrastructure and equipment backlogs and not necessarily to address teaching development work could thus be seen to have been an inevitability, particularly in the earlier years of implementation before 2013 where the expenditure was not as tightly monitored. While spending on infrastructure remained a characteristic of the use of the TDG throughout its existence, the later tighter monitoring did drive more funds to be spent directly on teaching development rather than infrastructure.

> The previous allocation focused mainly on refurbishment of physical resources, i.e. teaching venues. The current round intends to build on those efforts and accomplishments to improve teaching and learning within the institution. The 2012/13 allocation will mostly be directed at strengthening and supporting the teaching expertise of staff, particularly in specialist disciplines. Over and above that, a more resource orientated approach has been taken to enhance the teaching and learning nexus. (HDI 5)

While the use of the funds on infrastructure can be argued to be outside the goals of the ring-fenced grant, it is not in itself questionable. There were other areas that I argue could be more directly challenged. These included the purchase of corporate clothing, gifts and donations (Merged Institution 17), landscaping and the development of student email addresses (Merged Institution 15), the purchase of off-road vehicles (HDI 19) and a significant amount of money on conference venue hire, hotel catering and consultants across most institutions. It is not clear how all of these areas are linked to the

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[31]HE inflation is an index that measures cost drivers for HE education operational costs.

development of teaching, though arguments could no doubt be made. After 2013, there was a tightening up on such spending though it continued to some extent thereafter.

There is a tension inherent in the argument that some of the universities did not have requisite structures or cultures to ensure that the money was used in ethically responsible ways directed specifically at the development of teaching. The response to such an argument may be that greater control of the TDG by the State is needed, and indeed the reduction on its use on infrastructure came as a result of more explicit requirements. However, the State can only use such grants as drivers and not as orders or sets of instruction, because it navigates the autonomy of the institutions and has to engage with concerns about state interference (Boughey & McKenna, 2016).

In contrast to this use of the grant on infrastructure and equipment backlogs, from the outset the grant provided support for interventions that addressed formal T&L development in the HAIs and in some cases further strengthened already established T&L structures and activities:

> The University already has a system of providing grants to academics to innovate and research their teaching and learning, called the Fund for Innovation and Research into Teaching and Learning. It has a separate fund to allocate additional resources for tutorial and mentor programmes, particularly at first year level. It was decided to make a separate fund for Fellowships and Teaching Development Support, to generate a more distributed and sustained approach towards building expertise in teaching and learning at the University. The DHET Teaching Development Grant is most appropriate for this, as the awards are made for a period of two to three years whenever money is made available, and they are not used for infrastructure or salaries. (HAI 16)

> [The University proposed that the TDG] would be used to contribute to the running costs of two of our teaching and learning development initiatives i.e. the Centre for Health Science Education (CHSE) and the Science Teaching and Learning Centre (STLC). Note that there are other teaching

development initiatives across the University [whose running costs are funded from other sources]. (HAI 22)

The above data extracts further show how established structures at HAIs created an enabling environment that supported wider innovative teaching interventions and opportunities. This finding was also highlighted in the TDG review report of 2008:

At some universities, use of the grant is evidence-based, informed by research and teaching and learning development clearly is valued as a legitimate academic enterprise at the university. At other universities, the grant is utilised to address funding gaps for activities that need to be carried out, but for which other funding sources may not be available or may be inadequate. (TDG Review Report 2008)

The diversion of funds to address funding gaps, mainly in the HDIs, points to the unique challenges in their contexts. Various narratives from HDIs pointed to these universities having multiple weaknesses of a structural and cultural nature that then constrained agency. Besides having enormous infrastructural demands that needed urgent attention, there was an absence of strong institutional structures driving teaching development or institutional policies to support teaching development.

Thus, in addition to the structural constraints discussed above, there was also evidence of cultural constraints in that some institutions did not have a strong history of T&L development work. This is unsurprising given the historical conditions discussed in Chapter Four whereby some universities were developed with a clear purpose of training students to support various segments of the apartheid machinery.

The 2008 TDG review report refers to university teaching being 'subject to ambivalent attitudes' and thus arguably led to the marginalisation of T&L, which provided a further enablement for the diverging of TDG funds to areas unrelated to teaching development. The constraining cultures often placed an inferior status on teaching. Efforts to professionalise university teaching and attempts to develop educational expertise were commonly disparaged or contested in many academic communities (DoE, 2008b).

Only nine (9) out of 40 staff members participated in the planned Industry Exposure and R105 000 was spent. A further amount of R47 870.17 was spent on the seminar where various industry partners presented to academic staff. [Thus] An amount of R1 147 129.83 remained still unspent ... The biggest challenge is the timing suitable for both the industry and the Faculty, Secondly, there is lack of interest by academic staff to use this opportunity. (Merged Institution 1)

Difficulty to get academic staff to prioritise and focus on Learning and Teaching matters (HAI 16)

In both of the above cases, the lack of take-up of teaching development initiatives is explained in terms of the agency of academics, who elect not to participate. However, if the culture of the institution is not complementary to such endeavours, then the agency of individual academics, who generally have only primary agency in an institution, will unlikely be sufficient to ensure an institution-wide response to the need for teaching development. Ambivalent attitudes towards T&L work by primary agents (academics) and corporate agents (academic management) may have contributed to the lack of uptake. This emerged as a result of the CEPs and SEPs creating high systems integration in the 'parts', where both structures and cultures created environments that were not supportive of T&L development and allowed for the marginalisation of this work to emerge in the ways that it did.

Gosling (2010: 92) argues that even where there may be

... considerable agreement about what educational development values as important, activities such as teaching and learning, using learning technologies, and fair assessment of students, there has been less ... debate of the goals of these activities.

The lack of such debate enabled the diversion of teaching development grant funding to attend to infrastructural needs. I now turn to look in more detail at how teaching development was conceptualised in the analysed documentation.

5.4. Conceptualisation of the Teaching Development Grant Use

Across much of the data, there was evidence of a focus on TDG funded programmes, such as tutorials, directed at addressing students' needs. In many of these cases the student was positioned as 'the problem', and so teaching development seems to have been conceptualised to entail interventions aimed towards fixing the student, with the idea that this would lead to improved success and throughput.

It cannot be denied that our schooling system leaves many students woefully underprepared for higher education study (Morrow, 2008; CHE, 2016), and this was mentioned in some of the documentation to justify the use of the funds on various remedial interventions:

> [name of university] will naturally draw students from Historically Disadvantaged backgrounds. The schooling system wherein [name of university] attracts students does not produce the desired student for [name of university] in particular and for Higher Education in general. (HDI 20)

> The University was of the opinion that any intervention to improve the quality and output of our graduates can only be successful in the medium to long-term, particularly because the quality of the majority of our students we provide access for at this University are usually from academically disadvantaged schools. (HDI 23)

The conceptualisation of poor retention and throughput as emerging from problems in the student body and therefore requiring interventions directly for the students has merit, but its dominance seemed to have been informed by weak understandings of T&L development. Such interventions, add-on activities for the student, left the curriculum and the mainstream academic staff untouched.

The dominant account of the 'student problem' in South Africa is what McKenna & Boughey (2014) and Boughey & McKenna (2016) have come to call the discourse of the 'decontextualised learner', whereby student success or failure is understood to be determined predominantly or even entirely by attributes inherent in the individual.

Students are understood as individual beings with traits inherent in them that accord them a greater or lesser chance of success. Such traits include motivation, intelligence, language skills and other neutral learning skills such as time management (McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Boughey & McKenna, 2016). The students are not understood to be social beings bringing sets of practices with them that are more or less aligned to those expected in the university, and the university is not understood as a social context comprising structures and cultures that are historical and political in nature. Such understandings of students and the university can be seen to lead to interventions focused on remediation which fail to take the students' social being into account and which fail to acknowledge the political, cultural, and historical nature of the university, the curriculum and, indeed, the social nature of teaching and learning itself. There was ample evidence in the data that many interventions were planned in this add-on way which left the nature of teaching and learning in the university unchallenged.

> The TDG was primarily used to upgrade these students to entry level tertiary education … Enhance student support through tutorials and provide employment for senior students as tutors. (HDI 23)

> Considering that all this money went into student pockets [in the form of payment to tutors], it could be said that students' financial needs could be partly addressed while their leadership skills and the culture of helping out other learners was also inculcated. In 2009/10, the programme will be extended to the post-graduate programmes in the form of a tutorship programme. 40% of students' stipend will go towards their students' fees so as to reduce student debt. (HDI 20)

The narrative in the above extracts was common and shows an example of interventions that focused on providing tutorials for students. Although tutorials have been funded by the TDG across the system and across the T2–T3 period, it should be questioned whether they are indeed an academic development intervention that leads to sustained teaching development, however that might be conceptualised. If tutorials are fundamental to the pedagogical approach of the institution, then having them funded through the short-term, ring-fenced funding, rather than as part of the ongoing institutional budget, is problematic. Where the tutorial-related funding was tied to the development of the

tutorial programme itself and included the training of both academics and tutors, it is arguably more directed towards the aims of the grant, but where the TDG was simply the budget source for payment of tutors, as was predominantly the case, its use could be challenged.

Furthermore, the literature suggests that tutorials in many institutions are run in an almost remedial format whereby senior students repeat what was taught in the lectures and often have to do so in groups as big as fifty (Layton, 2015. Such an interpretation of tutorials contradicts how it is conceptualised in the literature. Page et al. (2005) broadly define tutorials to be peer assistance programmes where more able and experienced students assist less experienced students to adjust and successfully cope with a new environment or field of study. It is argued that this involves a more active and interactive mode of learning, allowing for more open communication and feedback and leading to lowered anxiety and greater student ownership of the learning process (Topping, 1998). Furthermore, such interventions are found to be most successful where they are well integrated with the portion of the course offered by academics, such as lectures and laboratory sessions (Layton, 2015). Such understandings of and approaches to tutorials might have been the case for the many universities who used their TDG funding to pay tutors, but there was no evidence of this in the data.

Beyond tutorials, many of the other student-directed interventions funded through the TDG seemed aimed at addressing student lacks in ways external to institutional structures or cultures. Interventions such as writing centres and literacy courses could be approached from a number of different ideological positions (Jacobs, 2005; Thesen, 1998; Daniels et al., 2017; Clarence & McKenna, 2017) and it is impossible from the data to identify the underpinning theories being called upon in the various student-focused interventions. However, given the dominance of the decontextualised learner discourse in South Africa (McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Boughey & McKenna; 2016; Case et al., 2017), and given how many of these interventions seem to have been developed separately from mainstream courses, academics and institutional structures, there is cause for concern that they would not enable an ongoing shift in the system from which the current poor throughput and retention figures emerge. I would thus argue, on the basis of the data analysed here, that a more thorough and critical conceptualisation of student development is needed, especially in relation to teaching development.

Beyond the use of TDG funds on infrastructure and student development initiatives discussed so far, a fair portion of the TDG was used on staff development. However, the funding that was directed at academic staff was largely focused on improving their disciplinary qualifications, rather than improving approaches to teaching.

> In the process assist academic staff with reducing workload and allow for more time to study. Major relief is required for 18 members of staff that are studying towards their masters. (HDI 23)

Structures to support research were already in place in all the universities, in the form of funding, processes or institutional arrangements, but similar structures to enable the development of teaching were not. While a few universities had strong academic development structures, many had low capacity and poorly resourced structures, and a few had barely any. This perpetuated cultures that marginalised teaching (McKenna & Boughey, 2014). Given the individual and institutional rewards that accompany research skills and efforts, research is often chosen as the focus of attention over teaching by some individuals and institutions (Boughey, 2012b). The National Development Plan (NDP) argues that an increase in the number of academics with doctorates will lead to improvement of the quality of student outcomes (National Planning Committee, 2011). The NDP also assumes that this will significantly improve throughput, the capacity to supervise higher degrees and, ultimately, the research productivity of the sector. However, the increase in doctoral outputs may not necessarily lead to improved throughputs if T&L is marginalised and not adequately supported and implemented. In addition to this, in order to achieve the desired doctoral outputs significant work needs to be done in T&L to strengthen the capacity of postgraduate supervisors as this is a challenge in the sector (ASSAF, 2010; et al., 2015).

Given the potential conflict of interest between teaching and research, there needs to be a better understanding in the sector of the connection to the benefits accruing to teaching development from staff qualification upgrades funded by the TDG. The relationship between academics having better discipline qualifications and their being better equipped to teach is not straightforward. The upgrade of academics' qualifications may not in all cases necessarily lead to the enhancement of T&L as this partially depends on the

academic identities of individuals (McKenna, 2012). Individuals with fragmented identities whose perceptions of their teaching and research roles are entirely separate can struggle with the integration of the two and in such a case benefits to T&L may be limited (see Gumbi, 2017, for a discussion of this in the UoT sector in South Africa). Conversely, Colbeck (1998) argues that those with more integrated academic identities are likely to integrate their teaching and research activities successfully.

The revised 2012 TDG criteria and the 2013 TDG policy state that the grant is meant to foster enhanced approaches to teaching; it is designed to make spaces for reflecting on T&L and allow for interventions in ways that have not been widely implemented to date (DHET, 2013b; DHET, 2011b). However, there was evidence across much of the data that this was not how TDG use was conceptualised in many universities. Instead, the TDG continued to be used for initiatives aimed at addressing perceived gaps in student learning, such as tutorials, supplemental instruction and additional language classes, or for the upgrading of staff qualifications. This may have emerged as a result of multiple factors such as the absence of T&L expertise from which corporate agents could base their decisions on grant utilisation (Boughey, 2010; 2013).

> There are a number of institutions that receive TDG funding but have little access to high-level skills to assist in developing their teaching capacity. In such cases, the TDG funding is inappropriately allocated and does not lever measurable improvements in teaching or student performance. (TDG Review Report, 2008)

It was recognised in Chapter Four that access to educational expertise and resources in South Africa is highly uneven across institutions. This is to some extent also true across disciplines because of different traditions of involvement in educational deliberations. In fair measure, this unevenness derives from the different historical approaches to academic development in higher education. Investment in teaching and T&L academic development was not sustained, which resulted in a loss of continuity of skills development and prevented the establishment of national structures to champion and develop teaching skills across the sector.

As evident in the data, the universities which seemed to have limited AD expertise were

more constrained in carrying out T&L enhancement projects in meaningful ways than universities with agents that had T&L expertise.

> Where projects are led by experienced educational developers they are more likely to have the networks, the know-how and the ambition to effect wider-scale change within their own institution or across the sector. (Gosling, 2014: 29)

As highlighted in the literature and in the TDG data, T&L expertise is still unevenly distributed and concentrated in the HAIs (Boughey, 2012a; Leibowitz et al., 2014). This is not to say such expertise has been unproblematic in the HAIs. There have been a number of concerns going back decades that AD structures have been complicit in retaining the racist status quo in such universities (see, for example, Vilakazi and Tema, 1985) and that the AD structures have failed to challenge institutional cultures (McKenna, 2012). However, nonetheless, it is clear that these institutions have had structures for AD work developed and institutionally recognised for years and this has provided enabling structural and cultural conditions through which to utilise the TDG funding.

