

**CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM
REFORM, DESIGN, AND MANAGEMENT
IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**

by

THEMBA JACOB MKHONTO

THESIS

**submitted in fulfilment of the
full requirement for the degree**

DOCTOR TECHNOLOGIAE

in

EDUCATION

in the

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

SUPERVISOR: Prof A. Muller

NOVEMBER 2007

DECLARATION

I, Themba Jacob Mkhonto, hereby declare that:

**CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM
REFORM, DESIGN, AND MANAGEMENT IN THE TWENTY
FIRST CENTURY**

is my own original work, that the manuscript has not been submitted previously for an award, and that all the external sources drawn on have been duly acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Signed: _____

THEMBA JACOB MKHONTO

DATE

DEDICATION

I humbly and respectfully dedicate

CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM REFORM, DESIGN, AND MANAGEMENT IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

to the following persons posthumously:

My twin brother; my son, Thulani; and my mother, Ms Thokozile Winnie Witness Mabaso;
My parents-in-law, Mr Kholisile Griffiths and Mrs Ntombi Phyllis Dineka.

Their collective memory has immortalized in me the limitless pursuit of "... the life of the mind" (Cornell West, 1999: xv).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am infinitely thankful for the Almighty God's blessings throughout my life. His numinous presence once more replenished my soul during the most challenging moments of this study. I am also immeasurably grateful to the NRF and the former Technikon Witwatersrand for the financial support that sustained this study, especially during the first three years of its execution.

I am eternally indebted to my wife, Mrs Busisiwe Kate Laurette Mkhonto, on whose shoulders I proudly stood for all the years of hardship and toil. I still continue to draw heavily on her fortitude, sacrifice, and patience. Her years of relentless support, resilience, and belief in me have finally yielded the desired outcome.

I also thank my father, Mr John M. Mkhonto – for overcoming the fears of his life and staying the course. I would like to salute my sons, Banda and Njabulo. They have been the quintessence of patience, respect, and perseverance. They have earned for themselves the virtues of tolerance and understanding, given the loss of all the material comforts they have been deprived during the years of my solitary confinement to my studies!

I greatly admire the messages and deeds of support by my younger sister, Refiloe Mabaso. I can only wish her the best for sharing some of her limited resources with me. Thabo Tembe and Phillip Thabede, my unforgettable friends, have been the proverbial pillars of strength, depriving themselves of their valuable time and other resources in order to lighten my worldly burdens.

It is most befitting also, to accord due respect to the following academic luminaries:

- Professor Anton Muller, my supervisor – his vast experience in the field of higher education curriculum has been profusely illustrated in his guidance of the shape and substance of this research project. I benefited immensely from his unbiased, analytic and conceptual understanding of theory and practice in issues facing South African higher education. The inordinate discussion and presentation sessions were indeed 'hectic', but fruitful in the long term.
- Dr Maretha Gous – her personable character is the quintessential blending of wisdom and humility. Apart from her professional input during the empirical phase of the study, I have tremendous respect for her continuous support and unwavering desire and interest in the actual

completion of the study. I am eternally inspired by her inculcation of spiritual sustenance in all the stages of the research. I will cherish her altruism forever!

- Professor Olga N. Makhubela-Nkondo – I extend my most sincere gratitude for the material morale-uplifting and material support she has selflessly offered. I owe much of my self-esteem to her insightful knowledge and understanding of the human condition and its innately indomitable quality. Her trust in my indefatigable strength has continuously served to revitalize me to proceed from one challenge of the study to the next.

I am truly indebted to the sterling work done by Mrs Malie King – her compassionate and personal attachment to this project will be painstakingly missed. From 2002 to date, this project owes its entire existence to her entrepreneurial, technical and editorial efficiency. Her clinical attention to detail provided the backbone of this study's 'coming into being'. I am extremely blessed for her boundless patience (and tolerance at times) in the arduous process of (re)typing and inordinate moments of printing draft-after-draft of the edited and corrected chapters, during her weekends and holidays! Her personal attachment and compassion manifested themselves until the conclusion of the project up to the binding of the required number of manuscript copies.

The dedicated UJ (Bunting Road Campus) Library Staff, especially:

- Mmes Geraldene Cele, Makgabo Kekana, Nelly Kaunda, Julia Paris, and Ms Tina Zondi – for doing everything in their professional capacity to ease all of my research-related concerns at the initial stages of the study. The logistical preparations they persistently addressed in the research room were definitely outside the ambit of their job description. Despite the initial episodes of restlessness, these dedicated professionals relentlessly put the research-related plight of the doctoral students at the forefront of the transformation of the library's research capacity – which has been excellently displayed by Mr Zanele Msomi through his Inter-Library Loan skills and resourcefulness. That not even a single ILL book was lost between us since 2002, speaks volumes of the nature and quality of his professional ability!
- Messrs Lawrence Stona, Jackson Selemela and Mduduzi Madondo all turned the library into my second home, and not even once complained about my constant requests for literature assistance. Ms Nomsa Mudau, Ms Fezeka Sithole, Ms Goitsewang Ncongwane, Ms Zevile Zondo, and MsLouisa Khumalo truly demonstrated their customer relations acumen at the front lending desk and made me feel very much a part of the library staff family. I will forever

cherish their honest enquiry of always asking: “How are things going [in your studies]”? Their sociability turned the isolatory nature of studying in the library into an enjoyable enterprise.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Chapter I: Enhancement of the study | 1 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.2 Background/Context of the study | 2 |
| 1.2.1 The international context of higher education curriculum reform/transformation | 2 |
| 1.2.2 The South African context of higher education curriculum reform/transformation | 5 |
| 1.3 Significance of the study | 8 |
| 1.4 Problem statement | 10 |
| 1.5 Objectives of the research | 11 |
| 1.6 Research design and methodology | 12 |
| 1.6.1 Data collection methods and procedures | 14 |
| 1.6.1.1 Literature review | 14 |
| 1.6.1.2 The empirical (fieldwork) of the study | 14 |
| 1.7 Overview of chapters | 16 |
| 1.7.1 Chapter 1: Enhancement of the study | 16 |
| 1.7.2 Chapter 2: Overview of trends in international higher education transformation | 16 |
| 1.7.3 Chapter 3: Overview of South African higher education | 17 |
| 1.7.4 Chapter 4: Overview of trends in higher education curriculum reform and development | 17 |
| 1.7.5 Chapter 5: Research methodology, data collection, and data presentation | 17 |
| 1.7.6 Chapter 6: Findings and discussion | 17 |
| 1.7.7 Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations | 17 |
| 1.8 Conclusion | 18 |
| | |
| Chapter 2: Overview of trends in international higher education transformation | 19 |
| 2.1 Introduction | 19 |
| 2.1.1 The changing higher education environment | 19 |
| 2.1.2 The multi-faceted impact and influence of globalisation on higher education development: an overview | 22 |
| 2.1.2.1 A historic and economic perspective of globalisation | 23 |
| 2.1.2.2 Proliferation of non-traditional higher education providers | 25 |
| 2.1.2.3 Commercialization/commodification of higher education ‘products’ | 32 |
| 2.1.2.4 The advent of academic capitalism | 35 |

