

Political Economy of Higher Education: South Africa in a comparative perspective

Meenal Shrivastava and Sanjiv Shrivastava

Global Studies and
Political Economy,
Athabasca University

School of Physics,
University of the
Witwatersrand



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South Africa in a comparative perspective

Higher/Tertiary Education

Major linchpin of

- Economic,
- Social and
- Political development

Produces both public and private

BENEFITS

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Private benefits

Better employment prospects

Higher salaries,

Greater ability to save and invest,

Better health and improved quality of life,

Higher life expectancy...

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Public benefits

Benefits society as a whole

Good Education = Higher earnings = Higher tax revenues

Greater consumption = Benefits to producers

Better teachers = Better education systems

Advanced knowledge and decision-making skills
= Robust civil society

Opportunities for economic advancement
= Higher productivity

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The role of the state

Making education policy,

Funding education

(directives from external institutions and trends)

World Bank

Long standing belief that

primary and secondary education

are drivers of social welfare and

thus **more important than tertiary education**

1985-1989: 17% of the World Bank's worldwide education-sector spending was on higher education

1995-1999: 7%

Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO, 2000

Consequent Trends

Inadequate **government funding for universities**

Loss of autonomy,

Infrastructural decay,

Falling academic standards,

Politicization and privatization of education

Large classes

In Africa

Large classes,
but **low enrolment**
levels overall,

Academic research
output in the region is
among the lowest in the
world



Creating the middle class

Tertiary education is an investment in the creation of a middle class

Important for social, political and economic reasons

Role in increasing the economic productivity
in Asian countries

Correlation between university enrolment rates and
labour productivity growth

\$2 per day or more:

57% (Asia)

34% (Africa) (2010 stats)

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The literature review

Reveals a recurring problem of quantifying the rates of return of investment in tertiary education

The inability to measure or account for social benefits/ externalities/ spillover benefits

Often hard to identify and even harder to measure individual's human capital enhancing the

productivity of other factors of production through channels that are not internalized by the individual

= social rates of return are higher than private rates of return to education

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Knowledge for Development (WB, 1999)

Recommendations:

- Developing countries could use knowledge to narrow the income gap with rich world economies
- Correlation between education in mathematics, science, and engineering and improved economic performance
- Private rate of return to tertiary education, at 20 %, was similar to that for secondary schooling
- Train teachers using distance learning and create open universities that use satellites and the Internet to deliver courses

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Task Force on Higher Education and Society (TFHE)

(WB, 2000)

To monitor its new emphasis on knowledge

Knowledge Economy Index (KEI) to measure:

- Favourability for knowledge development within the economic and institutional regime;
- Education;
- Innovation; and
- Information and communications technology.

Most African countries languish near the bottom of the KEI. South Africa, Botswana, and Mauritius record scores near the middle

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Spread of distance-learning institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa

Open Learning Network (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

Universite Marien Ngouabi (Congo-Brazzaville)

Tanzania's Open University

Zimbabwe Open University

Open Universities in Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia

Southern Africa Regional Universities Association (SARUA): 46 members from 13 countries

Tertiary Education in South Africa

Education system profoundly shaped by **social, political and economic inequalities** of class, race, gender, region and institution

New constitution and policies emphasize **higher education** as human resource development, and as a crucial arena vital to **economic, social, and political transformation**

Cont... Tertiary Education in South Africa

General decline in public subsidies to universities and financial pressures

Higher opportunity costs of deferred income for first generation graduates

'The legacies of intellectual colonisation and racialisation'

Rapid urbanization and higher population density

Cont... Tertiary Education in South Africa

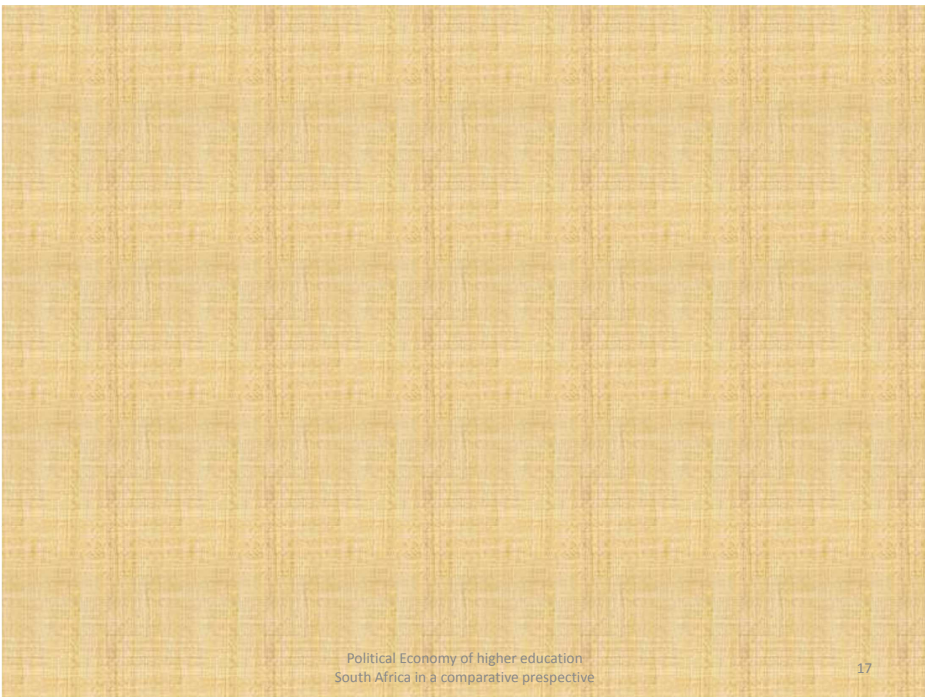
Universities exist at the intersection of **state, market and civil society**