Boughey (2013) indicates that expertise limitations were not restricted to institutional level but were also prevalent at a national level. Boughey (2013: 4) states that 'lack of structural capacity had been identified at a national level in the AD movement and the DHET and at institutional levels in the availability of agents to work with the grants'. This also had lasting implications for how T&L practices unfolded in the system at T2–T3.

I have indicated in Chapter Four that my own positionality allows me certain insights which I have had to manage alongside the requirement for data-based claims. In considering the ways in which the institutional constraints may have been echoed by national level constraints, I think it is useful for me to provide a few brief personal reflections. When I joined the National Department of Education in January 2008 to work on enrolment planning and the administration of the TDG and RDG, the department had capacity constraints. I had moved from an HDI at which I had taught Economics for six years and where as a lecturer I had no experience in either enrolment planning or the development of higher education teaching. The closest experience I came to teaching development work was the engagement with my tutors (honours students), who took

undergraduate tutorials. However, here my common sense understandings of teaching and learning prevailed as the tutors were not trained; the thinking was that top students would be able to tutor well by virtue of their own understanding of the content. My experience at this HDI was of a complete lack of teaching development and of a non-functional T&L centre.

My exposure to and knowledge of teaching development work was thus seriously limited when I joined the DHET[32] to work on the TDG. Once I joined the DHET I was tasked to work with the 2008 TDG review by providing mainly secretarial support. This served as a good induction process; however, six months after my arrival my supervisor resigned and I was tasked with administering some of the Review recommendations, including taking on the assessment of TDG proposals and progress reports.

The core of my work was assessing funding requests by universities and making judgement calls as to what should be funded. In the context of the lack of both theory and practice as to what would constitute beneficial use of the funds for the development of teaching, my colleagues and I developed a list of common items that we thought constituted 'teaching development'. These conceptions of the TDG that we recommended for the Minister to approve were based on our un-theorised common sense understandings of what constituted teaching development.

The following extracts taken from communications from the DHET to individual universities all indicate examples of funding requests that were approved but which are arguably unrelated to the sustainable and systematic development of teaching:

> Your letter of 7 March 2009 refers. I have approved your request to use a portion of the institution's unspent balance of its 2008/09 teaching development grant for the following purposes: R2 300 000 for the purchase of vehicles by the School of Health Sciences, for the transportation of students and staff to clinical sites. R1 600 000 for the

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[32] At this point the National Department responsible for Education was actually called the Department of Education. The restructuring of the department has been discussed in Chapter Three.

appointment of contract lecturers by the School of Health Sciences. (DoE, 2009)

As indicated in your original proposals, the amount allocated for teaching development may be used for appointing new staff, equipment for learning and teaching, workshop for improving the delivery capacity of academic management ... and operating costs like office stationery. (DHET, 2011)

I am pleased to inform you that I have approved the release of your 2011/12 teaching and research development grant of R3, 232 million and R319 000 respectively based on the satisfactory progress report submitted to the [DHET]. As indicated in your original proposals, the amount allocated to teaching development may be used for upgrading teaching venues and the purchasing of audio visual and technological equipment. (DHET 2012)

The general dominance of 'common sense' understandings of teaching in higher education, such that anyone can become a lecturer without a teaching qualification or requirement to engage with research in teaching, has been highlighted in literature to constrain T&L enhancement (McKenna & Boughey, 2014; Boughey & McKenna, 2016). A key issue is that such approaches do not address fundamental T&L areas such as curriculum and pedagogy that have the potential to enhance the T&L process (Luckett, 2012).

Furthermore, the main focus of my work in administering the TDG between 2008 and 2013 was on prudence in financial management of the funds, and very little attention was paid to the philosophical underpinnings or practical use of the funds at that point. Without T&L expertise, we did not see anything wrong in the use of the funds for addressing infrastructure backlogs or in areas that left formal T&L activities untouched. Quality teaching undoubtedly requires fundamental infrastructural requirements to be in place and so it is arguably justifiable that TDG funds were spent to this end. However, given the aim of the TDG to facilitate system-level and sustainable improvements in teaching, such usage can be challenged, and, significantly, the need for stronger conceptualisation of 'teaching development' was needed.

The analysis of the data indicates that, while the grant use was tightened up over the last few years, there was ongoing use of the funds for items that could be considered to more properly fall within the usual running costs of the university, and where the funding was used for teaching development initiatives these were often ad hoc and unsystematic.

This analysis of the TDG data in this study supports the argument that national-level capacity development will be required to ensure that the TDG is used towards its initial purpose. The CHE, through its Quality Enhancement Programme (QEP) (CHE, 2016; CHE, 2017), had the potential to play this role, as it has some focus areas specifically related to teaching and learning, as indicated in Table 17 below.

Table 17: CHE Quality Enhancement Project Focus Area

Enhancing academics as teachers
Enhancing student support and development
Enhancing the learning environment
Enhancing course and programme enrolment management

Source: Yeld, 2015

The CHE through the HEQC is responsible for several quality-related functions, one of which in institutional reviews. The criteria for institutional reviews included one set specifically devoted to T&L, of which the first round of institutional audits was conducted from 2004 and 2011 (CHE, 2017). The first round required institutions to report on the structures they had in place to assure the quality of T&L including the development of academic staff as educators. After the first round of audits, however, the CHE launched the Quality Enhancement Project in 2016 to focus on the development of quality systems of teaching. There have been concerns however about the theorisation and implementation of the QEP.

5.5. Staffing Constraints

Related to the issue of how teaching development was conceptualised, was the availability of AD expertise and the constraints on staffing. In institutions without strong AD structures, the data demonstrated that significant funding had to be spent on hiring

staff to undertake TDG tasks. However, the inability to attract and retain staff with teaching development capacity was mentioned in a number of documents across the T2–T3 period.

> The writing centre project in the Faculty of Engineering & Built Environment has been rather slow in taking off due to the unavailability of suitable staff and it is planned that earlier advertising in the next year of the project will be more successful. (HDI 10)

> Even where staff could be recruited for the Centre in 2010/11, as reported above, highly-skilled staff were a challenge to employ. (HDI 23)

> There were two resignations during the year, people going for permanent appointments in other universities … There are delays in filling the current vacant positions due to very slow administration processes at our Human Resource Department … Staff retention becomes a problem for staff who have Master & PhDs qualifications. (HDI 20)

This inability to attract and retain staff with teaching and development capacity can be seen to emerge from multiple structural constraints such as geographical locations, conditions of work, inefficient HR systems, and the lack of financial resources for competitive packages. The data shows how the inability to retain and place staff in budgeted posts impacted on TDG implementation. In well-resourced universities, such posts were often advertised as permanent posts, despite TDG funding fluctuating and being potentially short-term, and thus staff turnover was not as rife here as at the under-resourced universities.

The lack of specialist expertise that has resulted in weak conceptualisation of T&L interventions in the practices implemented in the field (Boughey 2010; 2012a) has largely been due to the 'large turnover of practitioners thanks to the instability of funding and the resultant lack of permanent positions and career progression' (Boughey, 2012a: 25). Boughey (ibid.) further argues that 'due to the higher turnover newcomers and other practitioners who have not been exposed to "new" theorisations tend to implement early critiqued practices'.

The challenge to attract and retain staff also affected the running of T&L units, which in some cases constrained the institutions' T&L implementation: in such cases staffing challenges impacted the establishment of T&L units and their sustainability.

> As indicated above, many Faculties rely on [removed] to give effect to the
> monitoring and support initiative. Typically, Academic Development units
> are staffed by temporary personnel and the initiatives are often hampered
> by a lack of stability and continuity in staffing. (HAI 8)

The challenges which some universities faced in acquiring and retaining staff often meant that funds that had initially been budgeted for salaries for the potential staff could not be spent. In other cases, even though the particular university may have had acceptable salary packages and working conditions, posts could not be filled due to the general shortage of expertise in the system in selected areas of specialisation:

> The pool of available candidates with eLearning skills is small, so there
> may be difficulty attracting suitable candidates (HAI 2).

The data also shows not only that the shortage of expertise hampered the implementation of appropriate T&L programmes but, in some cases, that universities failed to utilise the TDG because of this problem. At least four universities indicated at various points that they had failed to utilise their TDG due to the high staff turnover and inability to fill budgeted posts.

> When [university] was re-designated as a 'comprehensive' institution it
> did not have the benefit of merging with a technikon, which would have
> given it access to ready-made vocational programmes. It also does not
> have academic staff members who are experienced in, and understand
> fully, the nature of vocationally-orientated programmes. Consequently, it
> has struggled to develop more vocationally-oriented sub-degree
> programmes. The university needs a curriculum specialist with suitable
> experience to refocus current curricula and to design new ones, so that the

institution can increasingly provide programmes that are relevant to the communities it serves. (HDI 23)

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However, if e-learning is to be promoted across all faculties, a dedicated Academic Development Practitioner is required. (HDI 23)

The projects started only in the second term which created difficulties for their operationalisation especially when appointment of staff was required for successful implementation of the projects. Projects that did not have very clear project plans and designated project leaders in the faculties did not have much success. (Merged Institution 4)

In addition to the difficulty of some universities to acquire and retain T&L expertise, there were difficulties in acquiring and retaining administrative expertise. The uneven distribution of expertise in the broader administration, financial management, institutional planning and human resource professions had implications for the establishment of systems and processes and thus the implementation of the TDG.

5.6. Management of TDG Grant

The problems related to staffing for the administration of the grant were often tied to the ways in which the institution was managed and structured. There were examples in the data of institutions finding it difficult to track TDG expenditure or to ensure its use on approved items.

About R35 million in the reserves of the teaching development grant over the grant years, which was apparently utilised for other organisational business. The university management has promised to reverse this situation and also ensure the proper utilisation of earmarked funding for 2012/13-2013/14 (HDI 20)

This example points to a number of constraints in the system. There was not a dedicated person responsible for overseeing projects and initiatives related to the TDG, which in

turn suggests that the institution did not strongly value T&L development work, and also that there was an absence of accountability systems and processes to have prevented this misspending. It should be further noted that there is no evidence in the institution's documentation that this specific R35 million was ever ploughed back into T&L development work as promised by the institution's management. Structural constraints on the use of TDG for the development of teaching in the form of weak and absent systems and processes were evident in a number of the documents, mostly those from HDIs.

> At the moment, we are unable to provide a complete picture of how the above allocations have been expended by the various Departments as in some instances the procurement processes are underway while in others the processes have been completed. A complete picture in respect of the utilisation of the funds will emerge within a month or so. It is for this reason that we request permission to submit the actual financials at the end of May. (HDI 10)

> The money had been allocated for teaching development for the Department of Creative Arts ... but on preparing this report we noted that incorrect procurement processes had been followed. Our supply chain policy requires that given the amounts involved, a tender process should have been followed. We have now instituted such a process but this could not be completed in time for the auditors to include the money in the 'Funds Committed' column and they have instead placed the amounts in the Unspent Funds column. The intention however, is to comply with the policy and spend the money as soon as possible. (HDI 23)

> DHET needs to assist [HDI 20] to ensure that there is a functioning and credible HEMIS unit as the success of Project 5 will depend on credible management information system ... There are delays in filling the current vacant positions due to very slow administration processes at our Human Resource Department .... One hopes that the Administrator [and the university's] Turn Around Project will improve the current university systems. (HDI 20)

The data shows that institutions that typically had weak administrative systems and structures were severely constrained in the implementation of the TDG. The absence of basic operational structures for project implementation seemed to be a system-wide constraint amongst these universities. Also noted from the above data was constrained corporate agency, as there was an absence of a dedicated office or units to regulate, monitor and oversee directed TDG implementation. The flouting of procurement policies by HDIs 20 and 23 points to the lack of corporate agency to enforce compliance, accountability and transparency. Furthermore, the failure of universities to put in the appropriate permanent structures such as senior management responsibility, committees, clear project plans, appointments in offices, and annual review processes to support T&L implementation suggests an institutional ethos that placed little value on T&L development work and that was at times in crisis management mode.

Agency is key in initiating the reproduction or transformation of social settings as it is the agents that activate the parts (Archer, 1995; 1996). The extent of agential capabilities to exercise their agency is largely dependent on the degree of freedom that the agents have in their environments, which in turn is largely dependent on the nature of structures and cultures shaping the environment (Archer, 1995; 1996). At some universities, management cultures are bureaucratic and hierarchical, thus constraining agency, whereas at other universities, the academic projects that drive activities and structures, such as policies and processes, are in place to support T&L conceptualisation and implementation (Vithal, 2016).

Without the exercise of agency, or in the context of severely constraining structures and cultures, the potential effects of the TDG remained limited and in such cases their generative powers were constrained. There were a number of examples in the data of institutions indicating an awareness that changes were needed at a structural and agential level if the TDG was to be better utilised.

> While this report may still indicate some backlog in spending these grants, it should be noted that [the university] is now moving on well-established systems to ensure firm financial controls and expenditure. (HDI 20)

However, as can be gathered from the delay in submitting [the TDG] report and from some of its content, the management of this grant has not been entirely satisfactory. The University has taken the following steps to improve the situation: From now on, oversight will be located in the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research, and not in the office of the Chief Financial Officer. Any future grants will be ring-fenced so that grant expenditure can be more easily located. The parameters that formed the basis of previous requests are not fully aligned with the University's current teaching and learning strategy. (HDI 5)

The decision of this university to establish the DVC: Academic posts elaboration in the university's recognition of teaching development work, as this was a deliberate attempt by the university to institute an enabling structure to manage the TDG projects or was in response to better manage the TDG grant. It can thus be argued that the TDG itself was an enabling structure that shaped the emergence of this decision by corporate agents in the form of the university council, Vice-Chancellor and senate. It is unlikely that, in the absence of the TDG as a structure, the university would have instituted additional enabling structures and have had a shift in thinking and practice.

Furthermore, the implementation of the TDG began to shape decisions and practices at universities towards instituting T&L management structures to better ensure seamless implementation of this work. For HDI 5, as indicated in the extract above, the management of the TDG by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) was now shifting to the newly established office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research. The management of the TDG in the CFO's office is indicative that the HDI had no existing enabling structures in the form of a dedicated T&L corporate agent or functional unit that would be able to conceptualise and implement the use of a multi-million Rand grant for the development of teaching. The running of the TDG by the CFO, who would have financial rather than T&L expertise, constrained T&L activities, and similar scenarios were found at many universities that applied similar structures. Even in cases where the university had T&L practitioners, these agents would have had limited access to the financial administrator put in charge of developing the TDG documentation and overseeing the TDG related projects.

HDI 23 also located the TDG planning, implementation and spending in the CFO's office. This function was shifted away from the CFO's office after the management of the university had collapsed, as part of this collapse was the suspension of the CFO due to financial mismanagement. Due to a high turnover of senior management at this institution, the university struggled to put in functioning management and administration systems over the years. This had a direct impact on T&L and core areas that support T&L at the university.