| | | |
|----------------|--|-----|
| 2.1.3 | The role of Information and Communication Technologies in higher education | 40 |
| 2.1.3.1 | The impact of ICT on higher education | 41 |
| 2.1.3.2 | Opportunities presented by ICT | 42 |
| 2.1.3.3 | Challenges occasioned by ICT | 44 |
| 2.2 | Higher education missions in a new and diversified environment | 46 |
| 2.2.1 | The imperative for diversity | 47 |
| 2.2.1.1 | The growing demand and changing higher education constituencies | 49 |
| 2.2.2 | Responsive and responsible universities' adaptation | 50 |
| 2.3 | The state of higher education missions | 52 |
| 2.3.1 | The higher education teaching context | 52 |
| 2.3.1.1 | The changing role of university academic staff | 55 |
| 2.3.1.2 | Nurturing a new generation of academic staff | 59 |
| 2.3.1.3 | Academic freedom and perceived threats | 64 |
| 2.3.1.4 | Higher education curriculum and students in the context of teaching and learning | 66 |
| 2.3.2 | The role of research in higher education | 82 |
| 2.3.2.1 | The changing ecology of the research university | 84 |
| 2.3.2.2 | Research commercialization | 87 |
| 2.3.2.3 | The teaching-research debate | 89 |
| 2.3.3 | Higher education and community service | 91 |
| 2.3.3.1 | The indispensability of HE's social consciousness | 91 |
| 2.4 | The financing of higher education | 94 |
| 2.4.1 | Securing revenue for operational sustainability | 95 |
| 2.4.2 | Reducing costs for operational sustainability | 98 |
| 2.5 | Governance in higher education | 101 |
| 2.5.1 | Main shortcomings in the traditional mode of governance | 103 |
| 2.5.2 | The need to improve higher education governance | 105 |
| 2.5.3 | Issues of accountability and institutional autonomy | 107 |
| 2.5.4 | Faculty governance | 110 |
| 2.6 | Transformation trajectories in higher education | 111 |
| 2.7 | Possible future trends in higher education development | 115 |
| 2.7.1 | A technologically-induced environment | 115 |
| 2.7.2 | What type of curriculum? | 116 |
| 2.7.3 | Stakeholder responsibility | 117 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------|
| 2.8 | Some remarks pertaining to curriculum implications | 118 |
| 2.8.1 | The impact of globalisation on higher education | 118 |
| 2.8.2 | ICT and its reconceptualisation of the “time” and “place” of learning | 119 |
| 2.8.3 | Massification and the ‘hybridization’ of the student population | 119 |
| 2.8.4 | The ‘relevance factor’ in HE skills provision | 119 |
| 2.8.5 | Perceived epistemological stratification in the HE curriculum | 119 |
| 2.8.6 | Modes of HE adaptation to the changing knowledge ecology | 120 |
| 2.8.7 | The link between curriculum content and context | 120 |
| 2.8.8 | The HE curriculum and social class contradictions | 120 |
| 2.8.9 | Complexities of transformation nomenclature | 121 |
| 2.9 | Conclusion | 122 |
| Chapter 3: Overview of South African higher education | | 123 |
| 3.1 | Introduction | 123 |
| 3.1.1 | The legacy of apartheid higher education | 123 |
| 3.1.2 | The past: structural and conjunctural problems | 124 |
| 3.1.3 | Old institutional types and sub-types in a racially differentiated HE environment | 127 |
| 3.1.3.1 | Historically White Universities (HWUs) | 132 |
| 3.1.3.2 | Historically Black Universities (HBUs) | 139 |
| 3.1.3.3 | The former technikon sector | 143 |
| 3.2 | The higher education regulatory framework | 149 |
| 3.2.1 | The context for a regulated higher education environment | 151 |
| 3.2.2 | Determinants of higher education policy | 153 |
| 3.2.2.1 | The constitutional perspective | 154 |
| 3.2.2.2 | The legislative framework | 155 |
| 3.2.2.3 | The RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) perspective | 155 |
| 3.2.2.4 | The Department of Education (DoE) framework | 156 |
| 3.3 | Establishment of an integrated and differentiated national higher education system | 166 |
| 3.3.1 | Implementation of a single, but differentiated system of national higher education | 167 |
| 3.3.2 | The complexities of differentiation and their convergence in higher education | 170 |
| 3.3.2.1 | Organizational/Institutional differentiation | 170 |
| 3.3.2.2 | Programmatic/Streams differentiation | 171 |
| 3.3.2.3 | A newly proposed higher education quality assurance framework | 174 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------|
| 3.3.2.4 | Challenges posed by instability within the HEQF environment | 176 |
| 3.4 | Governance in South African higher education | 177 |
| 3.4.1 | The systemic context of higher education governance | 177 |
| 3.4.2 | The institutional context of higher education governance | 178 |
| 3.5 | Funding in the South African higher education context | 180 |
| 3.5.1 | Formula funding | 182 |
| 3.5.2 | Earmarked funding | 183 |
| 3.6 | Some issues in local higher education | 184 |
| 3.6.1 | The transformation debate: evolution or revolution? | 189 |
| 3.7 | Conclusion | 192 |
| Chapter: 4 Overview of trends in higher education curriculum reform and development | | 193 |
| 4.1 | Introduction | 193 |
| 4.1.1 | Knowledge, education, and curriculum dynamics: a higher education perspective | 194 |
| 4.1.2 | Higher education and societal contestations over knowledge as a strategic resource | 196 |
| 4.1.2.1 | Knowledge explosion: an overview | 200 |
| 4.1.2.2 | Higher education curriculum reform: a socio-economic dimension | 203 |
| 4.1.2.3 | Is the higher education curriculum an instrument for knowledge stratification? | 209 |
| 4.2 | The epistemological terrain of higher education curriculum development/from closed to open intellectual cultures | 215 |
| 4.2.1 | Disciplinarity: the cognate identity and organizational framework of knowledge fields | 216 |
| 4.2.2 | Inter-/Trans-/Multi-disciplinarity: epistemological democratisation of the curriculum? | 218 |
| 4.2.3 | From courses to credits: involving student choice in programme construction | 223 |
| 4.2.4 | From departments to programmes: thematic integration of subject fields | 223 |
| 4.2.5 | From subject-based teaching to student-based learning | 224 |
| 4.2.6 | From knowledge to competence: cognition <i>vis-à-vis</i> applied skills development | 225 |
| 4.3 | Higher education strategic responses to curriculum reform | 226 |
| 4.3.1 | “Deconstructing the university” | 227 |
| 4.3.2 | “Deconstructing the subject” | 227 |
| 4.3.3 | The key skills approach | 228 |
| 4.3.4 | Learning from experience | 231 |
| 4.3.5 | The Web-based curriculum | 232 |
| 4.3.5.1 | Implications for the higher education curriculum | 233 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------|
| 4.4 | Innovative curriculum models in a reconstituted environment | 237 |
| 4.4.1 | Modularization of the higher education curriculum | 239 |
| 4.4.2 | Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes/CATS | 241 |
| 4.4.3 | Recognition and Accreditation of Prior (formal) Learning/RAPL vis-à-vis Recognition and Accreditation of Prior (experiential) Learning/RAPEL | 243 |
| 4.4.4 | Competence and Competence-Based Education and Training (CBET) | 246 |
| 4.4.5 | OBE as curriculum model – a view from the south | 251 |
| 4.4.6 | The NQF and HEQF – establishing an equitable curriculum framework | 257 |
| 4.4.7 | Lifelong learning: interfacing social and economic ‘logics’ | 264 |
| 4.5 | Perspectives on curriculum expertise by private higher education providers and the corporate/industry sector | 271 |
| 4.5.1 | Private higher education providers as curriculum competitors | 272 |
| 4.5.2 | The corporate/industrial sector as curriculum competitors | 275 |
| 4.6 | Africanisation in the higher education curriculum sphere | 282 |
| 4.7 | Conclusion | 285 |
| Chapter 5: Research methodology, data collection, and data presentation | | 286 |
| 5.1 | Introduction/Background | 286 |
| 5.2 | Research design, methodology and procedures | 287 |
| 5.2.1 | The place/context of the empirical phase in the research/thesis | 289 |
| 5.2.2 | Procedures undertaken to execute the fieldwork | 292 |
| 5.2.3 | Data collection and instrumentation | 298 |
| 5.2.3.1 | Instrumentation for data collection and data realisation | 298 |
| 5.2.3.2 | Some basic theoretical/conceptual interview assumptions | 300 |
| 5.3 | Realisation of data | 301 |
| 5.3.1 | Realisation of data – the questionnaires (Plan A) | 301 |
| 5.3.2 | Realisation of data – the interviews (Plan B) | 303 |
| 5.4 | Data presentation | 304 |
| 5.4.1 | Pinpoint-generated tabular presentation of questionnaire data: Institution A | 304 |
| 5.4.2 | Pinpoint-generated tabular presentation of questionnaire data: Institution B | 359 |
| 5.5 | Some commentary based on the interviews | 398 |
| 5.5.1 | Current thinking on curriculum | 400 |
| 5.5.2 | Challenges that remain | 400 |

