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Heidegger and Althusser on Quality Management Systems in Open and Distance Learning

Victor J. Pitsoe and Moeketsi Letseka

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.72914>

Abstract

The quality management system (QMS), as an intricate of interacting elements, is a fundamental property of higher education and is fluid and very complex in nature. With this in mind, this chapter explores the symbiotic relationship between the notions of QMS and open and distance learning (ODL). Our thesis is that the notion of QMS is not value-free. Yet, it is a fundamental pillar of higher education institutions and commercial organizations. Among other things, it shall be argued that (1) constructs of *Being* and *Becoming* are the hidden epistemological and ontological dimensions of QMS and (2) QMS is a carrier of ideology. And to borrow from Michel Foucault, it shall be postulated that QMS perpetuates docile bodies. As such, this work shall draw on the works of Martin Heidegger and Louis Althusser.

Keywords: quality management systems, open and distance learning, ideology, docile bodies, *Being* and *Becoming*, temporality, Heideggerian model of temporality

1. Introduction

Quality management system (QMS) is a fundamental property of higher education, more specifically the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode of delivery. This chapter is premised on the assumption that accomplishing quality in ODL is not just about fulfilling standards and criteria required by an external quality agency, but that it is about growing ODL practitioners and students' interest and obligation to teaching and learning. The chapter is philosophical in that it explores the symbiotic relationship between the notions of QMS and ODL. Notwithstanding its exploratory nature, the chapter contributes to the on-going debate on knowledge and *quality* in higher education. Hence, the authors attempt to defend the view that the notion of QMS is not *value-free* and that it is a fundamental pillar of higher education

institutions and commercial organizations. It is worth mentioning that both as a social and power relations construct, QMS plays a major role in ODL and has sparked ample discourses in and outside academia. Apart from the shifting definitions and contested understandings of QMS, the central thesis of this chapter is that QMS is a carrier of ideology and that it perpetuates docile bodies; the latter will be analyzed in greater detail below. Despite the fact that much has been written about QMS, one of the most noticeable gaps in many contemporary texts on the *dominant* QMS (in terms of ideas, values, norms, beliefs, and behaviors) is a failure to see it as an (a) ideology, (b) ontological and (c) ontological and epistemological problem.

Against this backdrop, one possibility is to unpack QMS, both as a discourse and *emancipatory* dialog. The works of Martin Heidegger (a German philosopher and a seminal thinker in the Continental tradition and philosophical hermeneutics), and Louis Pierre Althusser (a French Marxist philosopher) are significant to the understanding of QMS in the ODL sector. They offer diverse analytical frameworks to consider the meaning of quality in higher education. Among others, therefore, this chapter argues that constructs of *Being* and *Becoming* are the hidden epistemological and ontological dimensions of QMS. It is the authors' view that QMS is always in the state of *Being* and *Becoming*. It is in a temporal mode of *being* and fits through Heidegger's [1] lens of "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*). Thus, the concept of QMS is central to ODL praxis. This chapter assumes that the QMS is a complex of interacting elements that are fluid in nature. It consists of "interrelationships of complex phenomena (as parts of the system) on the system as a whole" [2].

While exponents of the systems theory such as Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Talcott Parsons, and Norbert Wiener conjure that systems should be studied as a whole, this chapter starts with Aristotle's claim that knowledge is derived from the understanding of the whole and not that of the single parts. This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section begins by conceptualizing the notion of QMS in the context of higher education space. The second section presents Heidegger views on *Being* and *Becoming*. The third section reflects on QMS as a carrier of dominant class ideology. This reflection is against the backdrop of Althusser's *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. The fourth section presents QMS as a key pillar in the higher education industry. The fifth section proposes a (re)thinking of QMS through the Heideggerian lens of *temporality*. Finally, the conclusion gives a brief summary and the concluding remarks.