The situating of the TDG project in the hands of a senior person ensured that the person had the corporate agency to implement various initiatives. However, where this person was an administrator, either the CFO or similar, as was the case in a few of the HDIs and a couple of the UoTs, it potentially was the effect of alienating academics and AD practitioners. There was evidence that there was minimal or no engagement with academics and T&L practitioners in the planning of the proposals and preparation of TDG documentation in such cases. This was evident when the DHET engaged with the universities on their accountability for the grant. The centralised manner in which UoTs and HDIs were historically managed by the apartheid government conditioned these institutions to have weak management, administration and governance structures (Bunting, 2002; DHET, 2013b).

> One of our problems in 2006 was that our institutional timing was such
> that very little expenditure took place until April-May. Another was that
> our Departments were not fully aware that the grant existed and what it
> was for. The result was, however, not too problematic as we eventually
> saw a reasonably close match between the funds available and the projects
> that were proposed. Implementation was, however, somewhat delayed and
> monitoring has not really taken place sufficiently. It is expected that if
> funding is made available early in 2007 these problems will not be
> encountered this time around. (Merged Institution 4)

The above extract shows how weak systems paved the way for the emergence of practices of rushed expenditures. There is evidence that very little careful planning for spending was undertaken by the university and there was not even an awareness by the relevant people that millions of Rands had been deposited into the university's account by the

DHET, such that the university was 'not fully aware that the grant existed'. On the realisation that it may lose the funds due to its weak structures the university 'eventually saw a reasonably close match between the funds available and the projects that were proposed'. This approach in expending the funds does not indicate that much consideration was given to how the TDG could act as a mechanism to address issues of pedagogy and curriculum development. There seems to be a suggestion that there was a sudden decision to spend the funds in order to comply with the grant policy requirement of spending the funds in a given year.

This spending pattern was common across a number of universities in the system, whereby institutions rushed to commit and spend funds at the end of each financial year to avoid the funds having to be returned to the DHET. The DHET would receive requests for budget virements[33] at the end of each reporting year as affected universities rushed to shift and spend funds. As indicated in the Merged Institution 4's case, the university would have been required to obtain permission for a budget virement before the intended expenditure could be effected. These practices give the impression that in some cases funds were spent for the sake of spending, as most commitments[34] of funds were rolled over from year to year and remained unspent, resulting in the accumulation of unspent funds by universities totalling millions of Rands.

This undesirable practice constrained the enhancement of teaching and learning as it manifested in rushed ad hoc expenditures. The state requirement for universities to spend their earmarked TDG allocated funds in a given year mounted a considerable amount of pressure for universities to spend funds in a given year and can be argued to encourage such practices. It is a National Treasury requirement that all allocated earmarked funds, in any sector, be spent in the given allocated year as such funds are allocated on an annual basis. The lack of expenditure of allocated funds in a given year is understood to indicate inefficient implementation of the project or that funds are not needed for the intended

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[33] A budget virement is a shift of funds from one budget item to another within a given approved project.

[34] Commitments refer to intention to spend on certain activities, goods and services in the form of signing and issuing requisitions of purchase. It does not involve the actual payment of funds but signifies the intention for payment

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purpose. This not only leads to the National Treasury requirement that such funds be reclaimed, it is also the basis on which the National Treasury measures the ongoing need for the particular earmarked grant. This national legislation can be seen to be a major constraint on the effective use of the TDG. In the context of limited T&L expertise and institutional administration systems, the annual spending requirement encouraged the practice of rushed spending on ad hoc projects towards the end of the financial year to prevent having to return the funding to the DHET.

Furthermore, the practice of rushed expenditures to avoid the loss of funds echoed similar practices under apartheid, whereby HDIs' unspent funds had to be returned to the controlling departments at the end of each financial year. This resulted in tendencies for the unspent funds to be used up at the end of each year in annual spending sprees (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). While the funding of the higher education sector was now uniform across institutions, and all universities had the right to determine how to spend their block grants, HDIs still suffered the legacy of the 'use it or lose it' policies of the past, and the TDG ironically replicated this history.

The instability of management, governance and administration office tenure for personnel was identified in the data as a key structural issue across the HE system:

> Due to challenges experienced in the finance department following the suspension and finally resignation by the then Director of Finance, the process of utilization of the Teaching Development Grant was delayed (HDI 19).

In some cases, the high staff turnover of senior leadership holding positions of corporate agency had the potential to constrain the implementation of the T&L enhancement programmes. The frequency in the change of senior management at some universities interrupted systems and processes of the academic enterprise at universities, and in particular teaching development programmes, as at times this had the potential to change the organisational mission and culture.

> The leadership challenges that [HDI 10] experienced in recent times are a matter of record and therefore do not need restating here. Suffice it to say,

however, that while the institution was under administration in the first half of [year], the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) resigned and left at the end of [year] and, subsequent to that, [name], the Administrator, left to join the [HAI 6] … and was replaced by [name] as Administrator. [Name], the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), joined the institution in the latter part of [year]. Because of all these destabilising changes at the top, some institutional priorities went into the background, one of them being the utilization of the Teaching development grant. (HDI 10)

Although this institution's management structures have now stabilised it took almost six years for institutional structures and processes to be in place and functional. While this could be characterised as a very severe case of instability at the level of corporate agency, other examples were prevalent across much of the data, notably from HDIs. Leibowitz et al. (2014) found that strong leadership contributed to cultures of professionalism which created conducive environments for T&L enhancement by shaping behaviours and attitudes of academics towards their teaching work. Such cultures were more pronounced at research-intensive universities, which in the South African case are mainly HAIs.

The changes in the senior management of universities in some cases meant that the actors who were running the projects were removed, resulting in the disruptions of the TDG programmes and in some cases the non-implementation of these programmes. Corporate agents have been noted to be key in the success or failure of teaching development intervention work, thus high turnover of such agents of influence has the risk of destabilising potential enabling structures such as systems, processes and procedures of operations at universities (D'Andrea and Gosling, 2005; Frost, 2006; Luckett, 2012).

For those universities that had established stable systems to adequately manage the TDG funds and projects, the established systems enabled the uninterrupted implementation of the TDG project. Weak administration and management systems as structural constraints were often linked to cultural practices in the form of institutional ethos (Leibowitz et al., 2014). Thus, in cases where there were structural and cultural constraints, the TDG as a mechanism to strengthen T&L enhancement could not be fully activated and its full benefits and value could not be realised.

Three universities in particular were marred with chronic disruptions in administrative, governance, management and academic activities, with all three undergoing investigations and two of the institutions being put under administration. The use of administrators to bring about stability in a crisis has become a common feature of the South African higher education system, with five universities having been placed under administration between 2012 and 2013 (CHE, 2017; PMG,2013). Prior to 2012, two of the five universities had been placed under administration more than once. The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 section 41 indicates that:

> If an audit of the financial records of a public higher education institution, or an investigation by an independent assessor as contemplated in section 47, reveals financial or other maladministration of a serious nature at a public higher education institution or the serious undermining of the effective functioning of a public higher education institution, the Minister may, after consultation with the council of the public higher education institution concerned, if practicable, and notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, appoint a person as administrator to take over the authority of the council or the management of the institution and perform the functions relating to governance or management on behalf of the institution for a period determined by the Minister, and such period may not exceed two years.

At the time of writing, one university is going through such an audit due to continuous governance and management problems and an administrator may be appointed. Revisions to the Higher Education Act, approved in 2016, allow for easier appointment of administrators by the Minister. This has been met with some concerns about institutional autonomy and the extension of the DHET's authority over the running of universities in a post-apartheid era (CHE, 2017). However, given the ongoing upheavals within some universities, and examples of mismanagement, embezzlement and corruption, it can be argued that state intervention is often a necessity to protect the interests of students and staff within these universities.

The appointment of administrators in the system is indicative of the level of malfunction in many universities. This clearly acts as a serious structural constraint that jeopardised

the TDG implementation and T&L in general in some institutions. On the other hand, universities that enjoyed stable management and administrative systems seemed to have shaped their environments differently.

> Following the University's acknowledgement there was a need for a coherent mechanism and instrument to monitor the university's support systems, the University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC) of Senate advised on amending of the Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy and Procedures, which was approved by Senate [date] and Council [date]. This policy places the obligation for academic monitoring and support on Faculties and addresses the uneven implementation across Faculties and declining graduation rates in several qualifications. The Academic Monitoring and Support Template (see appendix A) provides the basis for Faculties to systematize their monitoring and support initiatives through an appropriate reporting framework, particularly with reference to those students deemed to be "At Risk". (HAI 8)

Strong leadership in the form of senate exercised its corporate agency in an environment that had enabling cultures to ensure that T&L work was effectively undertaken to yield the desired results. The establishment of enabling systems in the South African higher education system greatly varied, with serious implications for TDG implementation depending on the institutional configurations of systems at a given university.

> The manner in which the TDG is managed at universities varies widely across the system. At some universities, substantial management structures have been put in place, with dedicated administrative and professional staff available to manage the qualitative and quantitative use of the grant. At some universities, the use of the grant is intimately linked to a broader teaching and learning strategy within the university that is being implemented over the medium term, as part of the overall efforts of the university to improve teaching and learning. At some universities, use of the grant is evidence-based, informed by research and teaching and learning development clearly is valued as a legitimate academic enterprise at the university. (TDG Review Report, 2008)

Senior management are corporate agents by the mere occupation of their offices and are thus in position to direct or shape the environments and systems within which the TDG is administered. Corporate agents 'promote re-organisation and re-articulation of goals in the course of strategic action for their promotion or defence' (Archer, 1995: 191). Senior managers through the articulation of their 'project' exercise corporate agency, and where there is a complementary culture the situational logic allows for opportunism, or the possibility of morphogenesis in the direction of the project.

While this section has emphasised the significant challenges experienced by those universities without strong administrative structures or corporate agents, it should not be suggested that the implementation of the TDG was without challenges in institutions with these enabling mechanisms in place.

> The programme is moving ahead smoothly. Challenges to get buy in from
> all lecturers but with assistance of the Dean and Head of Department buy
> in has been secured. (HAI 2)

Despite this particular university having established T&L structures and having implemented T&L development work for more than thirty years, the uptake of T&L development work was still a challenge (McKenna & Boughey, 2014). Cultures within the faculties and the driving of the projects by corporate agents enabled the success and uptake of T&L programmes by staff.

As discussed through the various sections in this chapter, agential action or lack thereof was largely shaped by the prevailing institutional configurations. The data shows that in some sites there was a lack of corporate agency to lead and direct TDG implementation.

> The University acknowledged that interventions introduced in the past had
> not been sufficiently effective because of a lack of ownership by the
> Faculties. The University has introduced the position of Executive Deans
> in the four Faculties with, amongst others, responsibility for all teaching
> and research management of the Faculty. (HDI 23)

The projects started only in the second term which created difficulties for their operationalisation especially when appointment of staff was required for successful implementation of the projects. Projects that did not have very clear project plans and designated project leaders in the faculties did not have much success. (Merged Institution 4)

The lack of ownership of the T&L projects and recognition of such projects in universities can be attributed to multiple structural and cultural mechanisms that constrained agential action. In particular, the lack of buy in from faculties, as implied in the extract from HDI 23, highlights constraining cultures. The lack of project leaders of the TDG projects resulted in the agents not activating the structures, such us the TDG funds intended for teaching and learning enhancement, thus rendering the TDG ineffective.

The extracts below show cases whereby there was a lack of institution-wide, system-level development of teaching, whereby the institution simply divided up the funds to faculties, indicating a lack of teaching development culture and a lack of agency to lead a university-wide approach to teaching development.

In 2008/2009 the University of [removed] was awarded R 24,700,000 as a Teaching Development Grant. Thereafter schools were invited to submit proposals on how they would utilize the funds in line with allocations reflected in Table 1. As reflected in Annexure 1, we received proposals which included requirements for laboratory equipment, computer equipment, databases, vehicles and other items required for teaching, research and community engagement activities. (HDI 19)

Faculties were requested to submit their teaching and research development plans together with the resource requirement plans needed to operationalise their plans. The Management reviewed their plans and have allocated the necessary funding requested after extensive consultation with the respective Faculty Management. (HDI, 23)

A study by Gosling (2009, highlighted in Chapter One, pointed out the importance of corporate agency in the development and enhancement of T&L in the HE system. The existing structures and resources did not nearly match the scale of the need as there were no nationally supported teaching-and-learning networks in the system (DoE, 2008b). The thin distribution and stalled development of T&L expertise in many ways translated to agents who were not experts in the field, having no structures to draw from in the implementation of teaching development strategic decisions (Boughey, 2012a). A lack of capacity would constrain them from 'articulating shared interests, organising for collective action, generating social movements and exercising corporate influence in decision-making as an empowered corporate agent would' (Archer, 1995: 269).

5.7. Restructuring as a Structural Constraint

The merger process which was identified as a conditioning factor at T1 and the data clearly indicated that this had implications for TDG implementation. The data shows that this impacted on agential interactions and institutional configurations.

> The factors impacting on the teaching and learning environment in [Institution 17] have consistently remained constant and have caused instability since the merger in [year], and are still playing a major role in the institution's ability to improve teaching and learning. These factors include the process of faculty relocation due to the single site faculty model, the match and place process of placing staff in permanent positions, the process of aligning the university's PQM [Programme Qualification Mix] with the HEQF [Higher Education Qualification Framework], the HEQC [Higher Education Quality Committee] institutional audit and subsequent development of a Quality Improvement Plan, numerous human resource inequities which have not been harmonised, the unequal teaching and learning infrastructure and unequal service provision on the different sites. (Merged Institution 17)

> The issue of poor interface between the Centre and Faculties continue to pose a structural problem. This is worsened by merger error where the

Centre is not [linked] to the Academic Affairs division, along the faculties. (HDI 20)

The restructuring of faculties which came about as a result of the merger process slowed the use of the TDG and implementation of the [interventions]. (Merged Institution 17)

Institutional restructuring through the merger process was seen to have affected the implementation of T&L programmes, in that it led to the overstretching of both human and capital resources, and to have highlighted a clash of conflicting processes and values amongst other factors. The merging of some institutions meant that programmes had to be implemented across campuses, which in many cases did not have structured programmes or adequate human and physical capital prior to and after the mergers. The merger process posed structural constraints in the T&L environment that prevented the TDG from being fully activated by agents.

5.8. Conclusion

This chapter has presented findings as to the broader higher education environment's effects on the use of the TDG in the T2–T3 period. Although the TDG has provided significant funding for T&L initiatives, amounting to R5. 5 billion from 2007 to 2015 (DHET, 2016c), these have been constrained in their potential for significant change by the persistence of poor conceptualisation and the lack of sound theoretical underpinnings of teaching development. Contextual conditions shaped by system-wide factors have then intersected to further shape the ways in which the TDG was implemented.

What has emerged from the analysis is that the contexts within which the TDG is implemented are starkly differentiated and ever changing, and the factors that determine the differences at universities have been identified to be key in how the TDG supported interventions emerged. As evident from the institutional data presented in this chapter, the persistence and reproduction of constraining structures and cultures shaped the teaching development environment. Thus, institutionalised systems created a constraining synergy in the parts as they complemented each other, thus constraining agential work sympathetic to teaching development.