| | | |
|---|---|------------|
| 5.5.3 | Possible future trends | 401 |
| 5.6 | Conclusion | 401 |
| Chapter 6: Findings and discussion | | 402 |
| 6.1 | Introduction | 402 |
| 6.2 | Literature review | 403 |
| 6.3 | Higher education knowledge as contested strategic resource | 407 |
| 6.3.1 | The ‘de-canonization’ of epistemological/disciplinary cultures | 410 |
| 6.3.2 | Development and transformation of epistemological/intellectual diversity and equality | 411 |
| 6.4 | The challenge of globalisation on higher education curriculum reform | 414 |
| 6.4.1 | ICT and the proliferation of alternative higher education curriculum providers | 416 |
| 6.4.2 | Is the higher education curriculum a means of instrumentalism? | 417 |
| 6.5 | The organizational environment of higher education’s functioning | 420 |
| 6.5.1 | Higher education curriculum development in the context of institutional differentiation | 422 |
| 6.6 | The political environment of higher education curriculum policy development | 424 |
| 6.6.1 | The sphere of ‘curriculum correctness’ in the context of ‘political correctness’ | 424 |
| 6.6.2 | The nascent field of South African higher education curriculum reform | 428 |
| 6.7 | Some critical findings deriving from the empirical data | 432 |
| 6.7.1 | Some issues arising from discrepant notions of a “comprehensive” university | 432 |
| 6.7.2 | ‘Signals’ from the actual application/non-application of ‘non-traditional’ curriculum models | 433 |
| 6.7.3 | Conceptualization and development of the curriculum | 433 |
| 6.7.4 | Implementation of the curriculum modes of delivery | 434 |
| 6.7.5 | Monitoring/Evaluation and assessment of curriculum content and learning | 435 |
| 6.7.5.1 | Student assessment | 436 |
| 6.7.5.2 | Curriculum monitoring/evaluation | 437 |
| 6.8 | Africanisation: a trilogy of proposed models | 438 |
| 6.8.1 | The support for Africanisation in the higher education curriculum | 440 |
| 6.8.2 | Rationale and justification for the support of Africanisation the higher education curriculum | 443 |
| 6.8.2.1 | Democratic equalization | 444 |
| 6.8.2.2 | The promotion of multiculturalism | 444 |
| 6.8.2.3 | Advancing the shift from elitism to mass universal higher education | 445 |
| 6.8.2.4 | The cultural compatibility of standards | 446 |