2. Conceptualizing the notion of QMS in the context of higher education space

To begin with, the notion of *quality*, as a virtue of professional practice, is not a new phenomenon in the higher education landscape. It is about content and intellectual innovation. It is noteworthy that in the higher education space, *quality* is conceived as an *exception*, *perfection*, *fitness for purpose*, *value for money* and *transformation* [3]. Notwithstanding the fact that *quality* remains an elusive and contested concept, in recent years, "there have been increased efforts to bring total quality management (TQM) to academia and make academics more accountable

for the quality of their product" [4]. Most importantly, TQM has become a critical component of higher education reforms; and plays a vital role in improving the performance of higher education. As Pratasavitskaya and Stensaker [5] point out, "historically, one could argue that quality management in higher education had already been introduced during the 1980s, and in the beginning of the 1990s the idea of applying the popular industrial quality models—such as TQM, aiming at customers' satisfaction—to the higher education area was also quite widespread".

The QMS has turned into a management thought for the government, funding bodies, and higher education institutions. The notion 'management' in this instance is compatible with Michel Foucault's framework of *Governmentality*. It denotes 'authoritative control over the affairs of others', or 'an act or instance of guiding'. From a Foucauldian perspective, governmentality implies the way in which the state exercises control over the body of its populace. It allows for the creation of *docile bodies* to be used in modern economic and political institutions. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, French philosopher Michel Foucault [6] comments as follows regarding the prison as a system that renders bodies 'docile': "...by locking up, retraining and rendering docile, it merely reproduces, with a little more emphasis, all the mechanisms that are to be found in the social body? The prison is like a rather disciplined barracks, a strict school, a dark workshop, but not qualitatively different" (p. 233). He further argues that "The labor by which the convict contributes to his own needs turns the thief into a 'docile' worker" (p. 243). In this chapter, QMS is regarded as a tool for (a) improving professional standards; and (b) helping organizations run effectively. It is appropriate for instruction in post-secondary educational institutions. In Faganel and Dolinšek's [7] words, "being quality minded in higher education means caring about the expectations of students and other customers as well as all involved parties, and ensuring they are met". They further argue that "quality systems in higher education have been important for decades to help higher education institutions improve professional standards by comparing them with international educational qualifications.

With this in mind, it could be argued that factors such as "competition, cost, and accountability have encouraged higher education's interest in quality" [8]. In her doctoral thesis titled *Applying Deming's philosophy and principles to the instructional process in higher education*, Jane Andrews [8] notes, "there are several major reasons why higher education institutions should adopt the quality philosophy, principles, and practices". First, survival is the first order of business for any organization. Second, colleges and universities are in a competitive environment. And third, students, like business customers, will simply take their business elsewhere if they are not satisfied (p. 3). Andrews furthermore argues that "besides competition, the cost is a prime consideration for students enrolling in higher education". For her, "when there are pressures for tuition increases, students are going to come down with a vengeance about [the quality of] what they are getting [for their money]". Hence, QMS helps co-ordinate and direct an organization's activities to meet customer and regulatory requirements and improve its effectiveness and efficiency on a continuous basis. While implementing a QMS affects every aspect of an organization's performance, it is worthwhile mentioning that the QMS is complex, diverse and serves many purposes (including improving processes; reducing waste, lowering costs; facilitating and identifying training opportunities; engaging staff).

With these considerations in mind, one may suppose that teaching and learning are the nuclei of an educational institution. In recent years, higher education institutions have begun to follow William Edwards Deming's management philosophy. Although Deming originally applied his philosophy and principles to Japanese businesses after World War II, it could be argued that the philosophy and principles are applicable for the twenty-first century changing educational paradigms of colleges and universities and can be applied to college and university classroom instruction. Deming's management philosophy is foundational to TQM and its successor, QMS. Most scholars see Deming as "the Father of the Third Wave of the Industrial Revolution". His theories are premised on the assumption that "most product defects resulted from management shortcomings rather than careless workers, and that inspection after the fact was inferior to designing processes that would produce better quality" [9]. Most importantly, his emphasis is on meeting and exceeding customer expectations.

It should be mentioned that Deming's theory of management philosophy is grounded in systems theory. Deming [10] believed that "each organization is composed of a system of inter-related processes and people which make up system's components". For him, "94% of quality issues are caused by management problems". He writes, "Management's failure to plan for the future, he claims, brings about the loss of market, which brings about loss of jobs". Thus, "management must be judged not only by the quarterly dividend, but by innovative plans to stay in business, protect investment, ensure future dividends, and provide more jobs through improved product and service". Most importantly, Deming recognized that "improving quality will reduce expenses while increasing productivity and market share".

