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Work-Integrated Learning Practices: Lessons from Private Higher Education Institutions

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Work-integrated learning has become an integral part of learning in most higher education institutions. Towards the end of their academic careers, students are expected to integrate the theory learned in class to practice by practising their professional skills in a conducive working environment. Through workplace practice, students get the opportunity to engage with members of communities through service delivery.

The aim of this paper is to explore the impact and contribution of work-integrated learning practice to student learning in private higher educational institutions. This paper furthermore aims to explore students' views and experiences of workplace practice in private higher education institutions in comparison to the experiences of those working in the public sector. The study also assesses the academic supervisor's strategies in influencing student learning during workplace practice. This study adopts a qualitative research method which is participatory in nature. The research relied on the information, perspectives and views of higher educational teachers. Using purposive sampling, data was collected in a focus group discussion with ten academic supervisors in the private sector and a group of five final-year degree and five diploma students in a private higher learning institution in Pretoria. The findings collected from the participants in the study support the fact that workplace practice addresses unavoidable gaps in learning. It is necessary for students to learn effective skills and the desired work relations needed for the work environment.

The study concludes by providing insight into the impact and strategies engaged with regards to work-integrated learning and student learning processes in private higher education institutions. Recommendations on value-added policies that enhance teaching and learning strategies and course content on work-integrated learning within private higher education institutions were suggested in the study.

Keywords: *Work-integrated learning, student learning, Private Higher Educational Institutions (PHEI).*

1. Introduction

Although there is no consensus on the impact of workplace practice on student learning, workplace practices have become an integral part of learning in most higher education institutions. In their final year, students are expected to put the theory they learned in class into practice by practising their professional skills in a working environment. Through workplace practice, students get the opportunity to engage with members of communities through service delivery.

There is a high rate of unemployment amongst South African youths. This led the government to implement workplace practice (or work-integrated learning) into the educational system. The aim of this strategy is to foster employable skills which can improve student integration into the workforce (Naidoo and Van Wyk, 2016: 38). The paper explores the impact and contribution of workplace practice to student learning in private higher education institutions in South Africa.

2. Objectives of Study

- To understand the impact of workplace practice on student learning.
- To investigate the engagement of private higher education institutions (PHEI) with workplace practice.
- To analyse the strategies used by academic supervisors in PHEI to influence student learning.
- To present the skills needed for the acquisition of knowledge during workplace practice.

3. Research Questions

- What is the impact of workplace practice on student learning?
- What role do institutions of private higher education play in facilitating workplace practice?
- What kind of strategies are being used by academic supervisors in PHEI to influence student learning?
- What skills do students need for the acquisition of knowledge during workplace practice?

4. Literature Review

4.1 Workplace Practice and Student Learning

Workplace practice, also known as experiential learning or work-integrated learning (WIL), can be defined in multiple ways; it can be seen as “learning through action, learning by doing, learning through experience, and learning through discovery and exploration” (Northern Illinois University [NIU], 2012:1). According to the Association for Experiential Learning, experiential learning can be described as “a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with students in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values” (NIU, 2012:1). According to the South African Qualifications Authority, workplace practice or work-integrated learning entails an educational strategy outlined to address occupational learning and workplace practices for the benefit of both learners and organisations (Omni HR Consulting, 2018). Rambe (2018:2-3) argues that workplace practice “could be harnessed as a strategy for increasing student employability, through improving their academic and career management capabilities.” This fosters the student’s integration into the workforce with the suitable and adaptive skills necessary for employment (Rambe, 2018:2-3).

Rambe (2018:2-3) further explains that since learning is a process of human adaptation, students need to be involved with workplace practice in order to reconstruct, improve and provide a balanced learning experience. According to Kolb and Kolb (2009:42), the educational and industrial learning space itself is multifaceted – both organisational and managerial performance has been entwined into the learning curve as a learning system and process of learning. This enabled the educational scholars to debate on the need to shift their primary focus from classroom learning to other forms of learning, including workplace practice.

Referring to the fieldwork placement of occupational therapy students at UKZN, Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016:37) argued that “field work placement allows students opportunities for learning by integrating their theory into practice, conceptualising what professionalism entails and providing a chance to practise their professional skills in a supportive environment”. Most often, students acquire knowledge in their profession especially on the strengths and limitations of intervention plans required to address challenges of the corporate environment.

Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016:37) further reiterate that workplace practice is a multifaceted experience where students constantly engage with corporate-world experiences that shape their

learning behaviour. They claim that workplace practice is important for students to understand and gain the experience required for working in the corporate world. The skills and benefits attained during work-integrated learning exposes students and changes the focus of their learning to the context of their profession.

For Gready (2014:196), workplace practice addresses basic concepts in student learning, including time management, work stress, and teamwork. Gready (2014:196) explains that theory does not only provide what students need in basic learning but addresses the practicality (practical skills) of what needs to be learned in training and educational settings. Students are expected to be prepared for the complexities and realities of life which entails dealing with “uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflicts” (Gready, 2014:196). NIU (2012:1), reiterates the different types of workplace practice opportunities in higher education institute. The opportunities include; apprenticeships, clinical experiences, workplace practice experiences, post-graduate experiences, internship experiences, studying abroad, and volunteering.

Lam and Chan (2013:2), argue that there are four stages of workplace practice. These are illustrated in Figure 1. The first two stages, concrete experience and abstract conceptualisation, relate to the student’s experience in workplace practice. The ‘concrete’ experience involves students actively participating in issues faced by the organisation, leading to problem solving (Lam and Chan, 2013:2). The second stage, reflection and active experimentation, relates to the process of transformation during fieldwork practice. The ‘reflection’ stage entails the act of ‘thinking’, which emphasises the need for students to be able to recall the lessons they learned during workplace practice (Lam and Chan, 2013:2). The third stage, abstract conceptualisation, entails students being able to “generalise knowledge and theory” (Lam and Chan, 2013:2). The fourth stage, active experimentation, assists students in modifying existing concepts and knowledge during fieldwork (Lam and Chan, 2013:2).

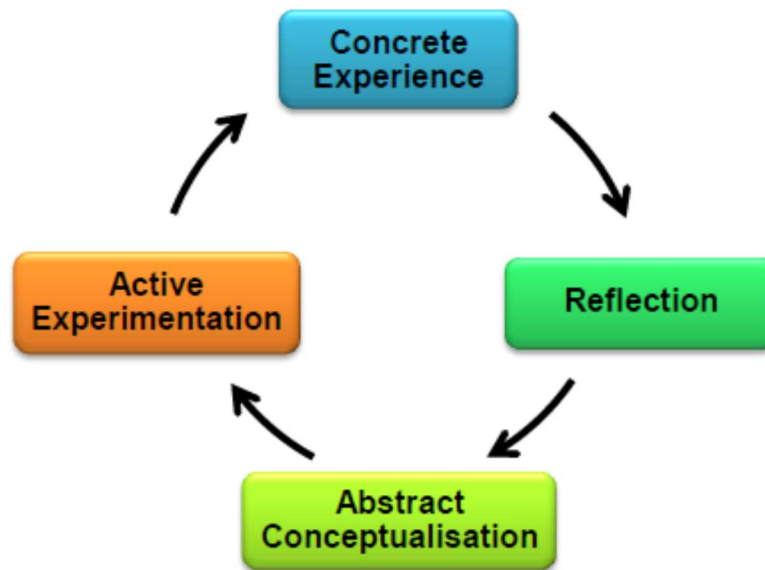


Figure 1. The learning cycle in workplace practice (Lam and Chan, 2013:1).

These stages are entwined and enable students to have a fundamental experience of workplace practice.

4.2 Theoretical Framework

4.2.1 Policy on Work-Integrated Learning

In the early 1990s, a gap between formal learning and workplace practice was identified. In recent years, scholars such as Dhemba and Jotham (2012), Dimo (2013), Gupta and Kelly (2014), Van Staden (2015), and Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016) have explored the impact of workplace practice on student learning. The findings of these scholars' work led the South African government to implement a work-integrated learning (WIL) policy into the educational sector in order to improve teaching and learning (Council for Higher Education [CHE], 2011:3). The major aim of the work-integrated learning policy is to assist and ease the transition between learning and working and to increase the rate of employability in the country.

WIL has been defined as the curriculum, pedagogy and different assessment practices that foster formal learning and workplace practices to enhance student learning (CHE, 2011:3). WIL is an approach used to foster career-focussed education which includes classroom-based and work-based learning applicable to any students chosen profession. In his report on WIL policy submitted to the Department of Higher Education, Van Staden (2015:3) described WIL as "an educational approach through which a person internalises knowledge, gains insights and

acquires skills and competencies through exposure to a workplace to achieve specific outcomes applicable to employment” (Van Staden, 2015:12).

According to the Council for Higher Education (CHE, 2011:5), WIL provides certain benefits for student learning. The first benefit of work-integrated learning is that it promotes academic performance by encouraging enhanced thinking and fostering the student’s motivation to learn. WIL adds personal value to students by enhancing their communication, leadership, and relationships skills and by facilitating effective teamwork amongst students (CHE, 2011:5). WIL also provides students with clarity on their career choices and professional identity, enables employment opportunities, and provides students with sound, positive work ethics. Lastly, WIL facilitates students’ competency in technical knowledge and skills (CHE, 2011:5).

In contrast, Van Staden’s report (2015:3) to the Department of Higher Education argued that WIL poses a challenge to student learning as it generalises the concept of employment and is not specific to theory learning. He also stated that some higher educational institutions do not have sufficient facilities to accommodate students for work-integrated learning (Van Staden, 2015: 5). Another challenge noted was that employers “have been slow to recognise how partnerships with education and training institutions might enhance the relevance of education for potential employees and lead to improved organisational performance” (Van Staden, 2015:5). Despite Van Staden’s comments, Gupta and Kelly (2014) have argued that WIL is the best strategy for preparing students for workplace practice. In fact, most universities in South Africa have prided themselves in the product offering for work-integrated learning provided by different institutions. This has assisted many students in gaining experience through workplace practice and service-learning projects.

It is important for WIL to go through the three phases of knowledge. This traditional knowledge system of the professions is outlined in Figure 2. The first phase of knowledge is centred on the academic discipline, where “Academic staff, in their roles as researchers, develop new knowledge and thinking in their field or specialism” (CHE, 2011:8). The second phase relates to the educational field, where lecturers/tutors are expected to design and implement appropriate learning and assessment methods, engaging both the curriculum and pedagogy of learning (CHE, 2011:8). The third phase relates to professional practice, which allows the transformation of theory into work-related practices.