| | | |
|---|--|------------|
| 6.8.2.5 | The promotion of epistemological diversity | 446 |
| 6.8.3 | Model conceptualisation | 447 |
| 6.8.3.1 | Brief explication of the model | 455 |
| 6.9 | Conclusion | 455 |
| Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations | | 457 |
| 7.1 | Introduction | 457 |
| 7.2 | Realisation of research aims and objectives | 458 |
| 7.2.1 | Factors contributing to the articulation of research aims and objectives | 458 |
| 7.2.2 | Articulation of objectives | 459 |
| 7.2.2.1 | Objective 1: To provide an overview and analyses of trends and challenges to higher education curriculum transformation in the 21 st century | 459 |
| 7.2.2.2 | Objective 2: To survey a sample of local HEIs' development and management of curriculum, learning materials, processes, structures, and outputs | 460 |
| 7.2.2.3 | Objective 3: To develop an appropriate curriculum development model for South African HEIs that will encompass the process, content and management dimensions of curriculum development, implementation and reform | 460 |
| 7.2.2.4 | Objective 4: To develop an appropriate curriculum conceptual and development model for South African HEIs that will encompass the process, content and management dimensions of curriculum development, implementation and reform; and take the African context into account. | 461 |
| 7.3 | Conclusions | 462 |
| 7.3.1 | The inadequate application of diversity | 463 |
| 7.3.2 | Dominance of market-oriented curriculum perspectives | 463 |
| 7.3.3 | Epistemological contestations in higher education curriculum development | 463 |
| 7.3.4 | Ideological ramifications in higher education curriculum development | 463 |
| 7.3.5 | Empirical research as critical in higher education curriculum development | 464 |
| 7.3.6 | Conservation of traditional modes | 464 |
| 7.4 | Recommendations | 464 |
| 7.4.1 | Mediation of Africanisation into the curriculum's epistemological base | 465 |
| 7.4.2 | Cultural compatibility of the curriculum | 465 |
| 7.4.3 | Broadening social participation | 465 |
| 7.4.4 | Incorporation of higher education as a field of study in the curriculum | 466 |

| | | |
|----------------|--|------------|
| 7.5 | Limitations of the study | 467 |
| 7.5.1 | Literature-based limitations | 467 |
| 7.5.1.1 | Scope of investigation | 467 |
| 7.5.1.2 | Inadequate development of organizational/systems theory | 467 |
| 7.5.2 | Empirically-derived limitations | 468 |
| 7.5.2.1 | Quantitative information/data | 468 |
| 7.5.2.2 | Exploration of post-merger process | 468 |
| 7.5.2.3 | The notion of comprehensiveness | 469 |
| 7.5.2.4 | Africanisation in the curriculum | 469 |
| 7.6 | Further research | 470 |
| | Bibliography | 471 |

LIST OF APPENDICES

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-----|
| APPENDIX A | Supervisor's Letter of Introduction | 515 |
| APPENDIX B | Researcher's Letter of Introduction | 516 |
| APPENDIX C | Letter of Reminder to Respondents (Institution B) | 518 |
| APPENDIX D | Questionnaire on Challenges Facing Higher Education Curriculum Reform, Design and Management in the Twenty First Century | 519 |
| APPENDIX E | Interview Schedule | 530 |
| APPENDIX F | Interview 1 Transcript: 15 September 2004, 11h00 | 532 |
| APPENDIX G | Interview 2 Transcript: 22 October 2004, 10h00 | 546 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----|
| Figure 1.1 | The classical mode of “one-dimensionality” of higher education as the sole producer and dispenser of knowledge | 7 |
| Figure 1.2 | A multi-dimensional (Mode 2?) relationship between higher education and other agencies in the production of knowledge | 8 |
| Figure 2.1 | A diagrammatic depiction of factors shaping and influencing higher education reform in the twenty-first century | 39 |
| Figure 4.1.1 | The knowledge-education-curriculum axis: a synthetic dimension | 194 |
| Figure 6.1 | The multiple stakeholder environment of higher education knowledge | 409 |

LIST OF TABLES
(INSTITUTION A/UNIVERSITY)