In his work *Out of the Crisis*, Deming offers 14 key principles that serve as QMS guidelines. These are:

1. Create constancy of purpose for improving products and services
2. Adopt the new philosophy
3. Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality
4. End the practice of awarding business on price alone; instead, minimize total cost by working with a single supplier
5. Improve constantly and forever every process of planning, production, and service
6. Institute training on the job
7. Adopt and institute leadership
8. Drive out fear
9. Break down barriers between staff areas
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the workforce
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for the workforce and numerical goals for management
12. Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship and eliminate the annual rating or merit system

13. Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone

14. Put everybody in the company to work accomplishing the transformation

While his teachings on quality and productivity have elevated him a hero status in Japan, Deming believed that “quality narrows the wide gap between customer requirements and process performance”. As he aptly puts it, “it is not enough to just do your best or work hard. You must know what to work on”. It is the authors’ view that Deming’s 14 points are also applicable to higher education. They have the potential to improve quality, production, and service in ODL. Hence, implementing QMS can benefit ODL in “(1) meeting the customer’s requirements, which helps to instill confidence in the organization, and in turn lead to more customers, more sales, and more repeat business. And meeting the organization’s requirements, which ensures compliance with regulations and provision of products and services in the most cost- and resource-efficient manner, creating room for expansion, growth, and profit” <http://asq.org/learn-about-quality/quality-management-system/>

3. Heidegger views on *Being* and *Becoming*

German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) was mainly interested in an ontology or the study of *being*. In his magnum opus, *Being and Time*, he outlines the notion of *being* (*Sein*) by means of phenomenological analysis of human existence (*Dasein*) with respect to its temporal and historical character. He postulates that “its temporal character is derived from the tripartite ontological structure: *existence*, *thrownness*, and *fallenness* by which *Dasein’s being* is described”. He re-iterates his thesis, “this characteristic of *Dasein’s Being* – this ‘that it is’ – is veiled in its ‘whence’ and ‘whither’, yet disclosed in itself all the more unveiled; we call it the ‘thrownness’ of this entity into its ‘there’; indeed, it is thrown in such a way that, as *Being-in-the-world*, it is the *there*”. He emphasizes that the “expression ‘thrownness’ is meant to suggest the facticity of its being delivered over.”

Perhaps, it is necessary to mention that *Being* and *Becoming* are both philosophical problems and policy imperatives in QMS. Heidegger [1] confirms that “*Being* and *becoming*” is neither simple nor static process – it is both an ontological and ontical inquiry and inquiry into *Being*”. He suggests that *Being* is “made visible in its *temporal* character in the sense that time is part of the identity and character of things”. For Heidegger, temporality depends on existential spatiality, and not the other way round. Hence, Heidegger calls the being or ‘essence’ of *Dasein* ‘existence’. Heidegger’s works, *Introduction to Metaphysics* [11], *The Essence of Reasons* [12] and *Being and Time* [1] are relevant in discussing QMS in this chapter. For Heidegger “*Being* goes beyond particular things, it is rather the ground of all beings and the source from which all beings derive their being”. In his book, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger [11] asks the question *Why are there beings at all, instead of Nothing?* He maintains, “the human being is not the lord of *Beings*, but the shepherd of *Being*” [1]. Central to Heidegger’s [1, 11, 12] thought is the assumption that the understanding of *Being* is itself a determination of the *Being* of *Dasein*.

For Heidegger [1], “...*Dasein* itself – and this means also *Being-in-the-world* – gets its ontological understanding of itself in the first instance from those entities which in itself is not

but which it encounters 'within' its world, and from the *Being* which they possess". He theorized, "being the rational animal, man must be capable of thinking if he really wants to". Still, he argues, "it may be that man wants to think, but cannot" [1]. Heidegger [1] declares that:

"What is meant by "Being-in"? Our proximal reaction is to round out this expression to "Being-in" "in the world", and we are inclined to understand this Being-in as 'Being in something' ...as the water is 'in' the glass, or the garment is 'in' the cupboard. By this 'in' we mean the relationship of Being which two entities extended 'in' space have to each other with regard to their location in that space...Being present-at-hand-along-with in the sense of a definite location-relationship with something else which has the same kind of Being, are ontological characteristics which we call 'categorical.'