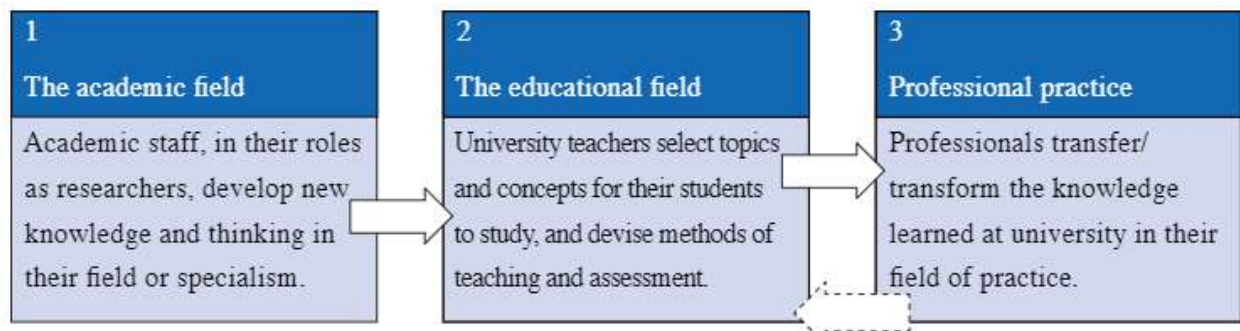


Figure 2. Traditional professional knowledge system (CHE, 2011:8).

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (2013), Van Staden (2015), and Omni HR Consulting (2018) explain that the workplace practice or WIL policy must be aligned with academic and workplace practices to benefit students and industries.

This can be achieved in three ways (CHE, 2011:8):

- a) Learning *for* work, which entails training and inducting new candidates for a profession or vocation.
- b) Learning *at* work, which involves the acquisition of knowledge and competencies from working experiences; and
- c) Learning *through* work, which involves assigning work-related tasks as part of the learning curriculum.

These three phases encourage the integrative aspects of learning and workplace practices even if there is no direct relationship between the learning curriculum and workplace practices (CHE, 2011:8).

Omni HR Consulting (2018), further reiterate the importance and impact of workplace practice on students. They postulate that work-integrated learning is important because:

- a) The acquisition of new knowledge and skills in a controlled environment benefits the students.
- b) It enables the students to develop new ideas for their various disciplines or choice of career.
- c) Institutions benefit, as organisations will continue to call on them to provide a continuous flow of skilled learners who meet human capital requirements.
- d) It hastens student employment after studying and fosters quality work integration.

- e) It reduces the unemployment rate amongst youths as students are equipped with entrepreneurial skills.

4.2.2 Acquisition of Knowledge for Workplace Practice

In his research on workplace practice, Gready (2014:199) analysed the experiences of students in the human-rights-related field. Gready's report (2014) stated that the knowledge and skill needed by students to conduct research on workplace practice include the following:

- a) 'Minding the gap' between learning and workplace practice by integrating points on what needs to be learned in the classroom and the field.
- b) Immersive involvement and necessary boundaries. This involves students understanding that although work can be time consuming and have different challenges at every structure, boundaries should still be set.
- c) Planning and flexibility: students are expected to be proactive and plan appropriately to respond to both the opportunities and threats of fieldwork. The ability to balance planning with flexibility within the work environment is important.
- d) Ethics are crucial, and during fieldwork, students need to familiarise themselves with the organisation's work ethics. Proper training is needed in this area.
- e) Trust and access (both socially and geographically): students should be able to access and travel around their respective field sites. Most often, trust is gained in line with individual's personality, perseverance and luck. Therefore, students are encouraged to display the right attitude that will help in the workplace practice.

5. Constraints in Fostering Professional Behaviour Amongst Students

According to Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016:38), "One of the key challenges for supervisors is fostering and developing [the] professional behavior of students, which entails introducing new theoretical ideas and knowledge as a necessary foundation for practice" (Naidoo and Van Wyk, 2016:38). Every educational tutor should be able to disseminate the applicable knowledge and translate theories into ideas and practice. If theories are not realised, students find it hard to adapt to the corporate world. According to Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016:38), students experience different challenges during workplace practices. These challenges include difficulty in translating theory into practice, a lack of understanding of the diverse contexts of the discipline or field, a need for clear guidelines, and a fear of failing in the task assigned to them (Naidoo and Van Wyk, 2016:38-39).

Scholars such as Dima (2013), Van Staden (2015), and Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016) have agreed that to address the major constraints in student preparation for workplace practice strategies are needed to guide the students on what is expected of them. Effective teaching strategies that bridge the gap between theory and practice are also needed. Effective teaching strategies will assist students in understanding the theory of learning and to easily adapt to the complications of work ethics. Dima (2013) and Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016) further noted the need to implement strategies that not only provide students with constructive feedback, but which also promote the freedom and autonomy of students. All these strategies, if implemented, are practical strategies for improving the culture of learning.

6. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research method which is participatory in nature. The research relied on the information, perspectives and views of teachers in higher education. Using purposive sampling, data was collected in a focus group discussion with ten academic educators from the private sector and a group of five final-year degree and five diploma students from a private higher education institution in Pretoria.

The selective criteria for the academic educators meant that they had to be educators in charge of workplace practice in a higher educational institution and have more than two years of experience. The students had to be in their final year and had to have done their workplace practice as part of their school curriculum. The participants gave their informed consent and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in the research. The participants were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could freely withdraw from the research if they felt uncomfortable.

The focus group sessions were audio-recorded, and the data was coded and transcribed in line with the objectives of study. The results were analysed according to four themes: (i) the influence of workplace practice on student learning; (ii) the private higher education institutions' engagement with fieldwork; (iii) the strategies used by the academic supervisors to influence student learning during workplace practice; (iv) the skills needed for the acquisition of knowledge during workplace practice.

7. Findings

Work-integrated learning or experiential learning (EL) provides students with the opportunity to put into practise what they have been studying in textbooks and in classrooms (Northern Illinois University [NIU], 2012:1). From the evidence collected in the research findings, students are required to complete a specified amount of workplace practice which is aligned to the exit level outcomes of the institution. Students are placed in real or simulated work environments and are allocated roles and responsibilities aligned with the organisation's work policies.

Towards the end of students' third year in the university, the students are expected to have an in-depth understanding of the knowledge, skills and insights derived from the themes of study in class. The students are expected to have become professionals in their areas of specialisation and to be able to draw conclusions using the lessons learned in the classroom. The students are also expected to have the comprehensive specialised skills needed to prepare them for the world of work within an organisation or business in their area of specialisation.

From the evidence collected from the case study, the WIL coordinator explained that students are required to conclude a project-based investigation within a chosen operational environment to present a business case, focussing on the operational requirements and approaches in the world of work as it applies to a selected specialisation area. This finding corresponds with Naidoo and Van Wyk's report (2016:38-39) on fieldwork practice for learning.

The WIL coordinator also indicated that experiential learning or workplace practice is a credit-bearing module in a student's qualification. If students do not meet the requirements for this module, the institution will not award credits for the module, meaning the student cannot graduate. This makes it compulsory for all students registered for diplomas and degrees to go through the workplace practice process, thereby preparing them for the corporate world. These findings support the mandate given by South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA, 2013). Students produce a portfolio of evidence (POE) of personal skills which can be shown to potential employers to showcase their experience. The POE is also used as a springboard for projects conducted during the student's workplace practice.

The WIL coordinator emphasised that each student is expected to develop and demonstrate detailed knowledge in their field of specialisation. Most importantly, students must be able to evaluate different sources of information and communicate effectively at the end of their workplace practice. The lessons learned are managed by students with their assigned mentors; however, the student must take full accountability for their actions and results.

8. Discussion and Analysis

8.1 Impact of Workplace Practice on Student Learning

The study found that workplace practice has and will continue to have great impact on student learning. From the discussions with students, it is evident that workplace practice has made positive contributions towards student learning.

Student A stated that:

“Most students who did workplace practice in the past five years are easily integrated and able to secure internship for themselves in the company where they did the workplace practice which eventually led to permanent employment for some students”.

Another student agreed, stating that “workplace practice has benefited the students by providing the students with a little sense of what to expect from the real world.” These results highlight that work-integrated learning delivers an analytical synopsis of the work-specific responsibilities assigned to students’ areas of specialisation within the work environment. Student C supported this statement, stating that “Experiential practice has broadened the knowledge gap of students on issues relating to the legislative framework in a specialised area, function and the business function within a selected workplace practice environment.” Student E stated that workplace practice addresses the core aspects related to the management function and creates a business case for the effective management and good practice approaches of specialisation area requirements in the workplace practice.

All participants agreed that the implementation of workplace practice in private higher educational institutions has increased the students’ level of confidence and has enabled them to understand the strategies required to operate effectively within a corporate environment. These findings support those of Dhembha and Jotham, (2012), Dimo (2013), Gupta and Kelly (2014), Van Staden (2015) and Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016).

8.2 Private Higher Education Institutions' Engagement with Fieldwork

The following findings were obtained from a focus group discussion with ten academic educators and an experiential learning coordinator. The findings show that most institutions of private higher education have integrated experiential learning into their curriculums. The educators from the PHEI under study explained that the workplace practice or experiential learning programme in the institution was designed to follow and achieve SAQA's critical cross-field outcomes. These critical cross-field outcomes involve enabling students to identify and solve problems using critical, creative thinking and being able to engage in teamwork at the workplace.

The experiential learning coordinator stated the following:

"We try to organise and manage programs which assist students independently with handling personal responsibilities and goals. This enables them to collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information related to tasks assigned to them".

Another academic educator stated that the PHEI in question had "assigned [an] effective curriculum and pedagogy, which allows effective communication using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentations."

Academic educator B elaborated further that:

"The college has incorporated SAQA critical cross-field outcomes in terms of use of science and technology to the learning system. This has enabled students to appreciate and recognise the importance of their responsibility towards the environment and health of others, especially within workplace practice. Students are taught to understand the dynamics of workplace practice and to possess the skills needed for problem-solving contexts".

The educator's focus group compared the engagement of private higher education institutions' and public higher educational institutions with workplace practice. The educator's focus group emphasised that private institutions are more committed in facilitating workplace practice as an integral part of student learning than institutions in the public sector.

According to the educator's focus group,

“The public sector rarely enforces workplace practice or experiential learning because there is a larger number of students in public institutions than in private institutions. Furthermore, there is no direct relationship between tutors and students in the public sector (unlike in private institutions), therefore there is no monitoring or proper guidelines on work-integrated learning”.

The focus group further noted that while the public sector most often facilitates internships for students almost immediately after university, this is already done during the school year in private higher institutions. These findings are yet to be tested as there is no adequate literature which addresses the importance and rate of engagement of workplace practice for students in the public sector.