Using Archer's (1995; 1996) theory in trying to explain this phenomenon, this can be seen to have resulted in situational logics of protection of the status quo of a constrained teaching development environment. This enabled questionable practices such as the use of funds on poorly theorised interventions and the diversion of TDG funds to non-teaching development related activities at T2–T3. The constraining nature of the parts seemed to reinforce each other, and thus constrained human agency with regard to the enhancement of teaching and learning.

Across the data, universities highlighted and acknowledged various factors that constrained the use of the TDG. This chapter has looked at some of the larger contextual issues; Chapter Six will now go on to present issues at a closer level, with particular focus on the TDG as structure and its role in shaping the T&L environment.

CHAPTER SIX

TDG FUNDED ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

6.1. Introduction

Chapter Six continues Chapter Five's look at the T2–T3 period but with a closer focus on the findings related to the structure of the TDG and its role on T&L development. This chapter thus analyses how the TDG structures shaped the T&L environment at universities, and then looks at the effects of the grant's distribution mechanism, monitoring model and short-term nature. Discussions in this chapter present the analysis of how the strengthening of the TDG policy impacted on T&L development in the various institutions.

6.2. Absence of TDG Policy Directives

As indicated in Chapter One, from its inception in 2004 up to 2006, the TDG was paid to universities as part of the block grant. The imbedding of the TDG into the block grant allowed university councils and management complete autonomy in the determination of how the TDG funding would be utilised. Thus, during these early stages of national teaching development funding, university management could use their corporate agency to utilise the money allocated for AD work on such initiatives or use it elsewhere. The Minister indicated in the 2005 Statement on Higher Education Funding that this practice of adding teaching development funds to block grants would probably change when the migration period to the new funding formula ended.

From 2007 onwards, the TDG was indeed allocated as an earmarked grant, which limited the extent to which it was subsumed into general institutional costs, but the TDG funds continued to be paid without directive policy, allowing them to be spent on issues such as infrastructure which, while necessary for good teaching, had no direct links to teaching development, as discussed in the previous chapter. The only criteria that guided the use

and management the TDG funds were presented in the form of a letter to universities, extracts of which are presented below:

Teaching development proposals must indicate how the use of these funds would contribute to the improvement of the institution's teaching outputs. These funds may be used for staffing and running costs directly related to teaching development, teaching materials development costs, and for the purchase of teaching equipment. They may not however be used for bursaries for students, or for funding fee reductions for students.

We do not expect institutions to produce lengthy proposals, given the short time frame we have given you. I would suggest that you aim at about one page per development fund[35], and that you indicate in these:

(a)   for what purpose you will use the development funds (eg for teaching: the appointment of additional tutors or purchase of equipment for classrooms and for research: purchase of research equipment or appointment of postdoctoral fellows);

(b)   what amounts you need, and how you will allocate these between different activities;

(c)   how you will be able to monitor and report on expenditure (remember that these are earmarked or designated funds).

(DOE Letter to Vice-Chancellors dated 16 October 2006)

The use of the funds from 2007/08 to 2012/13 was thus only lightly controlled as the above criteria were open to a wide range of interpretation and included areas such as equipment. The guidelines presented in the letter were also not specific as to the reporting format, and the analysis of the data indicates that this led to a weakness in the monitoring

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[35] This letter refers to both the Teaching Development Grant and the Research Development Grant.

structures that in turn constrained accountability and transparency in the use of the grant by universities. The extracts below present a few more examples of the wide range of areas where the TDG was utilised during this period in the absence of policy directives:

> The allocation for 2008 was planned to be utilised primarily to improve the laboratory facilities in the various departments. Due to the slow internal process of finalizing the allocations, many departments did not place orders before the end of the calendar year, but the processing of purchases is continuing. (Merged Institution 17)

> The summary of the allocations to the various divisions is attached. A detailed list of equipment which was purchased or planned to be purchased can be provided. The funds were utilized to acquire equipment and resources in the following broad categories ... We also took into account the fact that a number of laboratories will be constructed shortly and some of the equipment will be housed in the new laboratories. (HDI 10)

> The earmarked funds play a crucial role in the acquisition and maintenance of capital equipment and educational technology, within a responsible capital replacement plan. As a University of Technology, [name of university] is committed to the provision of state-of-the art computer and other capital equipment and educational technology. This commitment can only be operationalized by means of funding support through the Teaching Development Grant [signed vice chancellor]. (Merged Institution 17)

The matter of using TDG funds for infrastructure and other matters only tenuously tied to teaching development was discussed in the previous chapter. Without national policy guidance and in the absence of teaching development structures at some institutions, it was evident in the data that teaching development work was easily marginalised. System configurations of complementarities in the constraining structures and cultures allowed for the reproduction of existing T&L practices.

In a further attempt to address the weak implementation and utilisation of the TDG, the then Minister of Education, through the *Ministerial Statement on Higher Education*

Funding: 2006/7 to 2008/9, informed institutions in 2005 of the formation of the Teaching Development Task Team to advise on the future teaching development funding policy. This review would also look at the allocation mechanism for the distribution of these grants to higher education institutions.

This exercise of corporate agency by DHET was key in initiating the reconstitution of the structures in T&L. The review of the TDG began a process of strengthening policy on guiding the use and management of the TDG and shifted the structural powers of a 'new TDG policy' that challenged existing practices and systems. However, the implementation of most of the 2008 TDG Review Report recommendations were only up taken by the DHET in 2013. This was mainly due to structural constraints such as the restructuring that the DHET was undergoing, discussed in Chapter Three, and the absence of capacity within the DHET to take forth the TDG recommendations as all the senior managers that oversaw the TDG review process had left the department.

6.3. TDG structure

In Chapter Four, it was identified that at T1 the absence of a dedicated teaching development fund in the then SAPSE funding framework had constraining implications for T&L, especially in a context where there were high expectations of the role higher education was to play in promoting social cohesion and economic growth post apartheid. The restructuring of the funding framework that allowed for a dedicated fund to support T&L development in the form of the TDG was seen in the data to have impacted T&L implementation in various ways.

> Additional funding was required to employ monitoring and support coordinators at senior management level. The DOHET[36] grant made funding available to operationalise the Academic Monitoring and Support procedures. (HAI 8)

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[36] The Department of Higher Education and Training is at times referred to as DOHET. Although the Department of Higher Education and Training has been captured as DHET throughout this thesis, extracts have been captured as presented in the analysed TDG documentation.

There are several instances, which have been cited for non-compliance by the auditors. Although the audit report does not specify particular cases, we have taken note of the issues raised. In order to avoid the recurrence of such cases we have resolved to centralise the utilisation of the grant within the [T&L Centre]. Going forward, projects attached to facilities will be executed through the T&L Centre. Executive Management has also resolved to appoint an Accounting Officer to manage the TDG. This person will also serve as a Project Manager for the TDG. A portion of the TDG will be used for the Accounting Officer's personnel expenses. (HDI 10)

This proposal drew together a range of existing initiatives (including those listed in our grant proposal to DOHET), and complemented these with several additional initiatives, to allow for their coherent development within a broad framework. (Merged Institution 7)

Investment in human resources, infrastructure, improved planning and in addressing high-risk areas inevitably contributed to stabilise the environment on campus. It added value to the improvement of output rate towards the 2012 targets of 20-22%. (HAI 17)

As highlighted in the extracts above, the provision of TDG state funding for T&L enhancement was a structural enabler for the T&L environment and allowed institutions to put in place or strengthen existing support structures to advance T&L work. The earmarking of the TDG had the potential to contribute to the shifting and strengthening of positive perceptions, awareness and practices of T&L in various ways. There was evidence in the data of this happening through initiatives such as the increased offering and uptake of staff development interventions in T&L, increased recognition and support for T&L work, strengthening of T&L centres, and support for teaching awards.

The respective grants prioritised the appointment of Senior Faculty Co-ordinators appointed at the level of Deputy Dean or Dean's Assistant who would coordinate teaching development and academic monitoring at Faculty level. (HAI 8)

Faculties are reallocating their projects for proper accountability. In addition, we are working closely with our Finance section which is in the process of appointing a dedicated person to do financial management of all external grants … Secondly the TDG grant manager has just been appointed from 1 January 2015 and will now monitor the implementation of all projects very closely and further provide guidelines to all staff members regarding the implementation of the Grant. (Merged Institution 1)

In a meeting held on [date removed] the council of [Name of Institution] approved the establishment of a [name T&L centre] … to administer the institution' s teaching excellence awards. (HDI 10)

[The university will utilise its TDG funds on] enhancing the status of teaching [by allocating funds on] teaching excellence awards, exchange programmes, teaching sabbaticals, communities of teaching practice, organization of and participation in teaching and learning conferences, development of lecturer ' s expertise and methodology. (Merged Institution 4)

The proposed grant will help [name of university] realize both the ideals of the [name of university] *Learning and Teaching Development Strategy 2014* and as also articulated in the goals and the objectives of following key polices and procedures in particular, [name of university] Policy and Procedures for Vice Chancellor' s Awards for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, approved in [year]. (HDI 20)

[The university proposes to utilise its TDG funds on] raising the status of teaching, and establishing teaching and learning as an intellectually stimulating and academically valid area of scholarship, research and development through the prioritisation, profiling and incentivising of teaching as a valuable an valued activity within the university [through] teacher exchange programmes excellence in teaching excellence incentives/awards, establishing communities of teaching practice, organization of and participation in teaching and learning conferences and

seminars, researching Teaching and Learning. "Teaching and Learning development will benefit hugely when activities are evidence-based and draw on sound knowledge base", understanding why students experience difficulties, understanding the impact of teaching and learning interventions through theorising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the impact of each intervention. (HDI 23)

[The university proposes to utilise its TDG funds on the] Faculty teaching awards for best paper on teaching delivered at a faculty day/seminar, SoTL grants, the scholarship of teaching and learning [grants] enhances the quality of teaching both within the university and across the sector through publications and conference papers. These projects require funding as a stimulus, develop[ment of] self-regulated learning by providing research support to lecturers and students in two modules and in collaboration with the Education consultant for the Faculty. (HAI 13)

The university already has a system of providing grants to academics to innovate and research their teaching and learning called the [name of fund removed]. It has a separate fund to allocate additional resources for tutorial and mentor programmes, particularly at first year level. It was decided to make a separate fund for Fellowships and teaching development Support, to generate a more distributed and sustained approach towards building expertise in teaching and learning at the university. The DHET Teaching and Development Grant is most appropriate for this, as the first awards are made for a period of two to three years whenever money is made available, and they are not used for infrastructure or salaries. (HAI 16)

The implementation of TDG as an earmarked grant increasingly required accountability and transparency in the use of the funds on the part of the universities over the T2–T3 period. This formed institutional configurations of contradictions (Archer, 1995; 1996) within universities that had cultures and structures which constrained accountability and transparency. These contradictions created the situational logic for what Archer (1996) terms correction towards increased transparency and accountability. In the following

sections, I unpack the ways in which the actual structure of the TDG enabled or constrained its potential to bring about improvements in the system.

6.4. TDG Distribution Model

As previously discussed, from its inception the TDG was distributed to universities whose success rates were below the national norm of 80%. This meant that as a university's success rates improved the allocations it generated in the TDG reduced, and if its success rates improved beyond 80% it would no longer qualify for the TDG.

> The general observation is that the Grant amount is decreasing from the earlier years of 2007/08, which may indicate the improvement in teaching outputs as evidenced by improving teaching subsidy. (HDI 9)

This method of calculating the TDG thus seemed to reward poor performance, as indicated in Chapter Five, and seemingly had a perverse incentive not to improve teaching outputs. However, the amount generated for the TDG by poor success rates was never close to the subsidy that would have been accrued by stronger success rates. It was thus in the institution's financial and ethical interests to improve success rates and have decreased TDG allocations, though there remained some sense in which poor teaching and learning performance was 'rewarded' by increased TDG allocations. Significantly, the distribution of allocations based on success rates meant that annual allocations were not guaranteed to the universities as these rapidly fluctuated with changes in success rates. This had significant implications for T&L implementation.

> It is important to note, in reading this report on the utilisation of the 2010 Teaching Development Grant, that the 2010 DHET funding of R215, 000 was a drastic reduction from the previous year's R3 059 000. (HAI 8)

> ... [because] DOHET Teaching Development Grants vary from year to year ... Colleges need to integrate provision for academic monitoring and support into their budgets to ensure that the system is stable, institutionalised and sustainable. (HAI 8)

The below shows that R241 900 remained unallocated. It was decided by the awards committee not to make inappropriate selections and rather keep unallocated funds for a following year, so that a new set of awards could be made. This decision was made in view of the fact that the University could not be sure whether it would get funding, and if so how much, in future years. (HAI 8)

The table below provides a system-wide picture of fluctuations that affected all universities. While all 23 universities in this study received TDG funding at some point in the T2–T3 period, five institutions have been left out from the table below as they did not qualify for the TDG in these specific years due to their success rates being above the national norms.

Table 18: TDG Allocations Over a Three-year Period (in thousands)

Universities	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Merged Institution 4	13 604	0	596
HDI 5	0	4 276	7 962
HAI 6	5 912	15 470	15 378
HAI 7	5 049	9 919	12 211
HAI 8	0	3 059	215
HDI 9	38 738	0	7 374
HDI 10	7 062	7 884	14 284
HAI 11	0	0	5 722
HAI 13	0	3 797	616
Merged Institution 15	199 440	228 730	261 462
HAI 16	0		2 204
Merged Institution 17	15 641	12 815	12 098
HAI 18	18 207	8 155	11 493
HDI 19	24 657	14 071	18 419
HDI 20	38 530	30 000	37 846
HDI 21	9 103	7 361	9 170
HAI 22	9 341	4 932	8 830
HAI 23	6 459	1 694	4 735

Source: Table developed from data in DHET annual Ministerial Statements for 2008, 2009 and 2010

The mechanism of TDG allocation based on success rates resulted in the instability and unpredictability of annual allocations, making the planning of sustainable T&L

interventions difficult. There was evidence across the data of interventions that could not be continued year on year because of major changes in amounts received for these initiatives.

All universities in the sector were affected by the risks that the fluctuations posed, but the different contexts within which universities operated meant that universities were affected differently and the data shows that they were able to respond differently. Considering that HDIs were solely reliant on government funding for their T&L activities, the inconsistency of the TDG jeopardised the implementation of T&L programmes in such institutions significantly. For example, in extreme cases, such as those of Merged Institution 4 and HDI 9, in 2008/09 these universities received R13 604 000 and R38 739 000 respectively, and in 2009/10 these universities did not receive any funds because their teaching outputs had improved, though this also indicates that these institutions would actually have received more than the TDG allocation in increased block grant allocation. Given that there are always multiple demands on the spending of block grants, and universities are free to use the grant at their own discretion, it would have been difficult for T&L agents to be able to access such increases to sustain teaching development initiatives. In such cases, if universities were solely dependent on TDG funding for T&L activities, the T&L enhancement programmes were at risk of being discontinued. Although the 2008 TDG Review Team had warned that the TDG distribution approach severely impacted T&L programmes at some universities, the DHET continued distributing funds based on this methodology until 2013.