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-----|
| Table 3.1 | Racial distribution of the binary mode in higher education provision: 1990-1994 | 125 |
| Table 3.2 | Binary division of higher and further education qualification routes in the early 1980s | 128 |
| Table 3.3 | Programmatic and research orientation per institutional type: 1992 | 131 |
| Table 3.4 | Science research contracts at four previously white HEIs: 1995-2000 | 133 |
| Table 3.5 | Access by black students to predominantly Afrikaans-medium HEIs: 1988 | 135 |
| Table 3.6 | Access by black students to predominantly English-medium HEIs | 139 |
| Table 3.7 | Research output per racially segregated higher education institutional ‘type’ | 141 |
| Table 3.8 | University master’s and doctoral degrees awarded in 1996 per racial group | 142 |
| Table 3.9 | State funding for racially-differentiated higher education institutions: 1992 | 143 |
| Table 3.10 | Technikon student composition by race, during the stated period(s) | 144 |
| Table 3.11 | Proportion of African student headcounts at the seven HWTs | 145 |
| Table 3.12 | Disproportionate funding for HWTs and HBTs | 145 |
| Table 3.13 | Number of African students across the TBVC ‘states’ between 1988 and 1998 | 145 |
| Table 3.14 | African headcounts at historically white technikons: 1988 | 147 |
| Table 3.15 | African Headcounts at HWTs, in relation to other racial groups: 1998 | 147 |
| Table 3.16 | Higher education qualifications descriptors: 2006 | 175 |
| Table 3.17 | Proportion of earmarked and block funding: 1997-2002 | 181 |
| Table 4.1.2.2 | A SWOT analysis of the main challenges in higher education curriculum reform | 206 |
| Table 4.4.4.1 | Forms and areas/contexts of competence | 248 |
| Table 4.4.4.2 | A pedagogy-based variation of ‘competence’ and ‘performance’ | 250 |
| Table 5.1.1 | Type of respondent’s institution | 305 |
| Table 5.1.2 | Sex of respondent | 305 |
| Table 5.1.3 | Academic title of respondent | 306 |
| Table 5.1.4 | Respondent’s highest academic qualifications | 306 |
| Table 5.1.5 (a) | Respondent’s subject fields in respect of academic qualifications | 307 |
| Table 5.1.5 (b) | Respondent’s subject fields in respect of institutional curriculum development | 307 |
| Table 5.1.6 | Respondent’s position/post level in the institution | 308 |
| Table 5.1.7 | School/Faculty in which position/post-level is located | 308 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 5.1.8 Respondent's number of years in the same position | 309 |
| Table 5.1.9 (a) Number of academic staff members in the department/faculty | 309 |
| Table 5.1.9 (b) Number of academic support staff members in the department/faculty | 310 |
| Table 5.1.9 (c) Number of professional support staff members in the department/faculty | 310 |
| Table 5.1.9 (d) Number of other staff members in the department/faculty | 311 |
| Table 5.1.10 (a) Number of undergraduate students in the institution/campus: 2003 | 311 |
| Table 5.1.10 (b) Number of undergraduates in the school/faculty: 2003 | 312 |
| Table 5.1.10 (c) Number of undergraduates in the department: 2003 | 312 |
| Table 5.1.10 (d) Number of postgraduate students in the institution/campus: 2003 | 313 |
| Table 5.1.10 (e) Number of postgraduate students in the faculty: 2003 | 313 |
| Table 5.1.10 (f) Number of postgraduates in the department: 2003 | 314 |
| Table 5.1.10 (g) Number of undergraduates in the institution/campus: 2004 | 314 |
| Table 5.1.10 (h) Number of undergraduates in the school/faculty: 2004 | 315 |
| Table 5.1.10 (i) Number of undergraduates in the department: 2004 | 315 |
| Table 5.1.10 (j) Number of postgraduate students in the institution/campus: 2004 | 316 |
| Table 5.1.10 (k) Number of postgraduates in the school/faculty: 2004 | 316 |
| Table 5.1.10 (l) Number of postgraduates in the department: 2004 | 317 |
| Table 5.2.1 Epistemological base of the institution's curriculum model(s) | 317 |
| Table 5.2.2 Characterization of intellectual culture in curriculum organization | 318 |
| Table 5.2.3 The relationship between institutional mission(s) and curriculum | 318 |
| Table 5.2.4 The curriculum impact of mergers | 319 |
| Table 5.2.5 Level of curriculum re-organization between programme qualification mix | 319 |
| Table 5.2.6 Epistemological rationale of course content/knowledge organization in the faculty/ department | 320 |
| Table 5.2.7 Extent of enhancement of the curriculum's cultural compatibility through the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) | 320 |
| Table 5.2.8 Perceptions of the Africanisation of higher education curriculum | 321 |
| Table 5.2.9 (a) Degree of application of access/bridging courses for students who do not meet higher education requirements | 322 |
| Table 5.2.9 (b) Degree of application of franchised courses in the department/faculty | 322 |
| Table 5.2.9 (c) Degree of application of modularised programmes in the department/faculty | 323 |
| Table 5.2.9 (d) Degree of application of a Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) architecture in the department/faculty | 323 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 5.2.9 (e) Degree of application of unit standards/unitized curriculum in the department/ faculty | 324 |
| Table 5.2.9 (f) Degree of application of a whole course curriculum in the department/ faculty | 324 |
| Table 5.2.9 (g) Degree of application of learning credits to courses and modules | 325 |
| Table 5.2.9 (h) Degree of application of RAPL (Recognition and Accreditation of Prior Learning) in the department/faculty | 325 |
| Table 5.2.9 (i) Application of RAPEL (Recognition and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning | 326 |
| Table 5.2.9 (j) Degree of application of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) | 326 |
| Table 5.2.9 (k) Degree of application of skill and competence-based education and training (CBET) in the department/faculty | 327 |
| Table 5.2.9 (l) Degree of compliance with NQF requirements in the department/faculty | 327 |