The core purposes and functions of universities **cannot** be to serve purely utilitarian ends

An instrument of **social transformation** and as catalysts of public intellectual debate

In our **'Knowledge Society'** they have become instruments of the **economy, the labour market, and skills production.**

If this is so, what do we do?



Cellphone Assisted Teaching **CAT**

Before Opening the Box

$$| \text{Whole} \rangle | \text{Alive} \rangle + | \text{Decayed} \rangle | \text{Dead} \rangle$$

After Opening the Box

$$| \text{Whole} \rangle | \text{Alive} \rangle + | \text{Decayed} \rangle | \text{Dead} \rangle$$

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1st year students: 2011 University of the Witwatersrand

% of students	Class A %	Class B %	Class C %	Class D %	Usage during class for etc...
Smart phone	80	60	60	<5	A
Picture phone	15	30	20	20	A
Text phones	5	10	20	75	D
Netbook/ tablet/ipad	5	5	5	<2	B/C
Laptop/ computer	5	5	5	<5	B/C

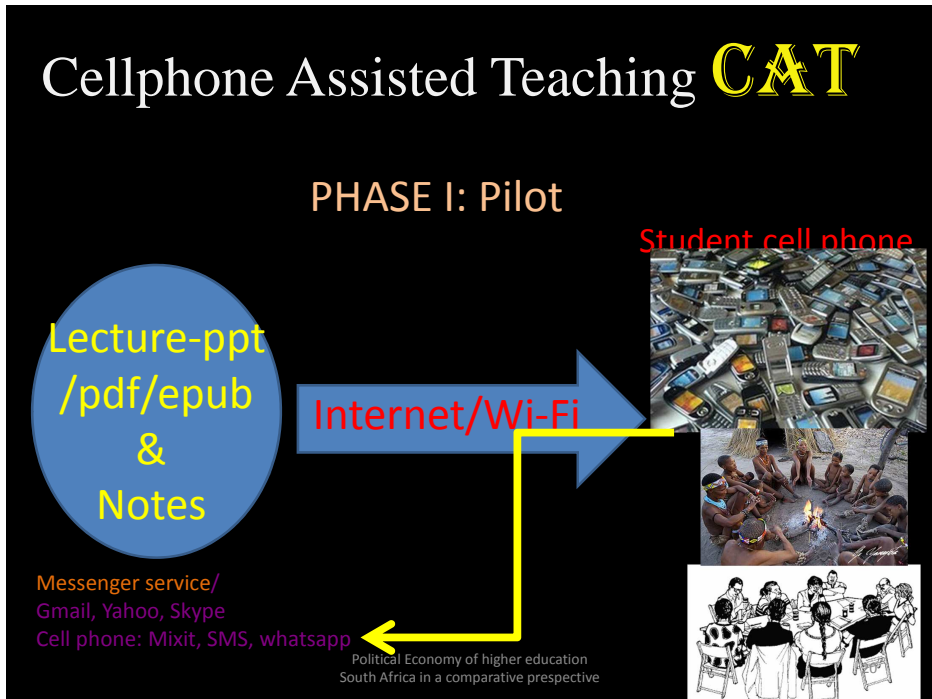
A - All the time

B - Frequently

C - Seldom

D - Rarely

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Student:

1. A2K
2. ADD
3. Skill deficiency: Which System?
4. Money of knowledge: Student to staff ratio



A2K – Addiction to Keyboard



ADD/Dyslexia/Self-Disturbance/Group Nuisance

Dyslexia:
 According to research, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter are in the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without a problem. This is because we do not read every letter by itself, we read the word as a whole and the brain figures it out anyway.