8.3 Strategies Used by Educators to Influence Student Learning in Preparation for Workplace Practice

There are different strategies engaged by educators to influence student learning during workplace practice. The participants from the focus study stated that a few months before the student goes for workplace practice, weekly workshops are organised on different topics to assist the students to prepare for the field work. The participants stated:

“We hold workshops and seminars every Friday of the week a few months before the students leave for experiential learning or workplace practice. The lecturers teach the students specific topics applicable to workplace practice. Topics such as time management, stress management, ethics, relationship management, code and conduct of work ethics that will assist the students to maintain a balanced life in the workplace practice”.

Educator A stated that:

“Most times, professionals and experts of different discipline are invited for the workshops to train the students on what to expect in the corporate world. This strategy has been effective as most often, both teachers and students find placements which has been effective till date”.

Another strategy engaged by the academics include asking students to give detailed reports on their work experience during workplace practice. The student is given a portfolio of evidence

to fill (which includes the induction report) based on the student's week one experience. They are expected to write a reflective essay, highlighting the key lessons learned during the induction week. This assists the supervisors to monitor and guide the students throughout their workplace practice.

Commenting on the importance of the POEs, Educator C said the following:

It is important for the students to submit their POEs, which is the collection of materials showing the tasks completed and the skills/competencies developed (this includes photos, minutes of meetings, schedules of workshops and seminars attended, products created, etc.) at the end of their workplace practice as it amounts to a 20%-mark allocation for their course work. This mark allocation assists students to take their experiential learning seriously.

Another key fact is that students are expected to submit a work-related learning report, which amounts to 40% of their course work. According to Educator A, the work-related learning report "Enables students to submit a work-integrated learning report in which they must liaise and discuss the obligation to write work integrated learning report with the person at the organisation responsible for their training."

The respondents stated that although it is compulsory to give feedback in their report, students must check with the necessary authorities at their workplace on what is permitted to be written, for ethical reasons. The students must make sure that ethical principle of confidentiality is observed and that the company agrees for the student submit the work-integrated learning report to the institution's internal and external examiners. Because the report may contain confidential information, approval to submit it is needed. If confidentiality must be considered, the students are expected to inform their assigned supervisors and mark the report as confidential on the outside cover.

Workplace practice supervision, an oral presentation on the internship experience, and a student placement sheet are also included in the curriculum, with a coursework mark allocation of 10 marks each. All of these strategies are employed to assist students in understanding the importance of workplace practice.

Educator E explained further that:

“The work-related learning report normally covers the important themes and aspects of students’ training experience[s], although more emphasis is encouraged on issues of personal development rather than those relating to the organisation and its markets”.

The work-integrated learning report provides a comprehensive report on all aspects of the students’ learning experiences during their fieldwork but focuses specifically on their personal development.

8.4 Essential Skills Required for the Acquisition of Knowledge During Workplace Practice

There are different skills that students require to overcome the challenges they encounter in workplace practice. Both the student focus group and the academic supervisors identified these categories. The student focus group confirmed that “the issue of time management, work ethic, stress management, effective communication, administrative skills, computer skills and stress management are important skills necessary for every student during fieldwork”.

The student focus group emphasised that the PHEI educators ensure that students are trained and demonstrate an understanding of the skills needed for workplace practice. This information correlates with literature given by Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016), who stated that workplace practice assists students to conceptualise the importance of professionalism and demonstrates how professional skills are employed within a supportive environment. Another important factor supported by the student focus group is that the portfolio of evidence (POE) should be part of students’ work-integrated learning, since it consists of a collection of materials that will enable students to demonstrate their skills and knowledge to both the organisation they worked for and the school itself. The POE further enables students to provide adequate progress reports on the specialised skills that they learned and used during their workplace practice.

The important skills mentioned above by the students focus group correlate with the skills described by the Council for Higher Education (CHE, 2011) and Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016) as necessary for students and researchers to cope with the challenges in workplace practice. From the evidence collected and the discussion presented, it is evident that the student participants see work-integrated learning as helpful in making successful career choices.

9. Conclusion

Workplace practice addresses the unavoidable gaps in learning (Van Staden, 2015). It is necessary for students to be prepared in terms of the knowledge and behaviour required for the effective management of their area of specialisation.

In terms of this paper's first objective, workplace practice has and will continue to have great impact on student learning. Most private institutions still regard the process as an effective contributor to student learning. The private higher education institution under study attests to the fact that workplace practice has made a positive contribution to teaching and learning system by allowing students to experience and learn the skills and values necessary in the workplace, thereby increasing their knowledge and helping them to be prepared for the corporate world.

In terms of this paper's second objective, it has been established that most private higher education institutions have embraced and implemented workplace practice into their curriculums. The South African government has mandated and implemented a work-integrated learning policy into the educational sector to improve teaching and learning.

The findings of this paper's third objective are that there are different strategies engaged by academic supervisors to assist students in preparing for workplace practice. Some of these strategies include organising workshops and teaching workplace skills within the classroom space. This study furthermore provides insight into the difficulties that students encounter during workplace practice. Students benefit from guidance and mentoring and the use of active teaching strategies, which allow them to accept greater responsibility for their learning.

This paper's fourth objective aimed to address the skills needed for the acquisition of knowledge during workplace practice. Both the literature review and the findings of this study affirm the need for critical skills to foster the students' acquisition of knowledge. These skills include effective time management, work ethic, stress management, administrative skills, and computer skills, to mention a few (Naidoo and Van Wyk, 2016:38-40).

As stated by Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016:37), both academics and the management of private institutions play a vital role in modelling, reasoning, and providing structured learning experiences where students can be supported in mastering concepts which can empower them

to practise independently. It is therefore advisable for Private Higher Educational Institutions to allow more opportunities for supervised debriefings after workplace practice experiences so that students and stakeholders can learn from one another.

10. Recommendations

The study recommends future research to enable a wider generation of knowledge in the private higher educational institutions. Most importantly, the study recommends the improved facilitation of workplace practice in terms of content selection, teaching and learning policies within private higher education institutions as proposed by Naidoo and Van Wyk (2016:40). Class-delivery techniques should also be considered. Academic supervisors should ensure students are taught employable skills that will hasten sustained improvement on student competencies.

Future research should continue to focus on the role the impact and contribution of workplace practice to student learning in private higher education institutions. The reason being that most of the research related to work-integrated learning has been conducted within the public sector. Future research on work-integrated learning will benefit private institutions and will assist in better integrating workplace practice as an integral part of student learning.

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Motivational Factors in the Practice of Having Multiple Concurrent Sexual Partners: A Study of Students in a South African University**Nereshnee Naidoo (Damelin: Pietermaritzburg)**nereshnee.aidoo@damelin.co.za

The practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships is not a new phenomenon. It has been reported in many places over the years. Studies show that engaging in such behaviour makes one more likely to contract STIs and STDs. With the current HIV pandemic facing South Africa, motivating factors for engaging in such a risky practice need to be explored.

This research investigated the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. In all, 21 participants (13 males and 8 females) took part in the research. Data was collected in 7 individual interviews consisting of 4 female participants and 3 male participants, 1 paired interview consisting of 2 female participants, one all-male focus group discussion consisting of 7 male participants, and 1 mixed-gender focus group discussion consisting of 2 female participants and 3 male participants. The data was analysed using thematic analysis. Results showed that there are numerous factors – such as being intoxicated, sexual drive, and experimentation, amongst others – that motivate people to engage in having multiple sexual partnerships. The implications of the findings were examined, and recommendations were made for improved policy and practice in this domain.

Keywords: *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), motivational factors, multiple concurrent sexual partnerships, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), sexually transmitted infections (STIs).*

1.1 Introduction

“Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships” has been defined as “overlapping sexual partnerships where intercourse with one partner occurs between two acts of intercourse with another partner” (Garnett, 2009:4). However, there has been much debate on the different forms of multiple concurrent sexual behaviour and the reasons for this behaviour. The issue of what motivates the practice is of major importance, as having multiple concurrent sexual partners is a significant contributor to the growing pandemic of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in Southern Africa (Gorbach, Stoner, Aral, Whittington and Holmes, 2001). This needs to be understood now more than ever as Statistics South Africa has released data that shows HIV/AIDS deaths in South Africa have moved from being ranked sixth in the world in 2012, to third in the world in 2013, with 458,933 registered deaths at the Department of Home Affairs in 2013 (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Research done by Morris and Kretzschmar (1997), Shisana et al. (2009), and Epstein and Morris (2011) demonstrates the link between having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and HIV infection.

1.2 Problem Statement

Engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships is a practice that causes many challenges. Having more sexual partnerships increases the likelihood of people becoming infected with HIV. South Africa, and most importantly, KwaZulu-Natal, has the highest global prevalence of HIV/AIDS. It is also noted that this province has the highest prevalence of engaging in what is referred to as risky sexual behaviour. Other challenges that arise from having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships are societal ones. People who engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships do not always engage in protected sex (Morris and Kretzschmar, 1997; Shisana et al., 2009; Epstein and Morris, 2011). Where a relationship results in a pregnancy, having more than one sexual partner makes it difficult to identify a parental as it can be initially unclear who the parent might be. Where current partners are not aware of other partners, some people may find themselves in a situation that becomes violent. When made aware of the situation, violence maybe directed towards the person who engaged in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Violence could also be directed towards the person cheated on, as some find it difficult to come to terms with the situation that they are facing. In cases where children are involved, this will also impact on them.

As there are many challenges that arise from engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships, it is important to understand why people engage in the practice. This study therefore explores the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and aims to identify what motivates people to engage in this behaviour.

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of this study is to explore students' views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners.

1.4 Research Question

What are students' views on what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Van Wyk (2001:4) writes that:

“A few decades ago, a terrible disease, previously unknown to the human race, began to kill people in the most alarming and terrifying circumstances. It was as though some primeval beast had surfaced in the collective bloodstream of the human race. Wherever this microscopic beast appeared, it produced panic, fear, guilt, hysteria, accusations, excruciating suffering and always, in the end, death”.

This “primeval beast” is now known as HIV/AIDS. The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) attacks the human body's defence cells, namely, the CD4 or the T-helper cells. The human body's immune system is left vulnerable to opportunistic diseases and is unable to fight these. There are three ways that HIV is spread. These include mother-to-child transmission and or blood/body fluid transmission. The most prominent mode, however, is sexual transmission. HIV/AIDS is a worldwide phenomenon. Although there has been a great deal of information circulated to the public about HIV/AIDS and the consequences of living with the effects of this virus, many people still do not take precautions during sexual activity. People still engage in behaviour that could leave them vulnerable to this “terrible virus” (Van Wyk, 2001:4). One of these behaviours is having multiple concurrent sexual partners; that is, sexual partners who overlap in time (Parker, Makhubele, Ntlabati and Connolly, 2007).