| Table 5.2.9 (m) Degree of application of notional instructional hours in the department/faculty | 328 |
| Table 5.2.10 Registration of all courses in the faculty/department with SAQA | 331 |
| Table 5.2.11 (a) Extent of (dis)agreeability on separation of ‘education’ and ‘training’ as ‘types’ of knowledge that enhance effective student assessment | 331 |
| Table 5.2.11 (b) Extent of (dis)agreeability on outside trainers’ suitability for evaluation of work-compliant skills/competencies | 332 |
| Table 5.2.12 Choice of assessment techniques applicable in the department/faculty | 332 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (a) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of lecture notes in the faculty/ department | 333 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (b) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of study letters in the faculty/ department | 334 |
| Table 2.13.1 (c) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of copies of additional reading in the faculty/department | 334 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (d) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of case study in the faculty/ department | 335 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (e) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of learner guides | 335 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (f) Degree of (dis)agreement on usage of computer-based learning materials | 335 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (g) Degree of (dis)agreement on usage of use of other learning materials | 336 |
| Table 2.13.2 Integration of computer-based learning resources in teaching | 337 |
| Table 5.2.14 (a) Extent of Web-based self-study experiences for students in the faculty/ | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| department | 337 |
| Table 5.2.14 (b) Effect of the Web's enhancement of asynchronous learning | 338 |
| Table 5.2.15 Frequency of students' Web access | 338 |
| Table 5.2.16 Students' Web exposure in the construction of own learning experiences | 339 |
| Table 5.2.17 Extent of Web-based organization of curriculum in the faculty/department | 339 |
| Table 5.3.1 Predominant student categories in the institution | 339 |
| Table 5.3.2 Epistemological focus of the undergraduate curriculum in the institution | 340 |
| TABLE 5.3.3 Extent of curriculum provision for mature (adult) learners in the institution/ faculty/ department | 340 |
| Table 5.3.4 (a) Percentage of full-time students in the institution/faculty/department | 341 |
| Table 5.3.4 (b) Percentage of mature/adult/part-time students in the faculty/department | 341 |
| Table 5.3.5 Percentage of adult part-time learners' professions (backgrounds) | 342 |
| Table 5.3.6 The institution's epistemological base, in terms of curriculum delivery to all students at all levels of study | 342 |
| Table 5.3.7 Availability/existence of learner support mechanisms to facilitate access to learning resources after hours | 343 |
| Table 5.3.8 Basis for course construction in enhancing students' experiences | 343 |
| Table 5.3.9 Matching student 'type' (1-3) to most likely course 'type' (A-C) | 343 |
| Table 5.3.10 Most practicable level of student-centredness | 344 |
| Table 5.3.11 Crediting of non-formally-/informally-acquired knowledge/experience in the faculty/department | 345 |
| Table 5.3.11.1 Level at which non-formal/informal knowledge/experience is credited | 345 |
| Table 5.3.11.2 'Classification' of university 'type' in respect of curriculum offered | 346 |
| Table 5.3.12 (a) Is comprehensive preliminary/candidacy examination required for any graduate course of study in the faculty/department? | 346 |
| Table 5.3.12 (b) Understanding of 'apprenticeship' as description of induction into graduate education | 347 |
| Table 5.3.12 (c) Departmental postgraduate funding capacity | 347 |
| Table 5.3.12 (d) Status of undergraduates' and postgraduates' 'exit velocity' in the faculty/ department | 348 |
| Table 5.3.12 (e) Institution's capacity to offer doctoral degrees | 348 |
| Table 5.3.12 (f) Intellectual and academic weight/value of postgraduate programmes across all subject fields in the institution | 348 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 5.3.12 (g) Postgraduate students' motives for further study | 349 |
| Table 5.4.1 Categorization of HE links with industry and society | 349 |
| Table 5.4.2 Comparability of HE standards and work-based learning | 350 |
| Table 5.4.3 State of HE graduates' work preparation | 350 |
| Table 5.4.4 The corporate classroom and HE's epistemological authority | 351 |
| Table 5.4.5 Guarantees of graduates' employability through work-based practicum | 351 |
| Table 5.4.6 (a) Coordinating structure/body for links with the state | 352 |
| Table 5.4.6 (b) Coordinating structure/body for links with civil society | 352 |
| Table 5.4.6 (c) Coordinating structure/body for links with the private sector | 353 |
| Table 5.4.6 (d) Coordinating structure/body for links with any other external agencies / organizations | 353 |
| Table 5.4.7(a) HE-private sector structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 354 |
| Table 5.4.7 (b) HE-state structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 354 |
| Table 5.4.7 (c) HE-society structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 354 |
| Table 5.4.7 (d) HE and other structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 355 |
| Table 5.5.1 Structure/Body responsible for curriculum development/management in the institution | 355 |
| Table 5.5.2 Structure/Body responsible for curriculum development/management in the faculty/ department | 355 |
| Table 5.6 Students' perception of predominant curriculum organization in the faculty/ department | 356 |
| Table 5.7.1 Curriculum implementation in the faculty/department | 357 |
| Table 5.7.2 Frequency of curriculum quality assurance mechanisms in the faculty/department | 357 |
| Table 5.7.3 State of innovative curriculum development procedures in the faculty/department | 358 |