> The Task Team recognizes that the current system (determined by the shortfall in nominal teaching output) generates increasingly smaller amounts of funding as output increases; this approach to the allocation of teaching development grants militates against appropriate planning at both the system and the institutional levels. (TDG Review Report 2008)

From 2013, as per the 2008 TDG Review recommendation, all universities were eligible for the TDG funds. This recommendation was based on the recognition that all universities needed T&L development work (DoE, 2008b). The difference under the new approach in TDG allocation was that universities whose success rates were significantly below the norm received more funds than those with success rates above the norm. Funds

were therefore allocated as per a sliding scale, but the exact allocated annual amounts could not be guaranteed as allocations were still determined on the basis of success rates, which changed from year to year.

The use of success rates to distribute the TDG and to measure performance and quality of outputs has been critiqued, as it is not an accurate measure of determining the state or quality of T&L processes (Boughey, 2013). Success rates do not measure throughput rates or the graduate attributes which may give a clearer picture on the state of T&L. Success rates are an indicator of courses passed by students and do not measure the progression and completion of students' studies in the system. In cases where there is low quality in the offered programmes, high success rates may be a misleading measure of student achievement (Boughey, 2013).

The decision to start the allocation of funds to all universities symbolised a policy philosophical shift from the national level, which critical realists would call cultural elaboration, on how teaching development implementation would be approached (Archer, 1995; Archer, 1996; DoE, 2008b). While the grants were to remain pegged to success rates, it was understood that these alone did not signify that approaches to teaching were successful or problematic and that all universities across the sector had teaching development work to do. However, the lack of clarity as to what constitutes quality teaching or teaching development means that even once the TDG was accessible by all universities, this was no guarantee that it would be used in ways that led to sustained improvements in teaching.

6.5. TDG Monitoring Model

The magnitude of the year on year fluctuations of TDG allocations became even more profound post 2013 due to the strengthening of the TDG policy published in the Ministerial Statement of TDG Management in that year. The implementation of the 2013 TDG policy, which has been discussed in Chapter Five, was aimed at improving the DHET's oversight function in relation to the management of Teaching Development Grant. This included the improvement of TDG structures in the form of increased staffing complement and the establishment of a Teaching Development Unit within the DHET to
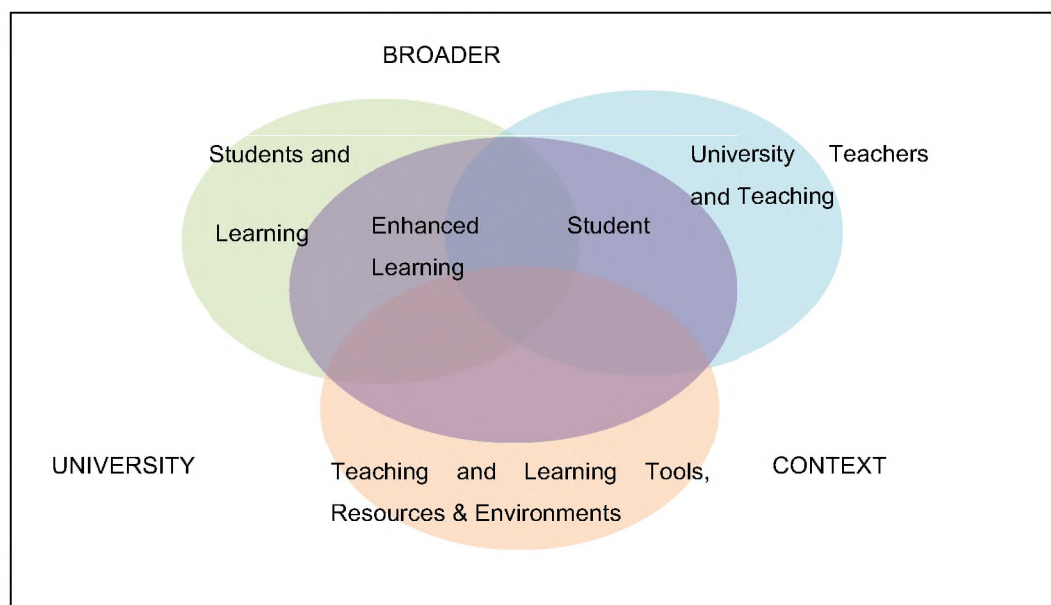
work much more closely with universities to collaboratively improve teaching and learning outcomes at universities.

Prior to this structural elaboration, the administration of the TDG and the other four grants had been performed by myself. This translated to about 76 progress reports and budget plans that had to be assessed for fund release in one month for a given financial year. This was a major capacity constraint in the management and administration of the grant, as discussed in Chapter Five. With these structural limitations, the focus of the monitoring was only on the summative evaluation to ensure that the allocated funds had been spent as per the approved projects. Thus, the grant management did not include the evaluation on the TDG use but simply reviewed fiscal compliance to the approved proposals. This monitoring approach has been critiqued in literature as often losing important data on the type and form of the funded activities emerging from T&L environments (Gosling, 2014).

The fairly superficial focus of monitoring on budget use was not only because of the major structural constraint in DHET staffing; it also emerged from the cultural constraint that teaching development itself was not particularly well understood in the DHET (or, as I have argued in the previous chapter, in many of the universities). The common sense notions of what constituted the development of teaching meant nuanced guidance was not possible.

However, shifts to these management approaches were brought about through the restructuring of the Department of Education, as discussed in Section 3.3. The restructuring of the department in 2009 was a key enabling elaboration, as it was through this process that new corporate agents and an increased staff complement were put in place to work on the TDG management and administration. This eventually led to the establishment of a Teaching and Learning Development Directorate in the DHET dedicated to the development and implementation of more focused TDG use, as presented in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Use of the Teaching Development Grant

BROADER

Students and Learning

Enhanced Learning

Student

University Teachers and Teaching

UNIVERSITY

Teaching and Learning Tools, Resources & Environments

CONTEXT

Source: DHET, 2013b

The TDG was to focus on the enhancement of teaching in ways that led to student success through a sustained focus of improving the quality and impact of university teachers, teaching and teaching resources (DHET, 2013a). This translated into the TDG supporting interventions that:

> … ensured a greater chance of learning success for students from previously marginalised groups (and students underprepared to meet the demands of university study), promoted scholarship of teaching and learning, enhanced the status and importance of teaching at universities, and enabled the development of a stronger academic pipeline (DHET, 2013a).

> The teaching development grant aims to support projects to serve as models of excellence. These projects aim to enhance student success and promote staff development through: development of teaching and learning materials that could be in print or electronic format. These materials will promote self-directed learning, integrate theory and practice and show curriculum relevance for the learners that are educationally underprepared. (Merged Institution 4)

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After the restructuring, there was a sense of rejuvenated corporate agency in the DHET that was more committed and driven towards strengthening teaching and learning enhancement. There was thus a shift to pay more attention to the qualitative monitoring and evaluation of the TDG use and a deliberate effort by senior management to be involved and direct the areas that the TDG would be used for at universities. This included a more informed scrutiny of the budget plans and progress reports, and increased one-on-one engagements with universities through institutional monitoring visits initiated in 2013. This increased engagement entailed a more rigorous approach to tracking TDG expenditures. It also brought significant changes to rollover processes. The strengthened capacity to undertake this work was largely made possible through a two-year secondment from a university of a T&L expert who had vast experience in the field and who was tasked to establish and set up the new Teaching and Learning Development Unit.

With new tighter monitoring applied in 2013, all unspent funds were to be withheld from universities (DHET, 2012a; DHET, 2012b). The tighter monitoring of the TDG projects resulted in large withholding of funds by those universities that were not able to spend. In some cases, funds were withheld due to the misuse of the funds or flouting of university procurement processes. This TDG management approach effectively meant that approved allocations which had not yet been paid out were largely dependent on expenditures from preceding years, thus compounding the problem of fluctuations and unpredictability of the grant allocations from year to year. Table 19 below shows how funds were withheld for reallocation into other national projects after the implementation of the 2013 TDG policy.

Table 19: Funds Withheld from Universities in 2014 and 2015

Number of Universities from which funds were withheld	Institution Type	Amount unspent and withheld in 2014
6 out of 7*	HDIs	R65 221 600
0 out of 10**	HAIs	0
2 out of 5	Other***	R29 619 200
Number of Universities from which funds were withheld	Institution Type	Amount unspent and withheld in 2015
7 (All)	HDIs	R39 852 342
4 out of 10	HAIs	R18 968 268
3 out of 5 (all)	Other	R30 938 746

*In 2014 and 2015 there were a total of 7 HDIs. An 8th HDI was added once one HDI was split into two universities in 2015.

**There are arguably 10 HAIs. These include institutions that had HDI campuses incorporated into them or were merged with former HDI campuses

***Other denotes merged institutions

Source: Table developed from the annual TDG payment letters and progress reports

As per National Treasury regulations (National Treasury, 2014; 2017), state funds allocated in a given year for earmarked projects are to be utilised in that given year. The department cannot release funds to an institution that has failed to spend the funds, as the state pays interest on the allocated funds since a portion of it is raised through public borrowing for which the state pays interest. Thus, the piling up of unspent funds in a university results in a higher inefficient cost on the state and the public. In the early years of TDG implementation, universities were allowed to roll over unspent funds into the next financial year with the understanding that the unspent funds had been committed and would be spent in the given rolled-over year. However, it came to light that some institutions continued to struggle to spend allocated funds and accumulated millions of rolled-over unspent funds. The DHET thus made a decision to cease the approval for rolling over unspent funds and began to withhold unspent funds for reallocation into national teaching development purposes.

However, it was not in the interest of the DHET to withhold funds, as the failure of the Department to release and disperse its allocated portion of the national budget increased the risk of the National Treasury in turn retaining funds and reallocating them to other pressing national needs. This threatened future allocations to the TDG and dampened any chances of the Department making budget increase bids for HE funding from the National Treasury. There was thus an upwards effect of underspending with potentially constraining effects on the higher education budget.

The withholding and loss of unspent funds was applied for the TDG funds only and not for other earmarked grants, such as the Clinical Training Grant or the Veterinary Sciences Grant, as these funds subsidise the costs for delivering programmes in these fields rather than projects, as in the TDG case. For the Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant, unspent funds could also not be withheld as capital projects required completion even in cases where some universities struggled to implement large-scale infrastructure projects. In cases where funds have been withheld from universities from the clinical training and veterinary sciences grants it has been due to severe incapability of the given universities to spend funds. In such cases the withheld funds would have been advanced to other universities and returned to the affected university at a future date. In the case of the TDG, withheld funds were lost and reprioritised for other national T&L projects or teaching development at other universities.

> In addition to the release of R11 923 000 for the teaching development grant communicated in a letter dated 10 November 2013, I am pleased to inform you that I have approved a further allocation of R71 402.2 for the 2013/14 teaching development grant. The funds are being redistributed to [name of university] because these funds were withheld from the university to which these funds were originally allocated to. The funds must be used for supporting academic tutoring and mentoring programme at the university[37]. (DHET payment letter)

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[37] The practice of redistributing withheld funds to other institutions is no longer practised as all withheld funds are now allocated to national projects. At the time when funds were redistributed to other universities, there were no set criteria for this process. An arbitrary decision/recommendation was made by officials to redistribute funds to institutions of need and which had demonstrated the capacity to spend in prior years.

From the data presented in the above table, it is clear that HDIs were the most affected by the implementation in 2013 of the more stringent monitoring processes. The withholding of all unspent funds in an attempt to encourage spending resulted in HDIs losing the bulk of their allocated funds due to their challenges and incapacity to spend. As discussed in Chapter Five, the shortage of skills, systems and processes were some of the contributing structural factors constraining the implementation of T&L activities at these institutions.

The historical practice of withholding unspent funds from HDIs during the apartheid era constrained the HDIs from building structures in the form of financial management capacity and administration systems. This practice was now inadvertently being echoed by current processes in an attempt to ensure efficient spending. The effects and implications of withholding funds by the current administration, although it is with the intent to encourage spending and efficiency, needs to be further interrogated as these processes may not lead to the strengthening of universities.

The withholding of funds then limited agential decisions on how far universities could implement projects and this further shaped the type of projects that emerged at T2–T3. Sadly, this constraint was experienced particularly at those universities that largely depended on the TDG. The unpredictability and fluctuations of annual allocations that resulted in the withholding of funds posed challenges with regard to the continuity and full implementation of systematic longer-term interventions and, in some cases, this led to their suspension altogether. HAIs, on the other hand, which were better capacitated to implement T&L activities, had minimal funds withheld. In 2013 no HAIs had funds withheld due to underspending, and in 2014 only four out of ten lost some portion of their funds.

Within the category 'Other Universities' there were five universities that have been included in the above table. One merged university has been excluded because its annual reports were unreliable – this would have been the sixth university in this category. The 2015 DHET payment letter below addressed to the university points to some of the reporting irregularities that caused its progress reports to be deemed unreliable.

Lastly, since 2011/12 the university has also failed to submit a progress report that meets the Department's audit requirement of using an audit

sampling methodology of not less than 60% of expenditure incurred. The university has instead submitted progress reports with samples of expenditure ranging from 30-35% ... The narrative report also has some projects that do not have reporting (project 3 and 4). The university is requested to provide reports for these projects ... Given that audit queries have persistently been raised by the university's external auditors for the past 3 financial years, please note that further funds will only be transferred to the university once the 2013/14 progress report is re-submitted and that an audit is conducted on 100% of expenditure incurred; and [once] the university provides a satisfactory response to the 2013/14 audit queries and their persistence. (DHET payment letter to Merged Institution 15)

Due to the problematic progress reports the university was required to resubmit its annual progress reports and meetings were often held between the university and departmental officials to determine the accurate status of expenditure of allocated funds. From the five universities only one university had unspent funds in 2014 and two had unspent funds in 2015.

The withholding of funds emerged from multiple mechanisms, such as institutional financial and capacity constraints. However, another significant mechanism that was evident in the data as a major structural constraint was the misalignment of the government's financial year and that of universities' academic year. This affected the spending at all universities:

The projects have a specific commencement and completion date. The life span of many of the projects exceeds one financial year and this should be taken into account when evaluating the consumption rate of the allocated funds. (University 15)

The government's financial year runs from April of one year to March of the next year, whereas universities' academic year runs from January to December. Universities would be required to submit progress reports at the end of April in each financial year to report on the utilisation of funds from 1st April of one year to 31st March of the next year. In

reality, the stringent administration process necessary for the release of the funds, such as the assessments of progress reports (which took months), often meant that funds were not usually released until in the third or fourth quarter of the year.