Informed by Heidegger's [1] work, the notions of QMS and *temporality* (*Zeitlichkeit*) have a symbiotic relationship. Closer to present time, QMS fits to be seen as the question of temporality – it carries the substance and attributes of *existence*, *thrownness*, and *fallenness*. While the notion of temporality is first hinted at in Aristotle's *Physics*, Heidegger [1] maintains the *Dasein's* being is founded on temporality and Temporality. As Heidegger writes, "the term *Temporality* does not wholly coincide with the term *temporality* [*Zeitlichkeit*], despite the fact that, *Temporality* is merely the translation of *Zeitlichkeit*". He identifies the *three ecstasies of temporality* as the past, present, and future (retaining, representing, and expecting). Among others, he stresses that "in expressing itself, temporality temporalizes the only time that the common understanding of time is aware of". Hence, the ecstatic nature of temporality can be understood if we delve slightly deeper into the future, past, and present. Heidegger accepts that "time needs to be explicated primordially as the horizon for the understanding of Being, and in terms of temporality as the Being of *Dasein*" [1]. He concludes that (a) "the world is neither present-at hand nor ready-to-hand, but rather temporalizes itself in temporality" and (b) "Temporality is temporality as fundamental ontology" [1].

In summary then, from a Heideggerian perspective, it could be argued that ODL practitioners are always in the state of *Being* and *Becoming* – they are in a temporal mode of being. It is also worth noting that within the field of QMS ODL practitioners are 'thrown' into the world and that their Being-in-the-world aligns with Heidegger's [1] lens of 'thrownness'. For this reason, Heidegger's notion of *Being* and *Becoming* is hidden ontical and ontological dimensions of QMS. In the next section, QMS is discussed within the context of dominant class ideology.

4. QMS as a carrier of dominant class ideology

The history of QMS can be traced back to the 1920s. It is rooted in Frederick Winslow Taylor's (1865–1915) classical management theory. The QMS also derives from Foucault's [13, 14] notion of *governmentality*. Chen et al. [15] note that "regulating academic quality assumes *state sovereignty* in defining and enforcing academic standards through policy steering". This section draws on the work of French Marxist philosopher, Louis Pierre Althusser (1918–1990). Althusser's work provides conceptual tools for unpacking QMS as a carrier of the dominant class ideology. It is important to state at the outset that the notion of QMS, as a site of class struggle and a product of ruling ideology, perfectly fits the lens of *Ideological State Apparatus*

(ISA). It is the authors' view that, like other social practices of everyday life, the notion of QMS is fueled and imbued by ideologies.

The authors postulate that QMS is not "abstractions that merely represent some form of spiritual or non-materialistic reality, but are rather a direct result of the structures of the materialistic reality itself" [16]. It is important to state that ideology is a vague and controversial notion. As a subjective dimension of social life, the concept of 'ideology' has a very rich history and carries diverse connotations. As Schmid [17] aptly puts it, "ideology is a human condition, a medium in which and by means of which we live our lives" (p. 57). Schmid [17] emphasizes, "the term ideology usually refers to ideology as a systematic, elaborated and delimited systems of thought, like political ideologies or religious" (p. 57). Schmid's contention concurs with that of van Dijk. According to Van Dijk [18], "ideologies have something to do with systems of ideas, and especially with the social, political or religious ideas shared by a social group or movement".

Eagleton [19] states that "all ideology is teleological, totalitarian, metaphysically grounded (p. xii); passionate and rhetorical (p. 4) and has to do with legitimating the power of a dominant social group or class (p. 5). He argues that "a dominant power may legitimate itself by promoting beliefs and values congenial to it; naturalizing and universalizing such beliefs so as to render them self-evident and apparently inevitable; denigrating ideas which might challenge it; excluding rival forms of thought, perhaps by some unspoken but systematic logic; and obscuring social reality in ways convenient to itself" (p. 5). With this in mind, the authors depart on Shils's [20] assumption that "ideologies are characterized by a high degree of explicitness of formulation over a very wide range of the objects with which they deal; for their adherents, there is an authoritative and explicit promulgation".