LIST OF TABLES
(INSTITUTION B/FORMER TECHNIKON)

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----|
| Table 5.1.1 | Type of respondent's institution | 359 |
| Table 5.1.2 | Sex of respondent | 359 |
| Table 5.1.3 | Academic title of respondent | 359 |
| Table 5.1.4 | Respondent's highest academic qualifications | 360 |
| Table 5.1.5 (a) | Respondent's subject fields in respect of academic qualifications | 360 |
| Table 5.1.5 (b) | Respondent's subject fields in respect of institutional curriculum development | 361 |
| Table 5.1.6 | Respondent's position/post level in the institution | 361 |
| Table 5.1.7 | School/Faculty in which position/post-level is located | 362 |
| Table 5.1.8 | Respondent's number of years in the same position | 362 |
| Table 5.1.9 (a) | Number of academic staff members in the department/faculty | 363 |
| Table 5.1.9 (b) | Number of academic support staff members in the department/faculty | 363 |
| Table 5.1.9 (c) | Number of professional support staff members in the department/faculty | 364 |
| Table 5.1.9 (d) | Number of Other staff members in the department/faculty | 364 |
| Table 5.1.10 (a) | Number of undergraduate students for 2003 in the institution/campus | 364 |
| Table 5.1.10 (b) | Number of undergraduates for 2003 in the school/faculty | 365 |
| Table 5.1.10 (c) | Number of undergraduates for 2003 in the department | 365 |
| Table 5.1.10 (d) | Number of postgraduate students for 2003 in the institution or campus | 366 |
| Table 5.1.10 (e) | Number of postgraduate students for 2003 in the faculty | 366 |
| Table 5.1.10 (f) | Number of 2003 postgraduates in the department | 366 |
| Table 5.1.10 (g) | Number of 2004 undergraduates in the institution/campus | 367 |
| Table 5.1.10 (h) | Number of 2004 undergraduates in the school/faculty | 367 |
| Table 5.1.10 (i) | Number of 2004 undergraduates in the department | 367 |
| Table 5.1.10 (j) | Number of 2004 postgraduate students in the institution/campus | 368 |
| Table 5.1.10 (k) | Number of 2004 postgraduates in the school/faculty | 368 |
| Table 5.1.10 (l) | Number of 2004 postgraduates in the department | 369 |
| Table 5.2.1 | Epistemological base of the institution's curriculum model(s) | 369 |
| Table 5.2.2 | Characterization of intellectual culture in curriculum organization | 369 |
| Table 5.2.3 | The relationship between institutional mission(s) and curriculum | 370 |
| Table 5.2.4 | The curriculum impact of mergers | 370 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 5.2.5 Level of curriculum re-organization between programme qualification mix | 371 |
| Table 5.2.6 Epistemological rationale of course content/knowledge organization in the faculty/ department | 371 |
| Table 5.2.7 Extent of enhancement of the curriculum’s cultural compatibility through the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) | 372 |
| Table 5.2.8 Perceptions of the Africanisation of higher education curriculum | 372 |
| Table 5.2.9 (a) Degree of application of access/bridging courses for students who do not meet higher education requirements | 372 |
| Table 5.2.9 (b) Degree of application of franchised courses in the department/faculty | |
| Table 5.2.10 SAQA registration of all courses/qualifications in the faculty/department | 374 |
| Table 5.2.11 (a) Extent of (dis)agreeability on separation of ‘education’ and ‘training’ as ‘types’ of knowledge that enhance effective student assessment | 375 |
| Table 5.2.11 (b) Extent of (dis)agreeability on outside trainers’ suitability for evaluation of work-compliant skills/competencies | 375 |
| Table 5.2.12 Choice of assessment technique(s) applicable in the department/faculty | 375 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (a) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of lecture notes in the faculty/ department | 376 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (b) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of study letters in the faculty/ department | 377 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (c) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of copies of additional reading in the faculty/department | 377 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (d) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of case study in the faculty/ department | 378 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (e) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of learner guides in the faculty/ department | 378 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (f) Degree of (dis)agreement on usage of computer-based learning materials | 378 |
| Table 5.2.13.1 (g) Degree of (dis)agreement on application of other learning materials | 379 |
| Table 5.2.13.2 Integration of computer-based learning resources in teaching | 380 |
| Table 5.2.14 (a) Extent of Web-based self-study experiences for students in the faculty/ department | 381 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 5.2.14 (b) Effect of the Web’s enhancement of asynchronous learning | 381 |
| Table 5.2.15 Frequency of students’ Web access | 382 |
| Table 5.2.16 Students’ Web experience in the construction of own learning experiences | 382 |
| Table 5.3.1 Predominant student composition in the institution | 382 |
| Table 5.3.2 Epistemological focus of the undergraduate curriculum in the institution | 383 |
| Table 5.3.3 Extent of curriculum provision for mature (adult) learners in the institution/faculty department | 383 |
| Table 5.3.4 (a) Percentage of mature/adult/full-time students in the institution/faculty/department | 383 |
| Table 5.3.4 (b) Percentage of mature/adult/part-time students in the faculty/department | 384 |
| Table 5.3.5 Percentage of mature/adult part-time learners’ professions (backgrounds) | 384 |
| Table 5.3.6 The institution’s epistemological base, in terms of curriculum delivery to all students at all levels of study | 385 |
| Table 5.3.7 Availability/existence of learner support mechanisms to facilitate access to learning resources after hours | 385 |
| Table 5.3.8 Basis for course construction in enhancing students’ experiences | 385 |
| Table 5.3.9 Matching student ‘type’ (1-3) to most likely course ‘type’ (A-C) | 386 |
| Table 5.3.10 Most practicable level of student-centredness | 386 |
| Table 5.3.11 Crediting of non-formally-/informally-acquired knowledge/experience in the faculty/department | 387 |
| Table 5.3.11.1 Level at which non-formal/informal knowledge/experience is credited | 387 |
| Table 5.3.11.2 ‘Classification’ of university ‘type’ in the context of curriculum offered | 388 |
| Table 5.3.12 (a) Is comprehensive preliminary/candidacy examination required for any graduate course of study in the faculty/department? | 388 |
| Table 5.3.12 (b) Understanding of ‘apprenticeship’ as description of induction into graduate education | 389 |
| Table 5.3.12 (c) Departmental postgraduate funding capacity | 389 |
| Table 5.3.12 (d) Status of undergraduates’ and postgraduates’ ‘exit velocity’ in the faculty/department | 389 |
| Table 5.3.12 (e) Institution’s capacity to offer doctoral degrees | 390 |
| Table 5.3.12 (f) Intellectual and academic weight/value of postgraduate programmes across all subject fields in the institution | 390 |
| Table 5.3.12 (g) Postgraduate students’ motives for further study | 391 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 5.4.1 Categorization of HE links with industry and society | 391 |
| Table 5.4.2 Comparability of HE standards and work-based learning | 391 |
| Table 5.4.3 State of higher education graduates' work preparation | 392 |
| Table 5.4.4 The corporate classroom and HE's epistemological authority | 392 |
| Table 5.4.5 Guarantees of graduates' employability through work-based practicum | 392 |
| Table 5.4.6 (a) Coordinating structure/body for links with the state | 393 |
| Table 5.4.6 (b) Coordinating structure/body for links with civil society | 393 |
| Table 5.4.6 (c) Coordinating structure/body for links with the private sector | 394 |
| Table 5.4.6 (d) Coordinating structure/body for links with any other external agencies/ organizations | 394 |
| Table 5.4.7(a) HE-private sector structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 394 |
| Table 5.4.7 (b) HE-state structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 395 |
| Table 5.4.7 (c) HE-society structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 395 |
| Table 5.4.7 (d) HE and other structure/body, composition and frequency of its meetings | 395 |
| Table 5.5.1 Structure/body responsible for curriculum development/management in the institution | 395 |
| Table 5.5.2 Structure/body responsible for curriculum development/management in the faculty/ department | 396 |
| Table 5.6 Students' perception of predominant curriculum organization in the faculty/ department | 396 |
| Table 5.7.1 Curriculum implementation in the faculty/department | 397 |
| Table 5.7.2 Frequency of curriculum quality assurance mechanisms in the faculty/department | 397 |
| Table 5.7.3 State of innovative curriculum development procedures in the faculty/department | 397 |
| Table 6.1 A "policy-borrowing" approach to curriculum development | 430 |
| Table 6.2 A trilogy of models of Africanisation in higher education | 449 |
| Table 6.2 A The external/macro-environment of Africanisation in higher education curriculum | 449 |
| Table 6.2 B Africanisation: an internally-focused curriculum model | 451 |
| Table 6.2 C The epistemological domain and the mediating role of Africanisation on the curriculum | 454 |