Please accept our sincere apologies for this late submission. You will observe from the attached documents that the 2013/14 teaching development grant has not been utilised as yet. The reason for this is that the grant was received late in 2013, not so long after we had received the 2012/13 grant. We have therefore prepared a cash flow projection which details how and when the grant will be used for the approved projects. (HDI 10)

Because of late arrival of money it has been a challenge to implement projects. [removed] has formulated a Teaching and Learning Strategy (to be implemented in 2013) that focuses on the professionalization of scholarly teaching. This strategy will provide an encouraging framework for staff members to engage in these opportunities. It is expected that, given the trend since the beginning of 2013, the R117246.58 allocated to the attendance of development opportunities, will be uitlized in full ... More Departments were interested in using this opportunity; however, short notice of funding towards the end of the year prohibited - could not fit into the end of year diary - therefore carried forward to the 2013/2014 programme. (HAI 16)

Timing of the funding cycle is a concern as funds arrive in the 3rd month, when half of semester one has already been completed. (Merged Institution 4)

Expenditure on this project could not really take off in 2012, pending DHET approval of the TDG proposal, which was received only in early 2013. Also, in view of condition for approvals, only the refurbishment of the current e-Learning Centres will take place in 2013, instead of purchasing these ICT for teaching and lecture halls. (HDI 20)

Late confirmation of funds transfer [from DHET] delayed finalisation of staff contracts so January start was not possible. (HAI 3)

Sourcing experts to run workshops on particular areas of need including evidenced based teaching, action research and developing of teaching portfolios delayed due to late confirmation from DHET. (HDI 5)

The late release of funds meant that most universities that did not have the capacity to advance their own funds to start their projects at the beginning of the academic year only had four to six months to spend their funds. Those universities that had the financial capability to advance their own funds at the beginning of a given academic year, which were mainly HAIs as shown in Chapter Five, had up to sixteen months to implement their T&L programmes. This differentiated access to financial resources, as discussed in detail in Chapter Five, translated into some universities being better enabled to implement T&L enhancement activities than others. That the TDG implementation processes did not acknowledge these structural differences meant the potential gains of the TDG were limited at some universities.

The structural mismatch of the financial and academic years had significant consequences for the sector. Even though the allocation of funds was based on a seemingly fair and equitable approach, based on the degree of need to address poor teaching outputs (DoE, 2008b), the withholding of funds did not consider matters of need and equity in a sufficiently nuanced way. The capacity to effectively implement T&L interventions at universities was context based and largely systematic, imposed by historical factors. The blunt practice and process of withholding unspent funds only brushed on the surface by focusing on the symptoms of underspending and not on structural, cultural and agential issues forming the generative mechanisms that led to such under-expenditure. The blanket approach in the management of the grant, whereby funds were withheld indiscriminately points to the flaws in this approach which ignored that the universities existed in a starkly differentiated system.

The structures of management of the TDG seemed to serve some universities better than others, whereby the inequities in the system were perpetuated as most HDIs, which already had resource constraints and which were highly dependent on the grant, further

lost funds through the withholding of unspent allocations. The HDIs which carried the most disadvantaged students, given their rural locations, arguably needed these funds the most given their historically-based resource constraints for T&L support and general student and staff experience support (Bunting, 2002; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012).

Figure 8: 2011/12 to 2013/14 Unspent at South African Contact Universities*
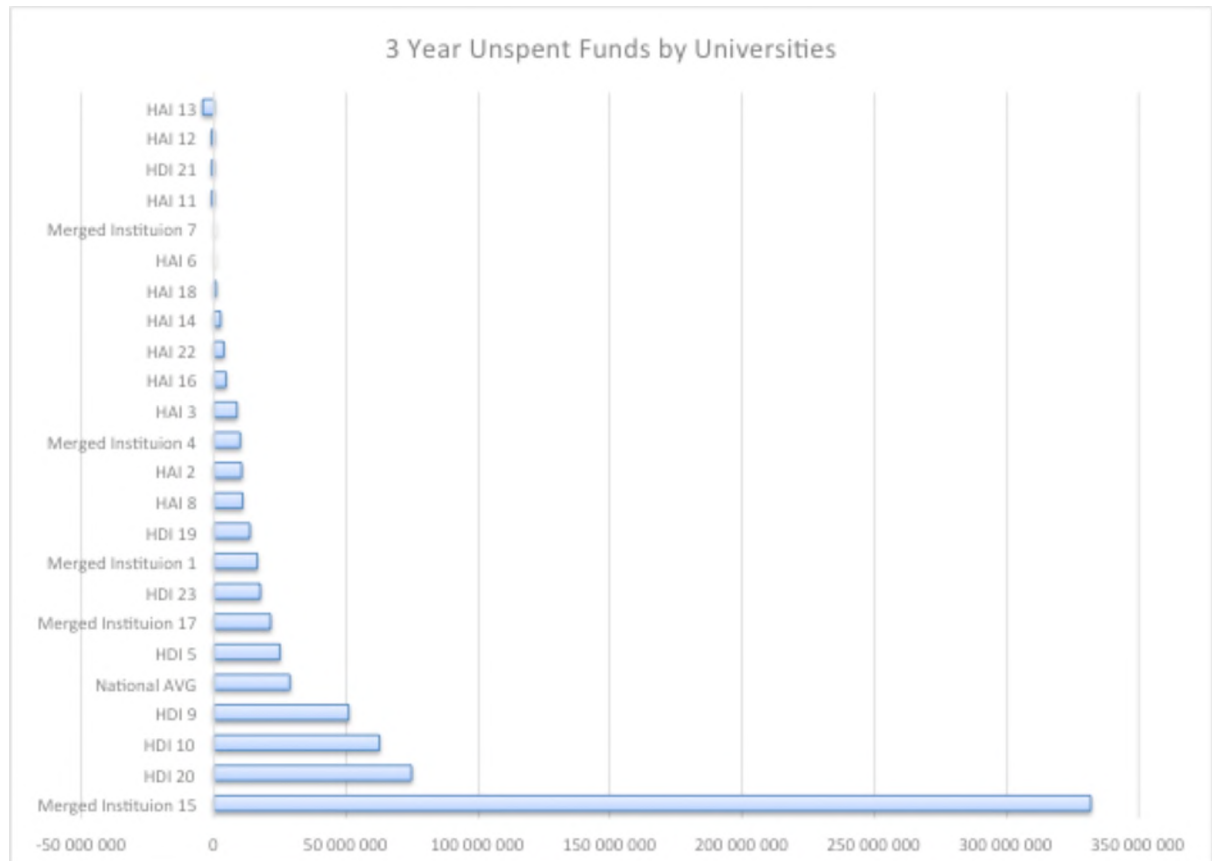
Source: Graph developed from TDG progress reports and TDG payment letters

*One university has been excluded from this table to avoid distortions as on average it received the bulk of the allocated TDG funds from 2011/12 to 2013/14. The data of this particular university has also been excluded, as the reporting in 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 was found to be unsatisfactory as the spending was fraught with irregularities and the university failed to submit progress reports that met the DHET minimum reporting requirements, such as the 60% sampling methodology for earmarked grants. (DHET payment letter to Merged Institution 15)

6.6. TDG Short-Term Budgets

The two previous sections have touched on how fluctuations in allocations severely constrained teaching development work and how the lack of alignment between DHET and university years constrained efficient spending and TDG project implementation. From 2007 to 2013 the TDG budget plans were for two-year[38] periods, and they were extended to three-year budgets from 2013 onwards. Even with the extension to three years, the short-term nature of the budgets, compounded with the unpredictability in TDG allocations, was seen in the data to have implications for the implementation of T&L interventions:

> The truncated two-year cycle, has proved to be challenging and has placed some strain on the institution to maintain its responsiveness and agility, as well as to improve on levels of performance within some projects. This has had unintended negative impacts on the effective implementation of the cumulative budget of R408 356 000. [Name of university] has achieved a comparatively lower expenditure rate of 55% against the 2012/13 budget, compared to previous 63%. Therefore, an unexpended balance of R 190 million (47%) is still available and in this regard. (University 15)

The TDG short-term budgets led to most of the proposals being for ad hoc initiatives. Such interventions had limited potential to shape systemic changes at the implemented sites and higher education system. This structural constraint on the likelihood of the TDG achieving its goal in terms was often complementary with cultural constraints, described in Chapter Five, whereby teaching development was underpinned by 'common sense' understandings.

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[38]TDG budget plans were based on confirmed National Treasury allocations which are communicated through the Medium Term Expenditure Framework budget process which furnished two-year allocations. From 2013, three-year budget plans were submitted to the department to curtail the effects of short-term budgets. For the three-year budget plans the third year allocations were equal to the second year allocations as the outer year allocations had not been published by National Treasury.

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In addition to the constraints restricting long-term planning, short-term and unpredictable TDG allocations affected staffing and professional development in the T&L field:

> ... where staff could be recruited for the Centre in 2011/12 ... highly-skilled staff were a challenge to employ as almost all the CLTD posts were on medium term contracts as a result of grant dependency. (HDI 20)

> The university planned to recruit a full-time Academic Development coordinator for each Faculty whose primary responsibility will be early detection of the problems experienced by students through analysis of test results and providing suitable remedial solutions. Unfortunately, the process of recruiting suitably qualified persons (on short contracts) was somewhat delayed because of poor response to our advertisement. These appointments have now been made on a three-year contract basis. (HDI 23)

The short-term budgets constrained universities from offering permanent posts and long-term contracts, particularly in cases where the T&L activities were solely or largely dependent on the TDG funding. Dependence on short-term employment contracts constrained the implementation of impactful interventions since it affected their continuity due to the difficulties of some universities to attract and retain T&L practitioners as posts in this field became unattractive:

> Faculties have identified several challenges. Of particular concern is the relative "instability" of their support system because it is typically staffed by Academic Development Officers who are on short-term contracts. This also impacts on the Faculties' capacity to enforce mandatory consultations as required of the policy. (HAI 8)

> Typically, Academic Development units are staffed by temporary personnel and the initiatives are often hampered by a lack of stability and continuity in staffing. Several Faculties expressed the hope that a more permanent support structure in Faculties would be instituted to sustain the programme. (HAI 8)

> Uncertainty around future funding [poses risks to] online teaching is part
> of an ongoing institutional e-Learning Project. (Institution 4)

The fact that universities were not guaranteed long-term stable budgets constrained corporate agents at universities to commit to long-term contracts and permanent employment. These constraints were more severe at sites with the inability to top up funds for T&L activities and counter the TDG fluctuations.

> Financially some faculties acknowledge that they do not have adequate
> funding while other faculties note that they are underfunded regarding
> staff provisioning and are looking for external funding to continue with
> programmes ... the Faculty of Education has funding available for up to
> 18 months ... but there is no clearly identified administrative support staff
> as yet. The Faculty of Engineering reports that funding is scheduled to end
> in September as theirs is a DHET funded project. The faculty is
> underfunded in human resource provisioning and external funding is being
> sought to continue the [removed] programme. (HAI 8)

Several faculties in the above extract point to T&L posts being largely dependent on ad hoc external budgets and not internal dedicated budgets like other portfolios of the academic enterprise which may have been deemed key at the university. The impermanence of employment of T&L practitioners, due to structural constraints such as grant-based funding and TDG fluctuations and cultural constraints in the form of value accorded to T&L in the South African higher education system, affected the effective implementation and sustainability of T&L development interventions. This limited career prospects for T&L practitioners and meant that careers in the T&L field were not as attractive as the typical academic careers (Luckett, 2012; Leibowitz et al., 2014). This resulted in high turnover of T&L practitioners in the system and the inability of universities to attract and retain staff.

> Staff retention becomes a problem for staff who have Masters and PhD
> qualifications ··· There were two resignations during the year, people

going for permanent appointments in other universities. (HDI 20)

Part-time, contract staff would often have no AD background or experience and so would likely be held captive by the same common sense understandings of teaching and learning that AD literature calls on us to challenge (Shay, 2012; Clegg, 2009). The new recruits often resorted to implementing common sense interventions typical of the academic support phase discussed in Chapter 4. Literature points to poorly-constructed interventions that formed part of the early years (1980s) of academic development continuing to form part of current practices at some universities (Boughey, 2010; Boughey & McKenna, 2016). With a shortage and unequal distribution of experts in the system, university leaders at some universities had no pool of expertise to tap from in their decision making of TDG usage and implementation of T&L programmes.

The use of part-time contract staff to undertake much of the TDG work meant there was a high turnover of staff evident in the data. There is also a concern that such staff would lack academic credibility, which would in turn restrict their agency to influence institutional teaching structures and cultures. Part-time, contract staff frequently had lower-level qualifications and little research experience, both of which are key to their having influence in the institution (McKenna, 2012). Part-time staff were in some cases paid by the hour, such as consultants working in TDG funded writing centres, and this meant they would not be part of staff meetings or included in other forums in which their experiences could be shared in ways that led to improvements in the mainstream curriculum. There is a certain irony that staff hired on such a part-time basis were structurally positioned as 'outsiders' and yet their work was to induct students identified as being 'at risk' in ways that ensured a sense of inclusion.

In many cases, the evidence shows that these T&L practitioners were not classified as academics, but were hired as administrative or support staff, which further contributed to the marginalisation of their work in that, in some cases, this limited the uptake of T&L initiatives. There were many references in the data to staff development initiatives that were poorly supported.

> We experienced the challenge that not all staff could attend training on the use of technology in teaching and learning. (HDI 10)

> Workshops to the value of R20 000 have been conducted. An amount of R380 000 is still unspent. Conflict between lecturing times and workshops schedule make it difficult for lecturers to attend workshops in large numbers. Times will have to be negotiated to ensure improved attendance. (Merged Institution 1)

The poor uptake of programmes also meant that budgeted funds could not be fully utilised for such programmes.

Although there has been advancement at most universities with regard to T&L posts being internalised, these posts at some universities still remain contract based and reliant on grant funding, and even in cases where they have now been made permanent, they are not positioned as academic staff.

The impermanent nature of the TDG also had implications for corporate decisions made on this work:

> There are also perceptions in the system that teaching development grants are an impermanent and so an unpredictable component of the higher education funding system, and that there is no guarantee it will be available beyond the current cycle. This creates a high level of instability and volatility in the system, for example through the short-term employment of teaching and learning development professionals on a contract basis, and the use of the grant in ways that do not link to a longer-term strategy for the universities. (TDG Review Report 2008).

> Several Faculties expressed the hope that a more permanent support structure in Faculties would be instituted to sustain the programme. (HAI 8)

The impermanence contributed to the detrimental practices in the system and further constrained the implementation of sustainable T&L enhancement work. Although the TDG has been implemented for more than 13 years as an earmarked grant, and despite the 2013 Funding Review arguing for the need and continuation of the TDG in the system in the form of a new Development grant, some universities still perceive the grant to be impermanent. This view was also expressed at the September 2016 Student Success Symposium held by the DHET. These perceptions on the impermanent nature of the grant continue to influence approaches to TDG project implementation. The perceptions of impermanence of the grant as a result of the fluctuations in allocations has had the potential to shape risk averse decisions by agents, where some universities have not fully committed to long term TDG interventions. At the time of writing and as discussed in the next chapter, T3, the TDG is being replaced with the University Capacity Development Grant, which will need to take this finding into account.