Looking closely at Althusser's [21] work *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, conceptually the QMS, both as a social representation and the *basis* of social practices, is a carrier of ideology. Althusser furthermore argues that "ideology has a material existence because an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices; and always manifests itself through actions, which are *inserted into practices*". He remarks, "all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, and ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence". Althusser concludes by saying that ideology, "as a material practice, depends on the notion of the subject." His propositions are that "there is no practice except by and in an ideology" and "there is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects".

From a Heideggerian view, an interpellation is a temporal form. As Althusser [21] aptly puts it, "*becoming-subject* happens even before we are born". He further declares, "an individual is always-already a subject, even before he is born, is [...] the plain reality, accessible to everyone and not a paradox at all". With this in mind, the main purpose of QMS as a carrier of ideology is in constituting concrete ODL practitioners as subjects – "individuals are always-already subjects". Althusser concludes that, "the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e. in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, i.e. in order that he shall make the gestures and actions of his subjection 'all by himself'".

For van Dijk [18], “ideologies form the basic social representations of the beliefs shared by a group, and precisely function as the framework that defines the overall coherence of these beliefs”. Thus, “ideologies allow new social opinions to be easily inferred, acquired and distributed in a group when the group and its members are confronted with new events and situations” (p. 15). Notwithstanding the fact that QMS ideologically is biased, it is critical to mention that QMS serves as a tool for social reproduction, ideological control, and regulation.

In summary, from an Althusserian perspective, QMS as a carrier of ideology has the function of constituting concrete individuals as subjects, that is, of enlisting them in any belief system. It also has a function of interpellating ODL practitioners as subjects. It could, therefore, be concluded that the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject. In the section that follows, it will be argued that higher education industry is driven by consumerist tendencies.

5. QMS as a key pillar of the higher education industry

Notwithstanding the fact that *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948, declares (in Article 26) that “everyone has the right to education” and further declares that higher education “shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit”, it can be reasonably argued that in the 21st century higher education has become definitely a *commodity* that is up for sale. It is critical to mention that higher education is *market-driven* and underpinned by what Slavoj Žižek, Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffe call a *consumerist* ideology. For instance, Žižek [22] argues that “the very act of egotist consumption already includes the price of its opposite”. Nonetheless, calls for quality in the higher education industry today are loud and clear. It is correct that higher education industry as a “business”, must embrace the notions of *quality*, TQM and best business practices in order to remain competitive and financially sustainable. While the cost of providing higher education continues to rise, higher education institutions face overwhelming challenges to long-established business models. Further worsening this challenging climate, the public is beginning to question the *quality* of higher education.

The notion of quality in higher education is as old as medieval ages and is traceable to the 13th century [23]. Hitherto, the definition of *quality* that “prevails in industrial/business environments, based on the idea of satisfying customers’ needs and expectations, is problematic in higher education” [23]. It is worth mentioning that in recent years, higher education institutions have encountered growing pressure to operate like businesses. Nonetheless, higher education institutions must change to meet the needs of its 21st century students; and embrace the notions of *efficiency*, *productivity*, and *innovation*. It is the authors’ view that the students are customers of higher education institutions. The authors equally assume that if the customer is satisfied, the product has good quality. Notwithstanding that the term ‘customer’ is central to Total Quality Management (TQM), our thesis is that in order to be effective higher education organizations must be customer-driven. The TQM is potentially the solution as to how to improve the quality of the services provided by higher education institutions – its central theme is the importance of meeting customer needs.

For Taiwo [24], “customer-oriented organizations are successful because they have a unified focus on what they do and who they serve. Taiwo continues by noting that “customers have wants, opinions, perceptions, and desires which are often referred to as the voice of the customer”. He argues that “the voice of the customer can also be defined in technical terms as the “standardized, disciplined, and cyclic approach to obtaining and prioritizing customer preferences for use in designing products and services”. Despite the fact that quality is defined as meeting or exceeding customer expectations, it is critical to ask the question, *to what extent are higher education sectors meeting or exceeding customers’ needs and expectations?* As Deming rightly puts it, “the customer is “one who gets your work.”