Rosenberg et al. (1999) researched concurrent sexual partnerships and the risk of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents. One of the objectives of the study was to investigate if there was any relationship between having multiple concurrent partners and the risk of contracting an STD. The findings of the study were intriguing. Of the participants who were involved in multiple concurrent partners, 26.7% were diagnosed with an STD. Rosenberg et al. (1999) also suggested that social networking research had shown that people who have multiple concurrent partners are likely to choose partners who share similar sexual beliefs.

On this basis, Rosenberg et al. (1999) suggest that it is possible that people with multiple concurrent partners are having sexual intercourse with others who, in turn, also have multiple concurrent partners. As a result of each person having more than one partner, a social network of sexual partners will exist. Those that engage in the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships consequently face an increased risk of contracting STDs and HIV/AIDS.

A more recent study done by Kalichman et al. (2007) involved participants living with HIV/AIDS. The study investigated the risk factors associated with people who are living with HIV. Participants were recruited from support groups for HIV-positive people and from anti-retroviral (ARV) clinics in Botswana (Kalichman et al., 2007). Participants were asked to complete an interview which required them to disclose their demographic and health information, their HIV/AIDS status, sexual risk, and ways in which they protect themselves and their partners from infection. The study concluded that the practice of having multiple concurrent partners is not uncommon amongst people who are infected with HIV/AIDS (Kalichman et al., 2007). The study also revealed that people who are infected with the virus may not disclose their HIV status to their sexual partners. It was further discovered that condoms were not used all the time; therefore, people were putting themselves at risk of contracting or re-contracting the virus.

The following literature review aims to investigate the factors associated with the practice of having multiple concurrent partners and will also explore studies that illustrate that having multiple concurrent partners increases the likelihood of one contracting or re-contracting HIV.

2.2 Theoretical Review of the Literature

It is evident from the studies described above that there is a link between one's likelihood of contracting HIV and having multiple concurrent partners, as having multiple concurrent partners increases the risk of one contracting the HIV virus. This link causes one to think of preventative measures that can be taken to address the pandemic of HIV/AIDS. An important step in establishing preventative measures is to understand why people engage in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. In the search for understanding why people engage in multiple concurrent partnerships, theories and studies have tried to provide explanations for what motivates the practice. When considering how people develop throughout their lifespan, there are many different viewpoints that have been offered. Developmental psychology provides many different theories that try to explain how people change over time.

There are two main theories pertaining to development; these are that development is either a continuous process or discontinuous process. Continuous development suggests that people gradually develop and gain more of the skills that they have been predisposed to (Berk, 2007). This is a gradual and steady change. The discontinuous process suggests that people develop through a series of different stages that can impact them differently (Berk, 2007). Various theorists support one or the other of these two aspects.

Another important debate in human development is the nature-versus-nurture debate. The nature-versus-nature debate tries to establish whether the gene pool or environment plays a more predominant role in shaping human development (Berk, 2007). 'Nature' refers to the characteristics people inherit from their parents, and 'nurture' refers to the environment that one develops in. There are many different theories that have been developed to assist in understanding development from either of these perspectives. Well-known developmental psychology theorists include Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner.

2.4 Review of Local Empirical Studies

It is important to consider studies that have been done locally, both in Africa and South Africa. This may allow a better understanding of the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships as it pertains to the population in Africa and may allow for other variables to be considered.

2.4.1 Social Factors

A study showed that the practice of having multiple concurrent partners is common among South Africans in the age category of 20-30 years (Parker et al., 2007). This study sought possible reasons for the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. The study investigated its participants' educational backgrounds, economic status, and sexual relationships. The results of the study showed that socio-economic and cultural reasons, which are interlinked with a person's self-esteem, can be attributed to this practice (Parker et al., 2007). The participants of the study reported that having concurrent partners gave them a sense of confidence and the security of having an almost constant emotional support. Participants also referred to a "need for sex" (Parker et al., 2007). This response also showed that the participants felt that they needed to get 'better' sex from another person but were afraid to lose their current partner.

Hunter (2010) also researched the reasons why people have multiple concurrent sexual partners. Hunter's research occurred in one of the places dubbed the "AIDS capital of the [KwaZulu-Natal] province, Mandeni" (Drum Magazine, cited in Hunter, 2010). Hunter (2010) noted race, gender, poverty, the concept of "everyday sex" and the political economy as being the driving forces for the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. Some of the participants in the study stated that they have 'sugar daddies' as well as other younger, 'poorer' boyfriends. One of the reasons cited for having 'sugar daddies' was to provide the female participant with gifts, often money, which 'poorer' boyfriends could not provide. In the study, female participants also referred to their boyfriends as "ministers of finance, transport and entertainment" or described having "one for money, one for food, and one for rent" (Hunter, 2010:147). This study uncovered many factors relating to socio-economic status, cultural background, and individual self-esteem. However, because this research was conducted in Mandeni, a rural area in KwaZulu-Natal, the above factors may or may not be true for the sample used in the current research, where post-modernism is experienced as more people are being shaped by the city environment and influences.

2.4.2 Sexual Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction

In the above paragraph, the socio-economic status of a person was identified as one of the motives for that person having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Poverty was one of the reasons why some participants in Hunter's (2010) study had 'sugar daddies'. While this might cause one to think that people of a high socio-economic status or people who are highly

educated would be less likely to engage in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners, Cruz and Mause's research (2014) examined the motives of highly-educated Mozambican women with high socio-economic statuses who engage in the practice. Here, the female participants engaged in multiple concurrent sexual relationships to obtain power and influence over people who could assist them in advancing their careers. Another reason for engaging in the practice identified in Cruz and Mause's research (2014) included obtaining sexual satisfaction where a spouse could not provide this. The practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners was also described as a way for these women to cope with male infidelity or male domination.

A study in another African country, Zimbabwe, looked at the prevalence of concurrent sexual partnerships among students in institutions of higher education. Shumba, Mapfumo and Chademana (2011) used a convenience sample of 145 students. From this sample, 85 of the participants were female, and 60 were male. The study found that most of the female participants were motivated by the resources they would receive from their multiple concurrent partners. Sexual satisfaction was one of the other reasons for engaging in the practice. Most of the male participants, however, were motivated primarily by sexual satisfaction. The research also noted that both female and male participants engaged in multiple concurrent sexual relationships with older men and women, respectively. The wealth and generosity of older men and the financial stability of older female sexual partners were cited as motivating factors for these relationships.

2.4.3 Gender

In a South African study, the statistics of men and women involved with multiple concurrent partners were investigated. The findings of this study, according to Shisana et al. (2009), were that in 2008, 30.8% of males and 6% of females between the ages of 15 and 24 reported having more than one sexual partner. This is a significant gender difference, revealing that substantially more males are engaging in multiple concurrent partnerships than females.

2.4.4 Masculinity

A study by Ragnarsson et al. (2009) investigated masculine identities, social structures, and sexual networks among men in peri-urban areas. The study found that a male's social identity was derived from his association with male social groups. In the group, a male's dominance was determined by his masculinity, which could only be shown by a male's socio-economic

status or his sexual supremacy (Ragnarsson et al., 2009). The male community of an urban area in the study supported sexual supremacy; that is, a man belonging to this social group engaged in multiple concurrent partners with other women in a discrete fashion. It was therefore found that the practice of having multiple concurrent partners was linked to masculine identities, as engaging in multiple concurrent partners was necessary to convey a male's dominance (Ragnarsson et al., 2009).

In the article, *Masculinities, multiple-sexual-partners, and AIDS: The making and unmaking of isoka in KwaZulu-Natal*, Hunter (2004) too argued that masculinity played a role in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. Hunter (2004) provides a description of what is called an *isoka* in his study. Throughout the years, this term has been redefined from the original definition of "a man old enough to commence courting" to a meaning that includes a "young man popular among girls". Hunter (2004) states that at the centre of a man's 'manliness' was his ability to get married and be the head of the home. Being the head of the home involved a man being able to provide for his family; often this meant being financially responsible for providing for the family's needs. As more men became unemployed and unable to fulfil their assigned role as sole providers, emphasis had to be placed on a man's ability to not 'waste' women; which meant that women had to fulfil all responsibilities (Hunter, 2004:125). A man's 'manliness' was seen to be associated with having multiple concurrent partners – or, in the cultural meaning, polygamy. The new definition of *isoka* was used as a justification for this practice, and men preferred having many lovers as opposed to having no lover (Hunter, 2004). In another study by Hunter (2010), perceptions of masculinity were also seen as a motivational factor for having multiple concurrent sexual partners in terms of fathering children, which is believed to improve a man's social status.

Hunter's (2004) study was conducted in a semi-rural area called Ekufundeni, but there are other studies that display that the belief of *isoka* is not restricted to semi-rural areas. Varga (1997) researched the sexual decision-making views of Black youths from rural and urban parts of KwaZulu-Natal. Here, Varga (1997) found that numerous men felt the *isoka* characteristic was desirable. The men also felt that *isoka* was a natural part of their culture. The *isoka* persona is not seen in a negative way by the people of the culture of which the term originates. It is seen as a part of their everyday life and is accepted by the Ekufundeni community as being a norm. It is interesting to see that the *isoka* persona is highly valued in this community.

Although the term *isoka* is used only by the Zulu clan, having multiple concurrent partners is not restricted only to Black Zulu-speaking people. A study done by Parker et al. (2007) involved the recruitment of participants from different provinces and investigated many areas of sexual behaviour. The study showed that the men of the study see the practice of engaging in sexual behaviour with multiple concurrent partners as being the norm. This study also suggests that some men may view their masculinity as an inescapable force. Although the notion of having multiple concurrent partners was shown to be seen as a norm by these men, not only men view this practice as a norm. Parker et al. (2007) also suggested that people's views of the practice of having multiple concurrent partners was evolving.

Between the 1940s and the 1950s, customary laws were implemented in KwaZulu-Natal which banned women from being allowed to have multiple concurrent partners (Hunter, 2005); however, as the participant in the above study suggests, "everywhere - people are just cheating" (Parker et al., 2007: 32). This forms an important rationale for investigating masculinity as a justification for the practice of having multiple concurrent partners.