6.7. Conclusion

Chapter Six focused on the TDG itself as a structure and how it has shaped the emergence of T&L activities in a differentiated sector. The discussions in this chapter focused on how the TDG as a structure evolved and how this structural elaboration shaped agential interactions and T&L enhancement in the field. It is acknowledged in the discussions that the restructuring of the funding framework, through which the TDG was earmarked with improved monitoring and accountability processes, enabled the T&L environment. However, as shown in the analysis of the progress reports, the different contexts within which the TDG was implemented in was key, as this determined whether the TDG implementation was enabled or constrained. Evidence from the analysed data also showed that the blunt operational structure of the TDG as an earmarked grant in many ways constrained T&L development at some universities. National structural factors such as a non-directive TDG policy, the distribution mechanisms, initial lack of monitoring and accountability processes of the TDG, misalignment of the financial year, and the short-term budgets of the TDG were identified as constraints in implementing the TDG. Core to this chapter, it was identified that the inability of the TDG implementation policies to acknowledge and take into account different institutional contexts limited the grant's potential for gains to be achieved.

In a starkly differentiated sector, the constraining mechanisms often meant that the TDG served better those universities who had the requisite structures, cultures and agents, and that those without such enabling conditions could leverage the TDG towards improved student success to a far more limited degree.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

With the demise of apartheid, South Africa found itself with a fractured and unequal higher education system that needed significant revitalisation if it was to play the roles of nurturing social cohesion and contributing to economic development set out for it in national policy. Multiple initiatives have been put in place since then to direct the sector towards these ends, such as mergers of institutions, the formation of new institutional types, and the introduction of a performance-based funding formula. Despite this, the sector continues to experience low retention and poor throughput.

The South African higher education system remains highly differentiated with regard to equity of access and success, as participation rates and teaching output rates remain racially skewed and the capacity of universities to address teaching development is differentiated. The achievement of equity in teaching outputs at South African universities spells advancements in social justice for the country. This study was motivated by this social justice imperative and the need for a transformed higher education system for all with regard to equity in access and success.

Amid concerns about the poor utilisation of the grant and the dire need to improve teaching and learning in the South African higher education system, this study sought to understand how the grant is utilised in different institutional contexts. The study thus sought to answer the question:

> What are the factors enabling and constraining the use of the TDG to
> enhance teaching and student success at South African universities?

In order to answer this question, I conducted a system-wide study investigation on the role of institutional contexts in the implementation of the TDG at each site. The understanding of these contexts shaping the T&L environment required the identification of underlying mechanisms that were responsible for the manner in which T&L and use of

the TDG has emerged in the system. When this study began, over R5.5 billion had been spent on the Teaching Development Grant with the aim of improving retention and throughput (DHET, 2010b; 2013d; 2016c). Making money available for the improvement of teaching was a significant initiative but no study had been undertaken as to its use. It was beyond the scope of this study to look at the effectiveness of the various projects funded through this grant but I was interested in knowing what had constrained or enabled the use of the TDG in the sector.

During the course of this study, there was an announcement that the Teaching Development Grant would be terminated in 2018, and replaced with the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), which would merge the TDG with the Research Development Grant. The UCDG will continue to be linked to each university's success rates and research output rates, and will continue to be an earmarked grant which can only be spent on approved proposals. The findings of this study provide significant implications for the use of the UCDG and for the ways in which it is implemented across the system.

7.2. Key Findings

The study began with a review of the conditions in the higher education sector prior to the introduction of the TDG, a period known as T1 in the Archerian model of morphogenesis which was drawn on (Archer, 1995; 1996). These structural and cultural conditions enabled and constrained the ways in which individuals could enact their agency in relation to the T2–T3 period when the TDG was implemented. In order to trace how these conditions played out in this period, year to year, I analysed TDG documentation from 2006 to 2015, which included TDG annual progress reports and budget plans from each of the 23 universities. As presented in Chapter Three, other documents that I analysed included TDG related documents, such as correspondence between DHET and universities, Ministerial Statements, various Ministerial Task Team Reports, TDG criteria and policy utilised over the years, and the 2008 TDG Review Report. This section draws out some of the major findings that were presented in this analysis in Chapters Five and Six.

One of the main findings in the study was that the historically-based differentiation in the South African higher education landscape continues to constrain institutions in multiple ways. The study showed that the stark resource-based differentiation in the system has prevented the TDG intervention resulting in system-wide gains as the potential gains of the TDG have not fully been realised at all campuses.

The focus on such constraints should not be seen to be an argument that the TDG has not been effective. Though this study did not analyse the effects of the various interventions, it seems self-evident that the wide spread of interventions over a number of years must have had important consequences for academics and students in these universities. There is thus a need for future research to look into the effects of the various TDG supported interventions. Furthermore, the implementation of the TDG as an earmarked grant which required institutional planning and reporting was found in this study to have led to the systemisation of processes and procedures and the establishment of structures, and the empowerment of corporate agents, particularly at sites that did not have these systems in place before the introduction of the grant. This emerged through the strengthening of the TDG structures, such as a strengthened policy which required focused planning and accountability processes.

The study showed how in the first nine years of TDG implementation the grant had been used to fund a wide range of other institutional needs that left T&L work insufficiently addressed. The study showed that institutions which had resource restrictions were not able to fully undertake formal T&L interventions as most of them resorted to utilising the TDG to fund infrastructure and equipment backlogs. These practices were found to be prevalent in former HDI campuses and those former HDI campuses that had been merged with former HAIs. As evident in the findings, these resource gaps have persisted and continue to compromise the academic enterprise at affected universities.

The study also revealed that universities which have access to additional funding other than state funding have been more enabled in the implementation of the TDG project than their counterparts with severe financial constraints. These universities were able to augment and advance their own funds in the implementation of the TDG and were thus able to counter late payments of the TDG and to mediate the effects of fluctuations in

allocations, short-term TDG budgets and at times inadequate allocations. This again demonstrates that mainstream funds from the state had been inadequate.

The move by some HAIs to utilise the TDG to meet infrastructure gaps exclusively at their HDI campuses also raises questions as to whether the HDI campuses are still 'islands' seen to be separate within the merged institutions. In one incident, a HAI submitted two progress reports, one for the former HAI campus and one for the HDI campus. The institution was requested by DHET to resubmit one institutional progress report. During an institutional visit it also came to light that this institution applied different approaches to a number of T&L initiatives, such as in the hiring of its tutors, whereby on the former HDI campus the tutor posts were advertised and on the former HAI campus tutors were hand-picked.

Another major finding of the study was that the unequal distribution of teaching development expertise in the South African higher education system was a major constraint in the TDG to the attainment of system-wide gains. The study showed that the shortage or lack of appropriate teaching and learning staff has had a role in the nature and type of interventions that have emerged at sites. The study shows that universities which have limited expertise were more constrained in carrying out T&L enhancement projects in meaningful ways than universities with agents that had T&L expertise experience. Findings from the study show that expertise and experience are still concentrated at the HAIs, with HDIs struggling to attract and retain the much-needed expertise. The inability to attract and retain staff emerged from multiple structural constraints such as geographical locations, conditions of work, inefficient HR systems and access to financial resources for competitive packages, and instability in governance and management structures at some universities. Emerging from the data in the study is that staffing challenges remain one of the core constraints in the implementation of the TDG, as in some cases this has translated to the failure by some institutions to spend the funds altogether.

Other forms of differentiation such as the previous binary differentiation of technikons and universities were also highlighted in the study to have had implications for T&L development in the sector. The institutional restructuring of the South African higher education system, which was achieved through mergers to create new institutional types,

was also found to have constrained some institutions in their capacity to implement T&L enhancement interventions.

The study found that, in addition to the T&L expertise constraints on TDG implementation, the uneven distribution of expertise in the broader administration, financial management, institutional planning and human resource professions had implications for the establishment of systems and processes and thus for the implementation of the TDG. The study revealed that the absence of expertise in such fields was at times coupled with unstable management, governance and administration corporate agency. There were instances of weak and uncoordinated institutional systems, policies, structures and processes, which further constrained the effective running of the academic enterprise at some sites. Instability at the universities affected the management of project-based programmes such as the TDG. These structural weaknesses constrained the potential gains of the TDG and related interventions at the affected sites.

There was some evidence of cultures that did not value transparency, accountability and compliance to the TDG policy, thus enabling the underutilisation or misuse of the funds. The role of corporate agency in the form of leadership and ownership of projects also emerged as being a key enabler in the implementation of the TDG. In cases where there was instability in governance, management and administrative structures, universities reported this to have constrained TDG implementation.

At a national level, the lack of corporate agency in conceptualising and managing the grant was attended to when a person with strong T&L expertise was seconded into the DHET. It was evident that this is central to its use and I have argued in the study that further work needs to be done in this area. However, given that this secondment has now ended, this finding has important implications for the UCDG. This study found that the availability of such expertise in strong corporate agents to manage and direct the grant is key to its being used in meaningful ways.

Another key finding in the study was that the blunt nature of the TDG implementation has limited its effectiveness as a steering mechanism to yield system-wide gains. In particular, the blunt practice of withholding unspent funds only brushed on the surface of the problem by focusing on the symptom of underspending and not on the structural,

cultural and agential issues forming the generative mechanisms that led to under-expenditures. This practice ignored that the universities existed in a starkly differentiated system and in contexts where some were better placed and equipped to implement the TDG than others. The TDG implementation structure thus seemed to serve some universities better than others as it ignored the contextual issues enabling or constraining TDG spending. This had the potential of perpetuating the inequalities in the system and reproducing the status quo as most HDIs which already had resource constraints and which were highly dependent on the state grant further lost funds through the withholding of funds.

The withheld funds were re-directed by the government for national projects. The fact that all universities including the well-resourced HAIs had access to these withheld funds through such projects translated into a regressive distribution of the TDG as the well-resourced HAIs then had access to additional TDG funds through national projects. The end result of this process was that the total allocation that a university ended up with in a given year was thus based on capacity to spend rather than on need.

The study also revealed that although T&L structures had been strengthened through the TDG and a directive policy for increased accountability and monitoring, the marginalisation of T&L work had had effects across the system: there was evidence of persisting cultures that did not acknowledge T&L as a legitimate academic activity and area of expertise and scholarship in academia. This in some cases affected the uptake of T&L interventions thus jeopardising the T&L enhancement project. The study shows that the transformation in the structures alone, such as the provision of funding interventions, did not necessarily result in a transformation in the practices and attitudes towards T&L work. This finding concurs with findings in other studies that looked at the resilience of cultures at selected universities (Luckett, 2012; Leibowitz et. al., 2014).

While the data does not allow for an analysis of the effectiveness of the TDG funded projects, the study was able to identify a reliance on common sense conceptualisations of teaching, learning, and teaching development. This meant that, in many cases, fairly ad hoc interventions which focused on 'gaps' in students were the main focus of TDG spending. There remains significant work to be done to ensure better-theorised and more institutionally-focused interventions being undertaken. The rush to spend the money in a

short time frame and the lack of corporate agents to conceptualise such spending often resulted in a number of unconnected initiatives being introduced and often not sustained year on year.

The problem of a lack of alignment between the DHET financial year and the academic year, coupled with the lack, in many cases, of strong institutional processes and T&L expertise, had a number of effects on TDG spending. Some institutions did not have internal funds to begin projects prior to the TDG funding being deposited into the institutional accounts, or they did not have the requisite agents to access block grants funds in the interim. The lack of strong corporate agency in such cases needs to be considered, alongside highly hierarchical cultures and managerial structures that would constrain the ability to transfer funds internally.

The fluctuations of TDG funding were found to be a significant constraint on the implementation of sustainable teaching development initiatives. In particular, this meant that staff hired on the basis of TDG funds were generally hired as part-time or contract staff. This meant that their academic qualifications and experience in teaching development were limited and, in many cases, meant that the posts were not filled at all. This again had constraining implications for the TDG projects to be sustained or to impact on mainstream teaching and learning experiences.

The study analysed the enablements and constraints on TDG implementation – it did not analyse the effectiveness of the TDG funded projects. This is an important distinction. The study offers a number of findings with implications for UCDG implementation but does not provide much by way of direction as to which interventions are most likely to result in system-wide improvements in student outputs. However, the analysis of the data does allow for a conclusion to be reached that the TDG has indeed been an enabling structure for the development of teaching in South Africa, but that this has not been adequate to address throughput bottlenecks in the achievement of the transformation imperative for equity in outputs. Furthermore, benefits that have been accrued in the past decade of TDG implementation cannot be confidently claimed to have been equally attained by all universities in the sector.

As discussed in Chapter One, the latest DHET cohort studies have shown that inequities in teaching outputs have persisted and remain racially skewed, where Indian and White students continue to perform better than their Mixed Race and African counterparts. In addition to this, participation rates in South Africa are still higher for White and Indian students than for Mixed-Race and African students. And, even more disappointingly, the participation rates in South Africa stand at 19.2% (DHET, 2016b), much lower that the OECD countries. The findings presented above reveal that the attempts to develop T&L through the TDG have been undermined by the uneven nature of a system characterised by inequities in the form of distribution in resources such as funding, infrastructure, staffing expertise, performance output and geographical location. These persisting inequities have constrained the TDG from achieving system-wide gains in the sector.

In some cases, it was evident that the structures supporting T&L work had been transformed but cultures that marginalised T&L work continued to compromise agential efforts to advance T&L. This lesson points to the need for innovative ways of transforming constraining cultures. The continual marginalisation of T&L is explained by Archer (1996) to be a result of complementarity in the parts, whereby constraining structures within institutional setups reinforce constraining cultures that defend, protect and reproduce the status quo. This points to the necessity of innovative interventions that will enable the mediation for elaboration of constraining cultures if structural interventions in the form of funding such as the TDG are to yield system-wide gains. This, as evident in the findings, indicates that contradicting cultures often led to the reproduction of the status quo. This thus constrained the activation of the TDG's enabling mechanisms for adequate T&L advancements.

7.3. Contribution

One of the main contributions of this study to the T&L field and national policy point of view is that up to now the higher education system in South Africa has not had an analytical study that has looked at the implementation of the TDG from a system-wide perspective. The decision to conduct a system-wide study was to ensure that all the complexities of the differentiated system as a whole were taken into account. The findings of how the TDG implementation has emerged in the South African higher education sector are particularly important at this point in time as the TDG together with

the Research Development Grant will be reconfigured into the UCDG as from 2018. In Archerian terms, this forms the T4 in the morphogenesis framework. This new grant is an elaboration of the TDG and RDG. The grant will aim to provide comprehensive and sustainable support for T&L, and research, with a total amount of R900 000 000 being made available in 2018 (DHET, 2016a; 2016c. The study has demonstrated that if the UCDG is to result in system-wide adequate gains its implementation policy should take cognisance of the differentiated nature of the system and generative factors that constrained and enabled the use of the TDG. Failure to take into account the stark resource-based differences in the sector poses the potential risk of the reproduction of experiences of the TDG implementation at constrained environments.

The increase of the amount of money for T&L from R649 596 under the TDG in 2016/17 to about R900 000 000 under the UCDG (which must include research development) is a welcomed elaboration but, as shown in this study, this will not automatically lead to gains, particularly at universities facing structural constraints (DHET, 2017). The structural inequities that pose constraints in the system and which have limited TDG potential will need to be urgently addressed in an honest and practical manner if adequate gains are to be attained under the UCDG.