Willis and Taylor [4] observe that “quality concerns have spread from manufacturing and service businesses to the public sector including public and private educational systems”. They further argue that “an increasing number of higher education institutions are adopting a TQM approach to enhance the school’s ability to attract and retain students by implementing processes to continually improve quality. In line with this, the authors argue that the fundamental purpose of QMS models is to serve the customer better. Even though QMS models were established mainly for manufacturing and industrial sectors, within higher education sectors they can contribute to the process of standardization of academic degrees. In spite of the fact that “TQM models developed for higher education are consistent with models frequently used in the manufacturing, business, and service sectors” [25], it is the authors’ view that the QMS and ODL have a symbiotic relationship. Like contact universities, the ODL institutions are the “key drivers in the knowledge economy and thus, are encouraged to develop links with industry and business in a series of new venture partnerships” [25].

As Chen et al. [25] observe, “universities are generally facing fiscal constraints and increased competition, increased calls for accountability, growing demand through growing enrolment and student diversity, and challenges from developing technologies”. They argue that “universities and higher education systems, in general, are expected to have a sophisticated approach to documenting performance excellence that is accountable, evidence-based, outcomes-focused and geared towards continuous improvement in spite of contextual challenges”. While QM principles are more widely accepted within the university today, Chen et al. [25] postulate that “the difficulty in translating TQM into an educational setting stems from the difficulty in measuring learning because the core processes of learning are too subtle to be measured meaningfully”. They emphasize that “some of the notions of quality management (QM) do not have simple equivalents in higher education such as managerial responsibility for quality, empowering staff for quality improvement purposes, setting standards to reflect customer requirements, and avoiding error/minimizing variation”.

In summary, many would believe that QMS in higher education has been important for decades. Notwithstanding that there exist many models of QMS, different quality tools and standards, the rise of QMS in higher education remains “a product of market ideologies of the 1980s and the managerialism that accompanied it” [26]. As Faganel and Dolinšek [7] write, “quality management systems in higher education have been developed for a number of years to improve professional standards”. They conclude, “several attempts have been made

to develop methods that would be modeled on ISO 9000 and TQM, but some of these models were developed to evaluate a business process in the quality field”.

6. (Re) thinking QMS through the Heideggerian lens of temporality

Despite the fact that Heidegger was overwhelmingly captivated by the concept of *being*, his commentaries are fundamental to re-imagining QMS (as a temporal phenomenon) in higher education. In his seminal work, *The Science of Being and Art of Living*, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi [27] provides an account of the concept *Being*. He writes, “as the omnipresent, essential constituent of creation, *Being* lies at the basis of everything, beyond all relative existence, beyond all forms and phenomena”. He further argues that “Being is the most glorified, most precious, and most laudable basis of all living. Being is the basis of cosmic law, the basis of all the laws of nature, which lies at the root of all creation and evolution”. His thesis is that “the conscious basis of Being is like a ship without a rudder, ever at the mercy of the tossing sea”.

Against this backdrop, the *being*-ness of QMS is a philosophical problem deeply embedded in existential temporality. Standera [28] contends that “temporality, as a fundamental condition of the possibility of our experience, unifies all the structures that comprise our particular way of *Being*, which includes *Being-in-the-world*”. For him it is the crucial glue binding all the elements and processes that Heidegger ascribes to our existence into a coherent whole, providing “the unitary basis for its existential possibility”; it “regulates the possible unity of all *Dasein*’s existential structures”. This corresponds with Orr’s (2014) view. He conjures, “whatever exists in the mode of temporality does not possess its being but receives it ever anew as a gift”. From the Heideggerian view, temporality should be conceived not as “clock-time”, but “ecstatically”. As Heidegger [1] notes, “ecstatic temporality is a process with three dimensions which form a unity; and confers unity on one’s entire existence, and not simply episodes in one’s conscious awareness”. His temporality provides a spectrum or factor for classifying cognitive complexity that establishes a radical continuity through the shared participation. Hence, temporality provides “a kind of framework or medium in which *Dasein*, which literally means ‘Being-there’, pursues its existence” (Orr’s 2014).

From a Heideggerian perspective, the notions of *being* and QMS have mutual connections and are tightly intermingled. The *being*-ness of QMS, as a phenomenon of life in higher education space, takes its meaning in *temporality* and *historicity*. Heidegger’s thesis is that temporality is not an entity, not a sequence of self-contained moments that move from future to present to past, and not a property or feature of something, but is, rather, akin to a self-generating and self-transcending process. He observes, “temporalizing does not signify that ecstasies come in a ‘succession’. The future is not later than having-been, and having-been is not earlier than the Present. Temporality temporalizes itself as a future which makes present in a process of having been”.