The notion that concepts of masculinity are derived from one's culture can be seen in the above study (Parker et al., 2007). Clark (2010) reinforces this notion and states that the region in which one resides is the strongest predictor of having concurrent partners (extra-marital sexual partners). Clark (2010) reports statistics which support this argument. Nationally, in 2009, the reported rates of extra-marital sexual partners among married men ranged from 4.7% in Rwanda to 28.6% in Tanzania (INSR and Marco, 2006; National Bureau of Statistics and Macro, 2005; cited in Clark, 2010). In Zambia, men living in the southern and western provinces were shown to be significantly more likely to have extra-marital sex than men living elsewhere. In Malawi, married men were determined to be more likely to report having extra-marital sexual partners in the southern region than in the northern region (Clark, 2010). This shows that there is an association between the region in which one lives and the practice of risky sexual behaviours. This furthermore suggests that the cultural context surrounding the meaning of masculinity in a region could be one of the reasons for having multiple concurrent partners.

The above studies focused on one racial group and cannot be generalised to apply to other races. The following study was done in Cape Town, South Africa, with participants belonging to different racial groups (Mah, 2008). This study used a cohort, two-stage sampling method, where the participants were interviewed to investigate the transition they underwent from adolescence to adulthood in light of the political change experienced in South Africa (Mah, 2008).

In the Cape area, 13% of the adult population have reported being involved in concurrent sexual relationships (Mah, 2008). In Mah's study (2008), 27% of male participants and 9% of female participants reported concurrency. There was no significant difference in terms of age groups. Black participants (41% of Black male participants and 18% of Black female participants) reported higher levels of concurrency than White (5% of White males and 5% of White females) or Coloured participants (23% of Coloured males and 3% of Coloured females) (Mah, 2008). The study further found that individuals who belonged to a religious denomination, had a post-matric qualification, were married, and had a personal income, were less likely to disclose concurrency than their counterparts. Although this study uncovers various personal, cultural, and social factors as reasons for having concurrent partners, it does not include the Indian population in its sample. Mah (2008) also does not elaborate on the possible reasons for engaging in the practice of multiple concurrent partnerships. Gender difference is shown but is not explained.

Upon evaluating the studies that have been done on having multiple concurrent partners, various personal, cultural and social factors that motivate the practice are made evident. Further thought could be given to the source of these factors to determine why gender differences in the reasons for engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships have been found.

The articles cited in the literature review of this study are not very recent. There is a deficit in recent literature which explores what factors motivate the practice of engaging in multiple concurrent partnerships. There could be various reasons for the decrease in literature on this topic being published in recent years. According to the University of Leeds (2010), there has been a 70% decrease in research that has been done on HIV/AIDS in the last 20 years. This could be due to new socioeconomic changes that have become a new trend in current economic situations, such as climate change.

Having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships has been directly linked to increasing one's chances of contracting HIV/AIDS. However, we are social beings, and we change with dynamics in the social sphere. Even though HIV/AIDs can be managed by antiretroviral drugs, ARVs are costly and do not prevent one from contracting HIV/AIDS. To create intervention strategies, it is important to research risky behaviours and establish why people still participate in such. This study will provide recent research on what factors motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. The research findings will be compared to earlier research to ascertain if any similarities are still present or if any changes in the factors that motivate the practice having of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships have been established.

This study is based specifically in Pietermaritzburg. Although its findings cannot be generalised, there has not been any other research that aims to address the research objective of this study that pertains to Pietermaritzburg.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Sampling

This quantitative research took on an interpretive paradigm. The study sample consisted of university students aged between 20 and 26 years old. The purposive or criterion sampling method was used to recruit the sample; however, snowballing had to occur as the initial responses received were too few. The study concluded with 21 participants (males and females). The data was saturated, with similar responses being received by the participants, and the sample size was deemed sufficient.

3.2 Data Collection

Data was collected using self-developed interviews and focus group schedules, which were tested in a pilot study to determine their validity and reliability. In a qualitative study, reliability and validity can be determined by the concept of trustworthiness (Morse, Barret, Mayon and Spiers, 2002). Trustworthiness relates to the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the results. The researcher used triangulation and data analysis to ensure that there were no discrepancies in the findings. Triangulation occurred by data being collected using two methods: focus groups and individual interviews (Maree, 2011).

The transcripts were analysed for inconsistencies and comparisons were made. Probing questions were asked to determine if the information provided was accurate. The aim of the study was not to generalise to the greater population but rather to explore or survey the participants' perspectives on what factors influence university students' tendency to engage in having multiple concurrent sexual partners.

The dependability of the research was ensured by the researcher by carrying out member checks and through the triangulation of the data received in focus groups and interviews (Maree, 2011). When participants said anything ambiguous or unclear to the researcher, the researcher checked for clarity by rephrasing the statement herself or stating what she had understood from the participant's response. The research was also subject to peer briefing. The researcher also remained in contact with the supervisors of the research and feedback was consistently provided. This was done so that the inferences from the research could be confirmed as being logical, should the same study be carried out by another researcher (Maree, 2011).

3.3 Data Analysis

An interpretive analysis of the participants' responses was conducted using a thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). Observation, encoding, and interpretation of the data occurred. A thematic analysis approach was well suited to the study as it allowed the researcher to discover what motivates the practice of the phenomenon being studied.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Participants were made aware of the favourable risk/benefit ratio of participating in the study and were also informed how the dissemination of the results would occur. The risk the study had for participants was that some participants may have had unresolved feelings as result of a possible experience of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. There was also a possibility that the participants' identities and experiences may be revealed by other participants in the study. However, the benefit of the study was that the volunteers would be helping the community by sharing their experiences regarding the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. The risks involved were minimised by the confidentiality pledge agreement and through the use of pseudonyms. The participants were also made aware that if they had experienced any psychosocial harm during the discussion on the research topic, the Student Counselling Centre would be available to them.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Distribution of Respondents

The study consisted of a sample of 21 participants. None of the participants opted to leave after informed consent was requested.

Table 1: Description of participants

Age range	Male	Female	Race
20-26	13	8	Black

4.2 Results

Motivation is a driving force responsible for people's actions. As people are different, some of their motivating factors will also differ. When the research question of what motivates people to have multiple concurrent sexual partners was put to the participants, a number of themes emerged. These are outlined below.

4.2.1 Emotional Attachment

Emotional attachment has positive and negative consequences. Some of the consequences raised by participants included: a fear of commitment; a lack of emotional attachment; insecurity; trust and mistrust; peer pressure; not being attached to someone; and the benefits of having multiple concurrent sexual partners. These are described in the sections below.

4.2.1.1 Fear of Commitment

A lack of attachment while maturing was described by the participants as a reason for why some people engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. In contrast, however, a participant described the need for emotional attachment to explain why she took part in multiple concurrent partnerships.

4.2.1.2 Insecurity

A participant had not wanted to get attached to a person, so she had engaged in sexual encounters with different people because of her insecurity and fear of commitment.

4.2.1.3 Trust and Mistrust

One participant raised the issue of trust. The participant further explained that her trust issues came from the relationship she had with her mother. The participant stated that if she had a relationship with her mother, her trust issues would not be as bad. Attachment to one's parents was also mentioned in the all-male focus group, where it was found that growing up without a parent – irrespective if that parent is the child's mother or father – has consequences for one engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships.

4.2.1.4 Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is a theme that emerged only twice. A participant in the individual interview stated that peer pressure was the reason that he and his friends engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Another participant noted that if something is spoken about frequently, it can be viewed as behaviour that is acceptable. Other participants did not feel that there was pressure placed on them by their peers to have multiple concurrent partners.

4.2.1.5 Lack of Emotional Attachment

It is important to note that emotional attachment was a theme that was frequently discussed, particularly by the female participants. A few of the participants felt that they did not feel emotionally connected to their partners and this void contributed to them having other concurrent sexual partners.

4.2.1.6 Not Being Attached to Someone

One participant stated that he prefers engaging in multiple concurrent partnerships with single girls. Another participant stated that she had very casual relationships, and because none were formal, she engaged in sexual intercourse with other people.

4.2.2 Benefits

The participants explained that there are different advantages to having multiple concurrent sexual partners. These include social, physical, emotional, sexual, and monetary benefits. This theme emerged in many of the discussions. It is significant to note that monetary benefits were not the only benefits reported. Sexual exchanges do not only occur because a person is economically unstable. The participants revealed that these exchanges can take place because a person is emotionally longing for something. For instance, one participant revealed that having multiple concurrent partners provided her with companionship, so she was not lonely.

Further important to note is the fact that the number of partners one participant had also depended on what benefits they had to offer.

4.2.3 Sexual Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction

This theme was prominent in the dialogue with the participants. The need for sexual satisfaction and the existence of sexual dissatisfaction were shown to be equally important factors in motivating participants to take part in multiple concurrent sexual relationships.

4.2.3.1 No Sexual Intercourse

Both male and female participants reported that if there is no sexual intercourse in a relationship, one is likely to engage in concurrent sexual partnerships with other people. Participants reported that sexual satisfaction is just as important as emotional satisfaction. They require their partner to engage with them both sexually and mentally. Many of the participants stated that if they were not happy sexually, they would engage in sexual intercourse with other people.

4.2.3.2 Sexual Experimentation

Participants in the focus group felt that people engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships for satisfaction and to explore one's sexuality. The participants stated that they are more likely to engage in multiple concurrent partnerships if they felt their partner was boring. In the focus group discussion, more females than males stated that they would engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships to gain experience and to 'get to know what is out there' before settling down with one person. The need for experimentation was a significant point raised in the discussions. Some male participants emphasised that their need to experiment was due to them wanting to experience sexual encounters with people of different backgrounds. Participants also stated that they different sexual desires could be fulfilled by different people. This further demonstrates how the need for sexual satisfaction drives the practice of engaging in multiple concurrent sexual relationships.

4.2.3.3 Desire for More Sexual Intercourse

A female participant from the focus group expressed that she felt that males are never sexually satisfied with what they have.

Some participants felt that having multiple concurrent partnerships is something that is not always planned, that sometimes sexual interactions can just occur. A participant stated that having multiple concurrent sexual partners had nothing to do their partner, but that people do tend to want more sexually.

4.2.4 Sexual Risk

In an individual interview, one of the participants stated that he would experiment with things that did not put his life in danger. The participant further acknowledged that having multiple concurrent partners is dangerous both emotionally and physically. Another view revealed by the participants were that HIV and STIs are not as much of a concern as getting pregnant and 'catching emotions'. This was prevalent in all three discussions. Participants spoke about 'raw sex' and a 'great pull-out game'. They also demonstrated misconceptions about what constitutes risky practices with statements such as, "She does not have AIDS, she is always looking clean". Such risky behaviours warrant further research.