The Historically Disadvantaged Institutions Development Grant (HDI-DG), which aims at assisting universities to reverse their HDI status and propel them to an equal footing with their HAI counterparts, has recently been implemented in 2016/17. This, although it is two decades late, is a welcome development in addressing historical backlogs and has the potential to eradicate historical inequities at HDIs. Similarly, like the TDG, for this grant to yield its expected gains the structural and cultural constraints identified in this study will have to be addressed at both national and institutional level. To do this will require strong corporate agency at a national level, and the political will to address current constraints.

The findings of this study are key as they do not only provide lessons for the UCDG but also have implications for the implementation processes and policies of other earmarked grants such as the Clinical Training Grant, Infrastructures and Efficiency Training Grant, Historically Disadvantaged Institutions Development Grant and the Veterinary Sciences Grants, which face the same risks highlighted in this study. As a reminder, these

earmarked grants, like the TDG, are steering mechanisms in the system that support universities through structural interventions in the form of funding to address system and institutional bottlenecks in order to improve student experience, success and throughput.

Another contributing factor to take forward at a national policy level for the UCDG and other earmarked grants is the reconsideration of the blanket approach of withholding of funds in cases where universities have unspent funds. The large loss of institutional funds by mainly HDIs is concerning and poses questions as to the social impact on the universities. The blanket practice of withholding funds seems to contradict the 2001 National Plan's equity principles as it discounts the blunt inequities in the system. The National Plan states that:

> ... applying the principle of equity implies, on the one hand, a critical identification of existing inequalities which are the product of policies, structures and practices based on racial, gender, disability and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, and on the other a programme of transformation with a view to redress. Such transformation involves not only abolishing all existing forms of unjust differentiation, but also measures of empowerment, including financial support to bring about equal opportunity for individuals and institutions. (DoE, 2001: 1.18).

While it might well be said that HDIs demonstrated little ability to handle the resources that they did receive, it is insufficient to simply note this and continue with a system which then tends to benefit HAIs more than HDIs. A critical realist approach insists that change requires an identification of the mechanisms from which events emerge. A system-wide process needs to be implemented to ensure that the UCDG functions for the system as a whole. Prior to and throughout the implementation of the TDG and other earmarked grants existing forms of unjust differentiation, in particular in the distribution of funding, and in staffing, infrastructure and equipment, have not been addressed in the system. The practice of withholding earmarked funds continues to be implemented without the system addressing the constraining structures.

The findings in the study pointed to how critical the distribution of expertise was to the success of the TDG and enhancement of T&L. The study showed that there is an urgent need of appropriate teaching and learning staff and also professional skills in higher

education governance, management and administration. The key recommendation from this study is that there is a need for a national structure for the advancement of university teaching. Suggestions in this regard were mentioned in the 2008 review of the Teaching Development Grant:

> A number of developed countries have over the last 10-15 years established or significantly extended national structures for the advancement of university teaching ... In South Africa, by contrast, despite our much greater need, structures for supporting Teaching Development are very limited in number and capacity. There are no nationally supported teaching-and-learning networks. While sound work has been done, current structures and resources do not nearly match the scale of the need ... investing in sound leadership and co-ordination structures, at national and institutional level, is a necessary condition for making optimal use of Teaching Development grants to the institutions. (TDG Review Report 2008)

Such a structure would house the growing body of knowledge and research, and would be led by a community of academics providing expertise in a collaborative manner. The proposed structure would serve as a resources structure for informing and promoting policy development and for supporting professional leadership at universities for all universities, particularly those that have extreme capacity constraints. Such a structure was recommended when a case for a flexible curriculum structure was made by the CHE in its proposal for an undergraduate curriculum reform in South Africa (CHE, 2013). However, this was never taken up. Such a structure would have to be funded through a state lever such as the UCDG. Through consultation, the DHET would set out the conditions of such an intervention, which would ideally be housed within an organisation such as the CHE or Universities South Africa (USAF) to ensure institutional autonomy and national priority interests. USAF is a membership organisation representing South Africa's universities by each university's vice-chancellor. It would be important that if such a national structure was established it would have to be equipped with the appropriate capacity and binding authority for stakeholders in its functioning. Of importance is that such a structure would need to be underpinned by a culture of sector-level development that takes institutional and disciplinary differentiation seriously into

account. It would also need to be peopled by individuals with significant credibility in teaching development and who are able to nurture theorised understandings of teaching and learning.

Related to this recommendation that a national teaching development structure be initiated, is a recommendation that the offering of Post-Graduate Diplomas in Higher Education (PGDHEs) be evaluated and more widely supported. This qualification has the potential to improve the theorisation of teaching development, and a number of such qualifications have sprung up in recent years. It would be useful if a national review of such qualifications were to be carried out by the Council on Higher Education so that we can have an idea as to the quality of these programmes and their effectiveness in improving teaching in the context of problematic common sense understandings of the issue. The introduction of a PGDHE focused specifically on the field of academic development and offered to academic development practitioners, funded through the TDG and offered by Rhodes University to academics from a number of institutions, can potentially ensure that AD staff themselves have a firm theoretical base from which to undertake their work. Given that this study found that many AD staff employed through the TDG have little or no AD experience, often have limited academic qualifications, and are hired on a part-time contract basis, it is unsurprising that they had little corporate agency to address institution-level issues.

Another capacity development intervention that needs to be considered at a national level is the initiation of a higher education qualification that particularly focuses on university financial management, project management, administration, governance, and student data analytics for decision making and institutional planning. The findings in this study pointed to a shortage of professionals in this area, which was a constraint not only in the implementation of the TDG but also in the stable managements of the academic enterprises and sustainability of universities. Currently the TDG is being used for a programme targeted at HE managers in partnership with Nelson Mandela University and Bath University. There is a need to extend such programmes for a wider scope and greater enrolment numbers. Such programmes need to cater to training for all levels of higher education skills, not only at senior management level, and they need to ensure that the complexities of the South African higher education system are curriculated into the programme. Such a programme needs to take into cognisance that for the effective

running of higher education institutions, professionals in the above highlighted fields need to work in sync and not be treated in isolation. As Trow indicates, such work is often:

> … treated in isolation, discussed by different people, with different methods and assumptions and often with different values; they are reported in different conferences and published in different journals for different audiences (Trow, 1973: 1).

The work undertaken by institutional planners in South Africa is often not sufficiently taken into account in directing university projects, and much useful data analysis undertaken by such people is underutilised (Botha & Muller, 2016), because they do not have the corporate agency to influence university structures or because their analysis is insufficiently theorised. There is a need for more formal qualifications that can improve capacity while also enhancing the likelihood of system-level equality.

Evident from this study is also the need for grants such as the Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant to urgently address infrastructure and equipment backlogs and inequities, particularly at former HDI campuses so that these universities are able to provide the same student experience provided at HAIs. This will also assist in these universities focusing their energies on strengthening their academic programmes and footprint as opposed to a continual preoccupation with the addressing of historical backlogs, which as the study has shown leads to the sidelining of T&L development work. This is an urgent need but one which will no doubt be difficult to address unless the funding allocated by the national budget to higher education is significantly increased. In the light of demands for free higher education, it would seem likely that any increases in funding in the near future will be used to make up for losses in student fee income.

The inequities in the system have been further entrenched due to the delay in the implementation of an intervention that addresses historical backlogs at HDIs. The delay for such an intervention after 20 years of democracy is an injustice, given the known challenges and conditions at these universities, which have been repeatedly highlighted in the literature (Bunting, 2002; Morrow, 2008, DoE, 2008c; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). Such an intervention is the HDI-DG, which was only implemented in 2016/17. The project will run for 5 years from 2016/17 to 2020/21; however, the funds have only been

allocated for the first 2 years for most universities because of the poor quality of the proposals that were submitted by universities. Institutions have now been provided with funds to develop their plans for resubmission, and are permitted to use these funds for external expertise in the development of the plans. Once again this is evidence of severe constraints in capacity within these universities. There is a concern that if the proposal development funds are used to pay external consultants to develop acceptable proposals, there will not necessarily be the institutional 'buy in' to implement them and the consultants might not be in a position to ensure that the proposals take structural and cultural conditions sufficiently into account.

From 2006/07 to 2011/12 the Infrastructure Grant allocated more funds to HWIs than HDIs, as presented in the graph below. It is not clear what criteria corporate agents used to arrive at a decision to allocate funds in such a fashion, but it is very possible that this resulted from universities' capacity to develop proposals. After the release of the 2011 Report on the Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Provision of Student Housing at South African Universities, which reported a desperate state of infrastructure at HDIs, the infrastructure allocations to HDIs from 2012/13 onwards significantly increased.

Figure 9: Six-Year Infrastructure Allocations (2006/07 to 2011/12)
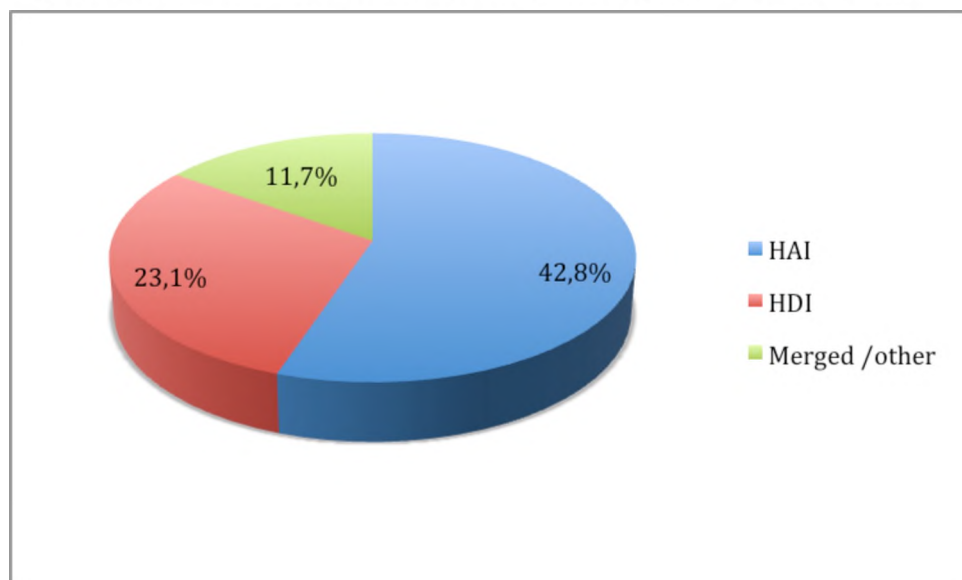
Source: Extracted from DHET Ministerial Allocations (2005/06 to 2011/12)

However, it should be noted that the allocation of funding alone, as it has been shown in Chapters Six and Seven, does not guarantee the eradication of historical backlogs and bottlenecks, as the system is plagued with numerous cultural and structural constraints.

The success of addressing these challenges through earmarked funding support is critically dependent on the development of capacity at universities to implement these programmes for which state support needs to be adequately provided. Furthermore, there is a critical need for the system and state to recognise that rural- and township-based universities, or more accurately those based in former homelands[39], need to be supported either financially or through a comprehensive plan to retain staff at these universities. Often these universities are in areas that have no adequate amenities and do not have big budgets to compete against the poaching of the much-needed staff (Buhlungu, 2017).

The new Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) project that will be carried through by the UCDG will undoubtedly be able to contribute to the provision of much-needed teaching staff in the higher education landscape. However, universities and the state will need to develop a staff retainment plan at universities that this study has shown to have struggled for years to attract and retain staff due to a multiple of cultural and structural constraints, the most prominent one being geographical location. A number of universities are financially unsustainable and are entirely dependent on the state funding to keep afloat. It is imperative that the new HDI-DG supports universities into a new era of financial strength and independence through the establishment of third-stream income capacity generation that strengthens rather than compromises the academic enterprise. And, as shown in this study, this will require the building of strong operational systems and processes, and the capacity for institutional planning, management, administration and student and staff support.

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[39] A homeland, also known as a Bantustan, was a territory set aside for particular African ethnic groups of South Africa and Namibia as part of the policy of apartheid. These areas were mainly rural, densely populated, inadequate for human occupation, impoverished, exploited and underdeveloped (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2017).

7.4. Limitations of the Study

This study aimed at investigating the whole higher education sector in its entirety by investigating on how the TDG implementation was constrained or enabled. While this enabled a national significance to the study, it limited the detail in which I was able to reflect on the TDG implementation. This decision to reflect on national-level constraints and enablements on implementation also meant I could not undertake an evaluation of individual initiatives or comment in any depth as to the projects funded by the TDG. However, had I elected to interrogate the use of the TDG within a particular university, or even within a particular faculty of a university, there would be a problem of suggesting that the findings had generalisations across the sector. This study was able to demonstrate that the conditions under which the TDG was implemented varied considerably along the lines of location, typology, resource distribution, cultures and performance. However, as much as these were the strengths of the wide scope of the study, the investigation of a large sample posed a risk of the study losing out on depth.

Another limitation of the study is that the data set of progress reports and proposals had to be signed off by university senior management as part of the accounting requirements on the use of the grant. This may have led to some of the presented empirical data in the documentation having been the perspectives of the corporate agents, and the understandings of primary agents could have been restricted in the data given their position in the university social setting.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter has presented a summary of findings which largely point to structural and cultural constraints that prevented the TDG from leading to system-wide gains. Although the study did not aim at investigating the effectiveness of TDG supported programmes, it did raise some questions in this regard. For example, in the case of Merged Institution 15, which received a total of R1.5 billion in the past 12 years, there was little improvement in teaching outputs. The DHET cohort studies published in 2016 show that after 10 years of study only 14.8% of the 2005 cohort studying at this particular university had graduated (DHET, 2016b). Similar patterns are also evident for some HDIs (DHET, 2016b). This data shows that although access had been provided to students, the system failed to meet

its social justice mandate to provide a reasonable chance of success, thereby rendering the exercise unproductive for either the individual or the country. These low throughput rates are a cause for concern in relation to the inefficiencies and constraints persisting at some sites, whereby interventions such as the TDG seemed not to have led to system-wide adequate gains. Of additional concern is the large wastage of human resources in the form of students lost in the system, and wastage of financial resources if one considers other investments made other than the TDG.

This chapter has stressed the urgent need of the system to tackle resource-based historical differentiation in creating environments that are conducive to T&L development. However, the ever-competing evolving demands on higher education within a declining fiscal environment add to the need for T&L interventions such as the TDG and UCDG to be implemented in enabling environments for adequate gains to be attained.

In the quest for social justice of equitable outputs and for the transformation of South African universities to serve all its citizens, the UCDG becomes a crucial mechanism to achieve the transformation and equity outcomes. As mentioned in this chapter, for the UCDG to be activated by agents in ways that will yield system-wide adequate gains, there must be a differentiated approach that is applied by acknowledging the capacity distribution across the sector. This chapter has thus presented the T4 for this study, which is the T&L conditioning environment within which the UCDG will be implemented.

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