birany mttaar

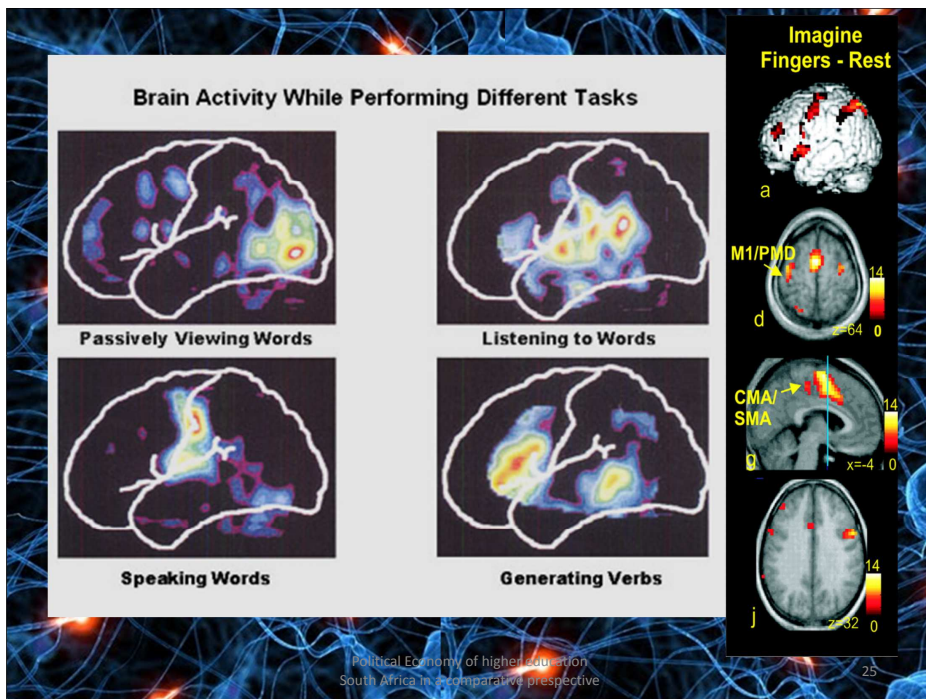
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Skill deficiency:

Study Skills:

- Note taking –
 “I have the handout/notes therefore by osmosis I have the knowledge”
- Note making – Highlighting text in books
- Working/Revision
 “monkey-see- monkey do”
 “watch the magician”
- Summarization

WHAT???



Sample notes: Old- system - handouts

Hydrostatics

There are two aspects of fluid mechanics, which makes it different to solid mechanics:

1. *For Solid, - Strain in a function of the applied stress*
[Elastic region]

The strain in a solid is independent of time over which the force is applied - Deformation disappears when the force is removed

2. *For a Fluid - the rate of strain is \propto to applied stress*
A Fluid continues to flow as long as the force is applied - will not recover its original form when the force is removed.

In fluids, we usually deal with continuous streams of fluid without a beginning or end.

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Sample notes: Interactive web based handouts

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1st year students: 2011 - University of the Witwatersrand
Ideal case: Block all Cellphone / 3G/4G signal

% of students	+/- 760				+/- 80	
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Usage during Class for etc...	Usage during tutorial or lecture
Smart phone	80	60	60	<5	A	30/70
Picture phone	15	30	20	20	A	-/<5
Text phones	5	10	20	75	D	-
Netbook/tablet/ipad	5	5	5	<2	B/C	10/10
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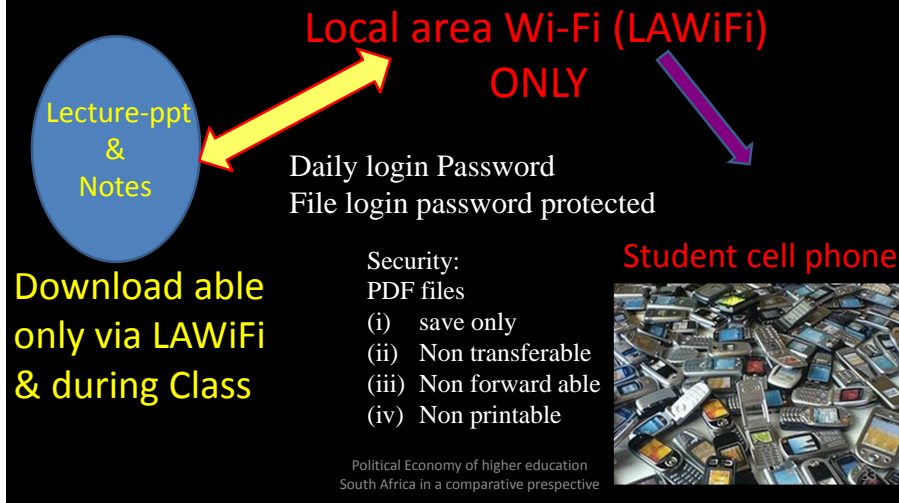
Sample notes: JPEG slide #

Photo-phone

Sample notes: PDF/ePub - editable notes for smartphone

Cellphone Assisted Teaching **CAT**

PHASE 2: Class Attendance
Security of notes



Resolution:

Block cellphone/3G/4G signals – unconstitutional Address

(a) A2K – loosing battle

i. Engage with keyboard

(b) Note taking/making – interactive approach

i. Campus notice boards

ii. Web pages

(c) Extension to Open University

Local area course identifier (LACI) and connectivity – student identifying classmates in vicinity