The focus group participants were asked if they believed that having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships increased one's chances of contracting HIV. Most of the participants stated that it could, but that with ARVs, living with HIV is better than getting pregnant - as ARVs can assist in leading a normal life. Participants later mentioned contraceptives that can be used against pregnancy. Many females mentioned the injection as their preferred contraceptive; male participants mentioned implants and 'pulling out' before ejaculation.

When a female participant was asked about HIV/AIDS, she stated that she tries her best to stay safe and to use protection every time she has sexual intercourse. However, this participant also stated that she does not consider STIs as much as people consider HIV/AIDS. It is also important to note that some of the participants disclosed that they do not always use a means of protection. One participant stated that when they had engaged in sexual practices with multiple partners, they had not used any protection. The participants offered immaturity as a possible reason for such risky behaviour. It is also important to note that the above participant had no friends who did not have multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Another participant only stopped having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships after he impregnated someone.

The perception of sexual risk in terms of multiple concurrent sexual relationships has not been considered in any other studies that have been reviewed. More research should examine this, as well as how people currently view HIV/AIDS. From the feedback received from the participants, there seems to be less of a concern about the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS now that ARVs are more accessible; therefore, some of them continue to engage in the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. It is also important to note, however, that two participants stopped engaging in the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships when each contracted an STI. They viewed continuing to have multiple concurrent sexual partners as a risky behaviour as they knew they could contract an STI again.

4.2.5 Social Factors

According to the participants, there has been a change in how people define their relationships. This was elaborated upon by a participant when asked what the definition of a relationship was.

4.2.5.1 The Term, ‘Relationship’

The participants perceived relationships as different things. In an individual interview, a male participant stated that he was not in a relationship, despite his significant other believing that they were in a relationship. A female participant in an individual interview also had a different opinion of a relationship, referring to hers as a ‘situationship.’ There also seemed to be confusion about what a sexual relationship is, as a sexual relationship may not be viewed as a ‘relationship’ but as an encounter of sex. There also seemed to be confusion in the definition of ‘multiple concurrent relationships.’ One participant from the focus group thought it meant engaging in sexual encounters at the same time. This female participant had never heard of the term ‘multiple concurrent partners.’ Relationships are also sometimes arranged. This was made evident by one participant, who stated that her friend had a future husband arranged for her by her family, which had caused her to seek affection from another person.

These responses imply that conceptualisation plays a pivotal role in how people behave towards one another. One’s concept of a relationship is derived from the meaning that one has given to that relationship. The participant mentioned above did not assign much meaning to the relationship that was arranged by her family. This could also be seen as a critique of the cultural norms where marriages are arranged by elders in the family and are to be accepted by an individual. The individual does not make their own choice, and this is culturally acceptable.

4.2.5.2 Relationship Problems

A male participant in an individual interview had his trust broken by the person he was in a relationship with. This caused him to have a loosely termed 'relationship' with another person. Another male participant from the focus group discussion stated that the more sexual encounters he has with someone, the more disinterested he becomes.

Relationship problems also emerged in another interview. Problems of trust were also identified as attributing factors to engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. Where people could not trust their partners or the relationships they were in, this resulted in feelings of insecurity. This was seen in a response from a participant who disclosed this as the reason for her friend engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships despite loving her boyfriend.

The above theme of relationship problems also emerged in a conversation with a third participant, who explained her reasons for having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. When asked to elaborate on the dissatisfaction she had experienced in her primary relationship, she stated that she required more attention. The participant further elaborated on the unhappiness she felt in her relationship, putting blame on to her partner. It is also important to note that a participant engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships due to a loss of trust after the participant had been cheated on. The participant had in turn sought revenge by doing the same thing to the significant other.

4.2.5.3 Social Norms

Several participants mentioned aspects that relate to the norms and expectations of society.

A participant referred to their culture in relation to the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. One of the participants stated that sexual intercourse had made her feel wanted and that she engaged in sexual encounters with many people because of that. Society's perception of gender roles has also been cited as a reason for gender differences, where, for example, the male participants in this group felt that females cannot behave in the same manner as males. One participant mentioned that having more than one wife was acceptable and easy to do in the days of King Shaka. The participant had asked why having more than one wife was easier to manage then than it is now, and another participant had responded that wives 'come with drama.' Having multiple concurrent partners is still viewed as being more acceptable for males.

Many of the male participants mentioned social factors as reasons for them engaging in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners. Some female participants also mentioned social factors, explaining that they needed the items that they received in exchange for sexual intercourse. Cultural reasons for engaging in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners were also provided by the participants. The term *isoka* was not well known by the participants; however, more modern terms ('play boy' or 'player') were well known. Some participants also viewed polygamy as a norm that is socially accepted in certain cultures.

4.2.6 Characteristics/Traits of People who are Likely to Engage with Multiple Concurrent Sexual Partners

People are individuals. Some of the factors which influence people's choices to participate in multiple concurrent sexual relationships are therefore likely to relate to personal or individual traits.

4.2.6.1 Personality Traits

Personality is one of the themes that emerged during the individual interviews, where participants felt that 'a certain type of person' engages in the practice of having multiple sexual partners. It is important to note that the literature reviewed did not discuss the distinguishing characteristics of people who engage in the practice of having multiple concurrent partnerships. Determining if there are any significant characteristics worth noting is therefore a possible topic for future research.

4.2.6.2 Hereditary Factors

The evolutionary model suggests that males engage in multiple concurrent partnerships for sexual reasons, whereas females engage with multiple concurrent partners for emotional reasons (Platek and Shackelford, 2006). However, some female participants in the focus group stated that sexual satisfaction was more important to them than emotional satisfaction. Other female participants stated that both are necessary. Another participant mentioned that there is always someone better than the current partner they are with.

4.2.7 Accessibility

4.2.7.1 Physical Distance between Respective People in the Relationship

Distance between partners can also make it more likely that having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships will occur. A participant gave an account of her roommate, who had engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. The participant stated that it was easy for her roommate to engage in multiple concurrent sexual relationships as she was not staying in the same city as her boyfriend and would not see her boyfriend often. Due to the physical distance between her and her boyfriend, she could have other sexual partners without her boyfriend finding out.

4.2.7.2 Lifestyle and Entertainment

A person's lifestyle and entertainment activities are also contributing factors in the likelihood that they will engage in concurrent sexual relationships. A male participant said that his lifestyle allowed him to interact with many girls as he worked in a bar. He stated that this lifestyle allowed him to engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships easily. Another participant also stated that sometimes people will engage in multiple concurrent partnerships if the sexual encounter occurs in public areas due to the excitement that they receive from the possibility of getting caught.

4.2.8 The Role of Substance Use in Sexual Relationships

Substance use/misuse plays a part in determining if a person will engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and whether that person will decide to use protection or not. Engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships depends on the environment or condition one finds oneself in.

4.2.8.1 Drugs and Alcohol as Modes of Socialising

Participants stated that drugs and alcohol are used in many close circles as a way to relax and socialise. This practice has effects that may be negative and/or positive to the individual. Substance consumption can also lead to people experimenting with different things.

The concept of 'drunk sex' emerged in the study. 'Drunk sex' is a concept that was known by many in the focus group discussion. Participants stated that they were more comfortable during drunk sex and found sex "better" when they were drunk.

Within the focus group, the researcher explored the frequency of alcohol consumption. Some participants stated that they drink mostly during weekends, whilst others stated that it depended on the time they had available with respect to the academic calendar.

4.2.8.2 Places that Promote Substance Use/Misuse

The participants felt that people use substances more frequently in clubs. This could be due to clubs selling alcohol as recreational drinks. The participants also stated that they felt intoxication caused people's decision-making abilities to be impaired, resulting in one acting in a way they may have not, had they not been intoxicated.

4.3 Discussion

In the study, a variety of themes emerged. When identifying not being emotionally connected to one's parents, two female participants stated that they had poor relationships with their parents whilst growing up. They stated that this caused them to experience difficulties with intimacy – they reported being afraid of both committed relationships and being alone.

In a study by Amidon (2007), the different attachment styles were investigated. It was found that if an insecure or ambivalent attachment style was evident, the person would be more susceptible to having multiple casual relationships. This could be the reason why the participants responded the way they did when asked why they engaged in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. One of the two participants stated that she has many partners because she does not like to be alone. She stated that if she was at home alone and someone were to message her, she would meet that person and engage in sexual intercourse with them. She also stated that she would sometimes meet with more than one person per day for sexual intercourse. It would have been interesting to have included an attachment survey that could be used to assess if the relationship between the participants and their parents affected their romantic/sexual relationships.

One participant's use of the term 'situationship' (in place of 'relationship') could also be the result of the participant's relationship with her parents. The participant's fear of labelling a relationship as such could emanate from deep-seated, unresolved feelings that the participant may have. It seemed as if the participant did not want to get too close to the person they were involved with because of their fear of the relationship not working.

Most of the participants did not find peer pressure to be a factor in determining the likelihood of them having multiple sexual partners. It was only included as a motivating factor by two participants. One participant stated that he engaged in the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships because he wanted to fit in with his friends. This makes one want to conduct further research to investigate whether males are more susceptible or impressionable than females and if the reason for this is due to society's gender expectations.

When evaluating the participants' responses in relation to genetic make-up and social constructivism, the male and female participants responded similarly. There were male participants who responded in a manner showing that they were more motivated by sexual satisfaction, and there were some female participants who responded with reasons that aligned more to their emotional needs. This reinforces the evolution theme identified, showing that females prioritise their emotional side more than they do their sexual drive and that males prioritise their sexual drive more than their emotional side.

Singer (1977) has long stated that there should be a new theory for understanding sexuality and that this could be achieved by understanding androgyny, a combination of masculine and feminine characteristics. That is a wise belief as it will also allow an unpacking of understandings of sexuality. Singer (1977) made this statement many years ago and women have become more liberated since then. This can be seen in the responses received from some of the female participants. Not all females cited emotional reasons for why they engaged in the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships – socio-economic reasons were also evident. Female participants received different things from their different sexual partners. These sexual exchanges provided them with things such as money and transportation, suggesting that these female participants do not have the ability to provide these for themselves.

However, one does not have to have a low socio-economic status to engage in this kind of social exchange. As Cruz and Mause (2014) concluded in their study, educated females of high socio-economic status also engage in multiple concurrent partnerships. In their study, this allowed the women in question to gain power and influence for the advancement of their careers. Singer (1977) and Cruz and Mause (2014) show that both tangible and intangible gains may be made through the social exchange. In Cruz and Mause's study (2014), the sexual exchanges resulted in something intangible; however, both tangible and intangible benefits are desired by females who engage in multiple concurrent sexual relationships.