It is prudent to believe that QMS, as a social construct, is neither a simple nor a *static* process. On the contrary, it is a fluid and changing the concept that is in a perpetual state of *Being* and *Becoming*. From a philosophical perspective, the QMS carries categorical ontological and

epistemological attributes/appeals of temporality, spatiality, being-in-the-world, worldliness, nearness, disclosedness, and thrownness). It is the authors' view that the notions of temporality, spatiality, and thrownness influence the *being-ness* of QMS. It is worth mentioning that the ontology of the *being-ness* of QMS is rooted in the phenomenon of time.

Given the fact that the 21st century ODL is trapped in *temporal flux*, among others, it calls for Heidegger's model of temporality, which unifies and enables practice and purposiveness. It is critical to mention that the Heideggerian model of temporality strongly resonates with the temporal dimension of meaning-enacting cognition [28]. Stendera as such, emphasizes that the Heidegger model of temporality.

"invites us to understand purposiveness as inherently temporal and temporality as shaped by purposiveness; to view the futural dimension as having a special significance, one that can be cashed out in terms of a radical indeterminacy that transcends mere predictive or anticipatory models of futurity; and, finally, to take temporality as being structured by and structuring the self-concern that defines Dasein".

As Stendera [29] points out, the *Heideggerian model of temporality* "is thick enough to accommodate and account for the valance and can connect self-concern with future-directedness in a way that makes sense of precariousness". It is the authors' view that Heidegger's model of temporality requires a regiment of critically reflexive ODL practitioners and leadership with temporal and disclosedness attributes. Gordon & Howell [30] recount that "the need for competent, imaginative, and responsible leadership is greater than ever before; the need becomes more urgent as the business grows ever more complex and as the environment with which it has to cope continues to change at an accelerating tempo."

In summary, Heidegger's model of temporality presents an alternative view of how the temporality makes meaningful experience possible. It has a critical role to play in the re-imagination of QMS in the 21st century; and captures the originary, and overarching sense of temporality. Its attributes are complex, inextricable entanglement with purposiveness; an emphasis upon radical futurity; and a fundamental connection to self-concern. Most importantly, the model of temporality has the prospects of guiding and informing the interpretation of ODL practitioners' experience of the world, changing from pragmatic temporality to what Heidegger calls *existential temporality*.

7. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that QMS is a set of intricate and interacting elements that are fundamental to higher education. It is the authors' view that while QMS plays a vital role in improving the performance of higher education it can also serve as a management tool by the government, funding bodies, and higher education institutions, to engender a controlled, and an unquestioning environment. This paper attempted to show, using Foucault's perspective, that as a form of control, QMS can be regarded as a tool geared towards the creation of *docile bodies*, that is, like the prison system, QMS requires unquestioning compliance, which can be attributed to docility. The building platform of this study drew on the work of Heidegger to

argue that ODL practitioners are always in the state of *Being* and *Becoming*. That is, they are in a temporal mode of being. This work showed that ODL practitioners are 'thrown' into the world and that their Being-in-the-world aligns with Heidegger's lens of 'thrownness'. In this regard, Heidegger's notion of *Being* and *Becoming* projects hidden ontical and ontological dimensions of QMS.

Drawing on Althusser's *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* the authors suggested that QMS can be regarded as a carrier of ideology in that it functions to constitute the individuals as subjects, and of interpellating ODL practitioners. It was noted that the rise of QMS in higher education is the product of market ideologies of the 1980s and the managerialism that accompanied it. However, the authors suggested that Heidegger's model of temporality can be regarded as an alternative view of how the temporality makes meaningful experience possible. This paper called for a re-imagination of QMS using both Heidegger and Foucault, given that QMS' attributes are complex, inextricable entanglement. Finally, it was argued that the model of temporality has the potential to guide and inform the interpretation of ODL practitioners' experience of the world, drawing on what Heidegger calls *existential temporality*.

Author details

Victor J. Pitsoe^{1*} and Moeketsi Letseka²

*Address all correspondence to: Pitsovj@unisa.ac.za

1 Department of Leadership and Management, College of Education, University of South Africa, South Africa

2 Department of Educational Foundations, College of Education, University of South Africa, South Africa

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