GLOSSARY

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| AAU | Association of African Universities |
| ACE | American Council on Education |
| ADEA | Association for the Development of Education in Africa |
| ADEC | Association of Distance Education Colleges |
| AGO | Alternative Governmental Organization |
| APCSA | Association of Private Colleges of South Africa |
| APEL | Assessment/Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning |
| APHEN | Asia Pacific Higher Education Network) |
| API | Age Participation Index |
| APL | Accreditation of Prior (Formal) Learning |
| AT&T | American Telephone & Telegraph |
| AUT | Universities and Technikons Advisory Council |
| BAeVU | British Aerospace Virtual University |
| BEE | Black Economic Empowerment |
| B-HEF | Business-Higher Education Forum (of the USA) |
| CALP | Computer Assisted/Aided Learning Programme(s) |
| CAP | Curriculum As Prescription |
| CAT(S) | Credit Accumulation and Transfer (Scheme(s)) |
| CATEs | Colleges of Advanced Technical Education |
| CBE | Competency-Based Education |
| CBET | Competency-Based Education and Training |
| CHE | Council on Higher Education |
| CHET | Centre for Higher Education Transformation |
| CVU | California Virtual University |
| CPD | Continuous Professional Development |
| DET | Department of Education and Training |
| ETDP | Education and Training Development Programme |
| ECTS | European Credit Transfer Systems |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| EU | European Union |
| EWP 3 | Education White Paper 3 |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FET | Further Education and Training |
| GNU | Government of National Unity |
| HAI(s) | Historically Advantaged Institution(s) |
| HBI(s) | Historically Black Institution(s) |
| HBT(s) | Historically Black Technikon(s) |
| HBU(s) | Historically Black University (Universities) |
| HDI(s) | Historically Disadvantaged Institution(s) |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HEI(s) | Higher Education Institution(s) |
| HESA | Higher Education South Africa |
| HEQC | Higher Education Quality Committee (part of CHE) |
| HRD | Human Resources Development |
| HWAU(s) | Historically White Afrikaans University (Universities) |
| HWAT(s) | Historically White Afrikaans Technikon(s) |
| HWEU(s) | Historically White English University (Universities) |
| HWET(s) | Historically White English Technikon(s) |
| HWI(s) | Historically White Institution(s) |
| HWT(s) | Historically White technikon(s) |
| HWU(s) | Historically White University (Universities) |
| IAU | International Association of Universities |
| IBM | International Business Machines |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IKS | Indigenous Knowledge Systems |
| ISP | Industrial Strategy Project |
| KPMG | Klynveld, Peat, Marwick & Goerdeler |
| MERSETA | Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Seta |
| MIT | Massachusetts Institute of Technology |
| NAP | New Academic Policy |
| NCHE | National Commission on Higher Education |
| NCVQ | National Council for Vocational Qualifications (UK) |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| NEPI | National Education Policy Investigation |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organization |
| NPO | Non Profit Organization |
| NIACE | National Institute of Adult Continuing Education |
| NMMU | Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University |
| NPHE | National Plan for Higher Education |
| NPO | Non Profit Organization |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| NRF | National Research Foundation |
| NSI | National System of Innovation |
| NSFAS | National Student Financial Aid Scheme |
| NTB | National Training Board |
| NTSI | National Training Strategy Initiative |
| NWG | National Working Group |
| OBE | Outcomes-Based Education |
| OBET | Outcomes-Based Education and Training |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OLA | Open Learning Australia |
| PAI(s) | Previously Advantaged Institution(s) / Individual(s) |
| PDI(s) | Previously Disadvantaged Institution(s) / Individual(s) |
| PQM | Programme Qualification Mix |
| RAPL | Recognition and Accreditation of Prior (formal) Learning |
| RAPEL | Recognition and Accreditation of Prior (experiential) Learning |
| RAU | Rand Afrikaans University |
| RPL | Recognition of Prior (formal) Learning |
| R&D | Research and Design |
| SAC | South African College |
| SAADA | South African Academic Development Association |
| S&T | Science and Technology |
| SADC | Southern Africa Development Community |
| SAIDE | South African Institute of Distance Education |
| SANTED | South Africa-Netherlands Tertiary Education Development |
| SAPSE | South African Post Secondary Education |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| SARIMA | South African Research & Innovation Management Association |
| SAUVCA | South African Universities' Vice Chancellors' Association |
| SAQA | South African Qualifications Authority |
| SDA | Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998) |
| SDLA | Skills Development Levies Act (Act 9 of 1999) |
| SEDA | Staff and Educational Development Association |
| SETA | Sector Education and Training Authority |
| SGBs | Standards Generating Bodies (part of SAQA) |
| SRHE | Society for Research in Higher Education |
| TBVC | Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda, Ciskei |
| TNC | Trans (Multi) National Corporation |
| TMC | Trans (Multi-national) Media Corporation |
| TSA | Technikon South Africa |
| TWR | Technikon Witwatersrand |
| UCGH | University of Cape of Good Hope (forerunner to UNISA) |
| UCT | University of Cape Town |
| UGC | University Grants Committee (UK) |
| UJ | University of Johannesburg |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNESCO | United Nations Education, Scientific & Cultural Organization |
| UNISA | University of South Africa |
| UPE | University of Port Elizabeth |
| US | United States |
| UWC | University of the Western Cape |
| VU | Virtual University |
| WB | World Bank |
| WBP | World Best Practice |
| WGU | Western Governors University |
| WIL | Work Integrated Learning |
| WPET | White Paper on Higher Education and Training |

SUMMARY

Higher education, as both a “place” and a “paradigm”, has throughout its history confronted challenges in the internal and external environments of its functioning (Brennan et al., 1999; Hirsch & Weber, 1999). In the twenty-first century, the nature of these challenges has necessitated that both the organizational character and curriculum offerings of higher education institutions be adaptive and responsive to changes occurring in the external environment.

How institutions of higher learning react to these changes, is an issue of divergent viewpoints. “Reform” and “transformation” – in the same mould as “adaptation” and “responsiveness” – are viewed in this study as the fundamental points of departure in articulating a trajectory along which change in the curriculum perspectives has to occur. As a ‘product’ offered to its ‘consumers’ – the paying students – the higher education curriculum has been a fiercely contested epistemological terrain. On the one hand is the concern that it services the interests of industry and commerce, to the detriment of society; while on the other, the curriculum has been viewed as reproducing elitist values. The problem then, is located in the realm of the curriculum’s capacity to respond to the contradictory nature of the multiple stakeholder interests.

The South African higher education system is faced with the problem of firstly, de-contextualizing and disengaging the curriculum from its erstwhile political ramifications (CHE, 2000b). Secondly, affordable and quality higher education is expected to be assimilated into the broader national socio-economic imperatives. From this study’s perspective, the problem statement is situated in the context of the curriculum’s capacity to meet the local reconstruction and developmental needs; while also adhering to international imperatives ushered in mainly by globalisation and the concomitant proliferation of alternative providers who have challenged the claim to epistemological hegemony by traditional universities. In other words, are current curriculum trends in higher education directed at meeting society’s needs; or is the entrepreneurial imperative more sacrosanct? One of the main challenges for South African higher education curriculum reform/transformation policy concerns then, should be to define and determine how the local and global curriculum polemics are to be reined-in in the broader ‘public good’ and social contract in improving the lives of all citizens.

Through its empirical phase, the study has attempted to investigate the extent to which higher education curriculum trends ‘conform’ or ‘deviate’ from worldwide curriculum practices. In that regard, policy rhetoric was able to be differentiated from actual policy implementation. In order that problems of critical generalisability be obviated, data and method triangulation were utilised; also taking into account the institutional reconfiguration that had major consequences for the curriculum, especially at institutions undergoing “comprehensive” organizational and curriculum restructuring. The extent of institutional curriculum ‘deviation’ or ‘conformity’ was therefore determined on the basis of the collective integration of literature-based and empirical data and information/knowledge.

The case study research conducted through questionnaires and interviews at the designated research sites (two higher education institutions with disparate academic cultures) therefore serves as the basis upon which larger investigations and broader perspectives could be incorporated, particularly from the extensive literature review.

While the two case studies could have limitations of generalisability, some practices and trends lend themselves to a greater degree of the transferability of the findings. For instance, the knowledge stratification inherent in the Western university model (Makgoba, 1998; Scott, 1997) has perpetrated an environment of epistemological ‘supremacy’ within local higher education curriculum policy formulation frameworks. In that regard, it has emerged from the case study that Africanisation (in its epistemological, rather than ‘anthropological/cultural’ sense) is not part of a critical and mainstream curriculum organization tenet. While this observation could be argued to be institution-specific, it certainly also reflects a systemic trend.

In the light of the epistemological context cited above, is it to be assumed then that the ‘politics of knowledge’ (Apple, 1990; Lyotard, 1994; Muller, 2000) is an extant curriculum/epistemological nuance even in the twenty-first century? The realizable outcomes of the study materialized in the conceptualisation and development of a trilogy of models on Africanisation; in which the input, mediating/modulating, and output triad factor characterises an environment of possibilities for its integration into the mainstream higher education curriculum.