Johnson (1976) investigated sex-role stereotyping and power use, which can assist in understanding how females use sex to gain power and influence their career. Johnson (1976) states that women have less access to resources in their work environment and will seek power and influence by other means. Presently, over four decades have passed since this statement was made; however, there are still females who use their sexuality to gain power and influence.

When investigating social exchanges (transactional sex), not one male participant stated that they had engaged in multiple concurrent sexual partners because of material benefits they would gain. It would have been interesting to have examined the financial backgrounds of the participants to determine if the male participants were from families that were more financially stable. This would have allowed for the elimination of extraneous variables that could be the reason for the differences in their responses. However, the male participants did mention that some of them gain popularity by engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partners. They also expressed excitement about the experimentation they had experienced in their sexual practices, which seems to be cultivated by adrenalin or the thrill that engaging with multiple concurrent sexual partners provides.

Most of the male participants responded that they were “sexual beings” and that this is what drives their behaviour. Some mentioned a need to have more sexual encounters and more experiences with different ‘types’ of girls. Some of the male participants also stated that they have different ‘types’ of girlfriends as there are different things that can be done with these girlfriends.

Experimentation was a theme that emerged with many of the male participants. This reinforces the evolutionary model that argues that males are driven by sexual desire. When evaluating the responses regarding sexual risk, the participants did not seem to consider the practice of engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships as particularly risky behaviour. This, they suggested, was due to the treatment now available for STDs and STIs, including HIV. A research question that could be considered in future research could investigate what possible deterrents may be for the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships so as to prevent this risky behaviour.

The different themes that emerged from the study are very much socially constructed. Investigating individually-based factors, this paper will now discuss the findings surrounding personal opinions, personality traits, decision making, and lifestyle.

One participant, who knew of instances where people engaged in multiple sexual partnerships, stated that she goes to church and that engaging in sexual intercourse is against her religion. She stated that this is the reason why she has not become sexually active. She also described herself as introverted. However, other participants stated that some people they know appear introverted and quiet but engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships nevertheless. Another participant stated that conservative people also practise having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. The difference in personal opinions and in personalities described by the participants suggest that there is not necessarily a particular personality profile for a person who engages in having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. However, when looking into the comments by the participants around decision making, it seems as if people will behave in a way that they perceive to be acceptable or in a way that they feel they will not be judged for.

Whether one chooses to engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships also depends on one's current circumstances. Participants mentioned that when they are in a certain situation that favours them or provides them with the opportunity to engage in the practice of having multiple concurrent partners, they are more likely to do so. One participant mentioned that the easier it was to have sexual encounters, the greater the likelihood would be that they would have multiple concurrent sexual partners. Other participants confirmed that accessibility to sexual intercourse is an important factor. The participants also stated that when intoxicated, one is also more likely to have sexual intercourse with someone, as one's decision-making may be impaired, or one may be more comfortable with having sex than one would be when sober.

A number of the male participants mentioned that having sexual intercourse while drunk is a popular activity, referred to as 'drunk sex'. The participants mentioned that sexual intercourse feels better when one is intoxicated because of the comfort and ease that exists when people are in that state. This makes one question if people who engage in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships when intoxicated are those who are less sexually confident when they are sober. A research question that could be posed by future research could be one that seeks to determine if participants who have multiple concurrent sexual partners regularly consume alcohol.

One should also research further and investigate the reasons for their alcohol consumption to determine whether they drink to simply unwind or with the objective of becoming intoxicated.

From the above discussion, it is evident that the themes attributed to the social factors which influence people's inclination to participate in multiple concurrent sexual relationships are interlinked. In order to gain a better understanding of the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partners, some leading questions should be developed with the aim of understanding the background of the person who is providing the information. This would allow for a more thorough understanding of the responses received. The current research, however, has determined that there are trends in how the practice of engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships is viewed.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Research has shown that having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships is a contributor to the spread of STIs and STDs. By understanding this practice and the reasons for it, it should be possible to develop ways to decrease the practice of multiple concurrent sexual partnerships and to consider safety precautions. Themes that emerged in the literature review and during this study have shown that a wide range of factors influence one's decision to take part in multiple concurrent sexual relationships. These factors are not only sexual in nature but are also social, environmental, and cognitive. The research questions have been answered and the results have shown that there are numerous motivating factors for engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships. By looking at these factors, behaviour change models can be developed and safety precautions can be taken.

5.2 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

In this study, many of the factors found to inform the practice of having multiple concurrent sexual partnerships are social in nature. They underline the gender and socio-economic inequality that still exists in society. Female respondents were the only respondents who stated that they engaged in multiple concurrent partnerships due to the different benefits they received from their partners. Susser (2009:103) states that South Africa is a "middle-income, industrialized state at the tip of poor, under-industrialized continent". He also argues that "government has had much less success in reducing the enormous gaps between rich and poor that they inherited from the apartheid regime" (Susser 2009:103). This may still be true today.

Thus, it is clearly important for national policy to work towards reducing socio-economic inequality. It is also important to note that this study was done with university students, who did not mention sex work. However, the participants did mention that exchanges do occur for sex, even if they did not link it to the behaviour carried out by sex workers. With regards to sexual risk, most of participants felt that STDs and STIs (including HIV/AIDS) are no longer a deterrent practising risky behaviour as one can lead a seemingly healthy lifestyle with no one finding out about the STD/STI due to the medications that are now available.

Considering the results and discussion of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Policy should be put into place at an education level to not only educate the youth but to also attempt to transform their beliefs about sexual behaviour and the age of sexual debut. It is alarming that the age of most first sexual encounters is now very young. The way the youth perceive sexual activities and the desire for such activities should be investigated.
2. Behaviour change projects should also occur and the involvement of parents is needed. It is important to note that two of the participants in the study who had had multiple concurrent partners stated that they did so when they were young and immature. This affirms the need to educate and transform the lives of the youth.

Recommendations for further studies are to include an analysis of the demographics of the sample and to include household income as one of the variables. This will allow one to investigate further the responses given by the participants. The sample size of this study was also very small as the aim of the study was not to generalise findings the entire population but to explore and to understand the factors that motivate the practice of having multiple concurrent partners, irrespective of race. Future studies may benefit from a larger sample.

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The Impact of Mergers and Acquisitions on Employee Morale: An Evaluation of H&K Networks in South Africa

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With a view to the profitability of their businesses, most mergers have placed their focus on economic and political uncertainty, while ignoring employee morale and wellbeing during the process of transition. Human capital is often overlooked during and after a merger. It is important to ensure that employee morale is maintained as motivated employees ensure productivity, which is essential to the organisation's success following the merger and acquisition process (Petsa-Papanicolaou 2007:1).

This paper intends to demonstrate how employee morale is vital to the success of mergers in modern world. Special focus will be placed on H&K Networks in South Africa. Most mergers or acquisitions result in losing key personnel, thereby affecting the newly-formed company's desired growth strategy. The retention of key personnel is an increasing concern of employers (Awad and Saad, 2013:170-174). Mergers and acquisitions therefore ignore employee morale at their own peril. Generally, enterprises that merge or that are acquired base their success on the capability of the involved employees. This ensures the company's success in its ventures going forward (Lupina-Wegener, Schneider and Van Dick, 2015:60). The proper management of employees during a merger results in optimal productivity.

Keywords: *mergers, acquisitions, post-mergers, employees, employers, culture, morale, leadership*

1. Introduction

Management is engrossed with procedures, strategies and methods in acquiring, merging, and selling for the self-survival of the organisation, while the human component becomes insignificant (Aswathappa and Dash, 2008:116). Most mergers fail due to transitional blunders. Dixon and Nelson (2005:210) led an investigation that revealed that a significant part of the failures of mergers and acquisitions resided within human resource divisions. Numerous human resources offices were not set up to offer assistance with employee due diligence components.

Cartwright and Cooper (2014:24) concur that somewhere close to 50-80% of new mergers fall flat. As indicated by Cartwright and Cooper (2014:24), the greater part of mergers failed because the human and operational sides of integration between both companies were neglected. The redesigning of a new company can also contribute in new mergers. Richards (2010:5) states that the impact of mergers and acquisitions on employee morale can be detrimental if the redesign of the business is not taken care of adequately.

This research examines the impact of mergers or acquisitions on employee morale and provides employers with insights to help pre-empt employee reactions to such business changes.

2. Literature Review

In a merger, two organisations unite to become a new business, usually with a new name. Since the companies involved are typically of a similar size and stature, the term ‘merger of equals’ is sometimes used (Lupina-Wengner, Schneider, and Van Dick, 2015). In an acquisition, one organisation buys another (Scott, 2013:15). There are also cases where one organisation might be absorbed into another or where one of the companies operates as a subsidiary of the other (Scott, 2013).

Pokharna (2011) indicates that mergers and acquisitions are regularly undertaken to extend a present organisation or operation which seeks long-term gains and an expansion in market control.

2.1 Post-merger Integration

Mergers primarily result in organisational change. In some cases, the strategic focus of the merger is cost driven; in others, the anticipated benefits of the merger focus on growth expectations (Weber, Rachman-Moore and Tarba, 2011:97-192).

2.2 Disregard of Psychological Issues

When organisations are integrated, the psychological impacts of change on individuals are not given sufficient thought. Insufficient communication all through the merger process can result in employees not being kept informed during the integration process. Even though individuals feel their occupations are in question, they generally have minimal dependable data on which to base their choices (Weber et al., 2011:97-192).

2.3 Culture Conflicts Between the Two Organisations

Representatives with various values and work styles are habitually required to cooperate with no structure for open dialogue (Weber et al., 2011:97-192). Whilst conflict is healthy, a diversity of culture presents itself from different organisations of which the need for embracing such cultures is required.

2.4 Contradictory Organisational Directions and Indistinct Roles and Responsibilities

Senior managers are regularly moderate in articulating the vision and mission of the new, combined organisation. In the wake of scaling down, staff are left to manage more work and have little direction in determining organisational priorities (Weber et al., 2011:99).

2.5 Human Resources (HR)

Ajjarapu (2004) explains that one of the fundamental reasons for the failure of a merger or acquisition is the exclusion of HR. Muncherji and Dhar (2009:415) report that HR professionals are not included in the merger and acquisition team, which normally includes individuals from finance, IT, and other disciplines who are seen to be fundamental in making the deal work. Organisations that fail to recognise the significance of HR in their organisation and their part in the accomplishment of integration, fail to achieve success (Weber et al., 2011:99).

2.6 Employee Morale

Dixie and Nelson (2005:26) explain that low morale eventually depletes employee commitment, damages the product or service offered, and estranges the clients and customers that the business serves. Pokharna (2011) explains that “low morale goes viral in that it may begin with one disgruntled employee then extend towards a general condition, or spread from department to department and finally affect the entire organisation”. Poor morale is, however, reversible (Pokharna, 2011).

Richards (2010:15) reports that mergers and acquisitions can have a detrimental impact on employee morale if the revamping of the business is not dealt with in a viable manner. Amid any merger or acquisition exercise, there are no less than two groups of employees involved, frequently originating from organisations with unmistakably different cultures and styles. ‘Taking in’ another culture can be challenging, yet it is particularly so when employees are confronted with instability about what the future may hold or feel that their occupations are in jeopardy.

2.7 Employees Have Feelings

Pokharna (2011:20) further adds that amid a looming or a materialised merger and acquisition, the workforce may abruptly feel disengaged, bringing about absenteeism or employees stopping their occupations in these organisations. Such dissatisfaction adversely influences employee efficiency and their yield level. Ineffective communication strains the business representative relationship and decreases staff morale.

2.8 Employee Reactions

Holtom (2008:237) has noted that massive downsizing and layoffs occur during mergers and acquisitions and that this leaves a lasting impact on the workers that get fired, and a severe state of trauma for those left behind.

Not only are there quantitative impacts associated with employee turnover, but the quality of personnel leaving an organisation is also important. According to Holtom, Mitchell, Lee and Eberly (2008:237), employee turnover represents more than a monetary loss. Often those employees who leave the organisation are its most esteemed workers. New employees must begin the learning process at the base of the quality and productivity curve. This directly affects the organisation’s bottom line and its customer service in particular.

2.8.1 Stress, Fear of Job Loss, and Competitiveness

Richards (2010:17) explains that there are three areas that impact employees during mergers and acquisitions, namely: stress, fear of job loss, and competitiveness.

2.8.1.1 Stress

Change is difficult for workers, particularly if they are not part of decision-making processes. Mergers and acquisitions can result in troublesome environments within the workplace. Should this not be dealt with effectively, there could be uproars that could cause disturbances. Organisations are encouraged to share as much data about what is going on and how the progressions will influence singular workers as they can.

2.8.1.2 Fear of Job Loss

Whenever at least two organisations combine, a clash of cultures is unavoidable. Two associations rarely have a similar culture. As these groups become acquainted with each other, conflict or misfortune on both sides is unavoidable. Employees may fear losing their jobs or losing openings that they once had in the past. This fear can contrarily affect productivity and may even result in workers leaving the organisation to look for jobs elsewhere. It is vital for organisations, their directors, and HR staff to recognise this and to provide opportunities for employees to become more acquainted with each other, to openly address concerns, and to work together towards the creation of another culture that will combine the best of both worlds.

2.8.1.3 Competitiveness

At the point when employees are worried about their own professional stability, they will probably end up noticeably focused with others and this intensity can bring about conflict, sometimes even violence. During mergers and acquisitions, it is important for managers and Human resource experts to be aware of indications of negative rivalry and to guarantee that representatives are being kept informed about effects on their jobs and their prospects with the organisation. While some opposition is great, rivalry is bad when it creates strain and negative clash in the organisation.

3. Methodology

Hartas (2015) describes quantitative research as utilising mathematical methods and techniques to obtain appropriate data for investigating a research problem. Denscombe (2003:267) describes qualitative research as an approach that focusses on implications and the way individuals comprehend things. Lancaster (2005:67) states that the difference between quantitative and qualitative research stems basically from the ideas of what constitutes logical rather than non-logical research techniques.

The main aim of this approach was to identify the boundaries of the environment in which the problems were most likely to exist and to identify elements that would add relevance to the study. In the realm of this research, there are two ways to deal with collecting and reporting data using qualitative and quantitative methodologies. As per Lancaster (2005:2), a qualitative approach to dealing with research is centred around understanding a phenomenon from a closer point of view, whereas a quantitative approach tends to approximate from a larger number of people by utilising review techniques (surveys).

This research design was the most useful considering that there was a high level of uncertainty in the environment under research and the problem was not clearly understood. This research design provided a high level of flexibility to the researcher due to the lack of formal structure associated with the design.

The proposed study was mainly aimed at answering the following questions:

- What is the post-merger perception of H&K Networks?
- How was employee morale impacted by the merger?
- What did employees resort to after the merger?
- What recommendations could be made to management to secure more successful change management implementation methodologies in the future?

Data was collected using questionnaires administered during the research process. Prior to finalising the questionnaire, a pilot test was used to test face validity and to evaluate the questionnaire. The final questionnaire had three parts. Dichotomous and Likert scale questions were used, apart from five open-ended questions. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program and the results were presented using

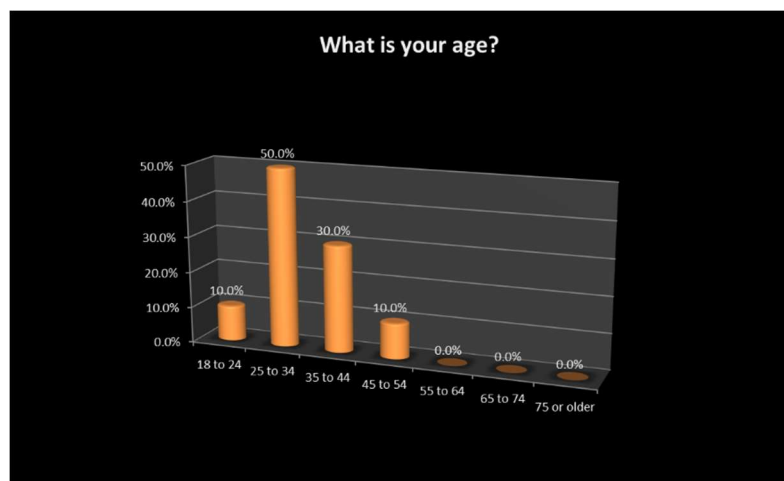
frequency, percentages, bar charts, pie charts and tables. The face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by expert opinion, and the reliability of the results was confirmed by applying Cronbach's alpha test.

The target population consisted of ten employees, six of whom came from the K Networks Organisation, and four of whom came from the H Communications Organisation. These are the two organisations that merged to form H&K Networks. A convenience non-probability sampling design was used to select study units. These study units included employees and managers at H&K Networks that represented a wide range of variation in the dimensions of interest in the case study under research.

Lancaster (2005:136) believes that it is most helpful to meet those who can reveal insight into the issue being investigated, who are likely to volunteer this information most promptly, and who may be approached for information. Multi-method techniques, including questionnaires, observational field notes, and written document analysis were also used. This permitted the triangulation of data.

4. Results

The results of this research are based on findings obtained from employees at H&K Networks. The employees were asked a set of questions based on the theories of motivation and change management as discussed in the literature review. The survey began with a few biographical questions (age, gender, and which team of H Networks and K Communications employees formerly belonged to). These were followed by questions regarding work satisfaction and motivation during a change. The survey was sent out to ten employees in the OSS/BSS team at H&K Networks, and a total of ten responses were collected.

Figure 1: Age distribution of respondents

From Figure 1, it can be ascertained that 50% of the respondents are between 25-34 years old, 30% of the respondents are aged between 35 and 44, and 10% of the respondents are between 45 and 54 years old. A further 10% of the respondents are between 18 and 24 years old. This shows that the major age group affected by the merger is between 25 and 34 years of age.

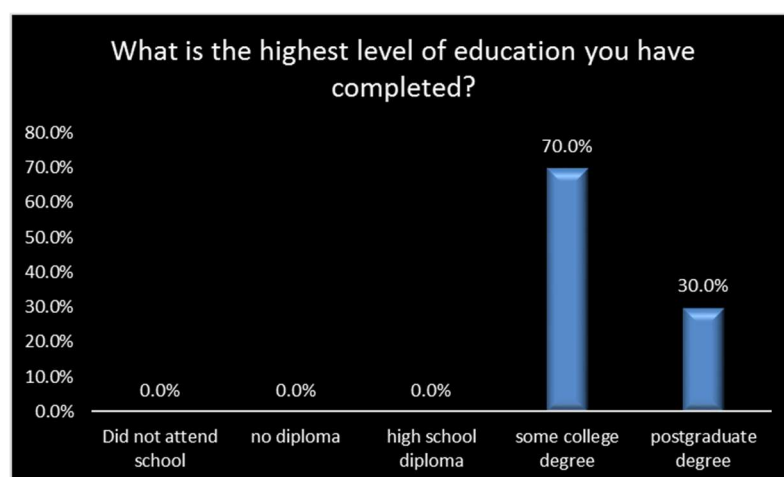
Figure 2: Education level of respondents

Figure 2 illustrates the educational level of the people in H&K Networks' OSS/BSS team. 70% of the respondents have obtained a college degree and 30% of the respondents have obtained a postgraduate degree. The high educational level reflected in the survey shows that employees can move to greener pastures in the event of other opportunities arising. The chances of losing key personnel are very high in the event of low employee morale.

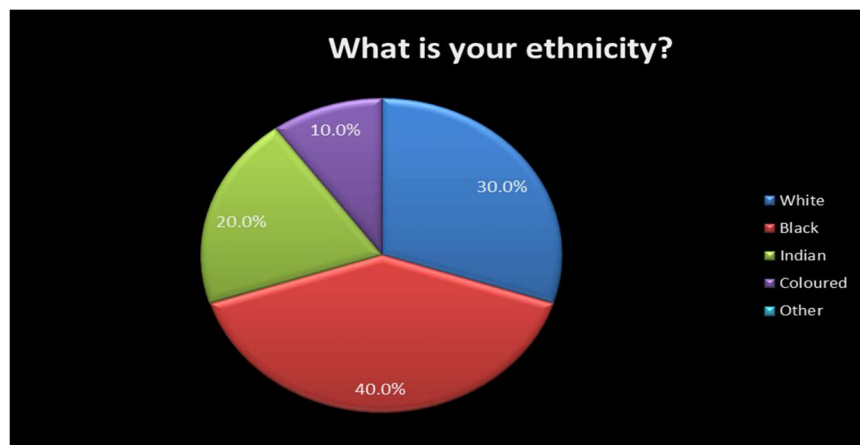
Figure 3: Ethnicity of respondents

Figure 3 represents the ethnic groups that the team comprises. There is a balance representing the ethnic groups within South Africa within this team. 40% of the respondents identified as Black, 30% as White, a further 20% as Indian, and 10% as Coloured. Employee morale has no ethnic boundary, hence this section placed focus only the populations impacted by the mergers and acquisition. All races are affected by mergers and acquisitions.

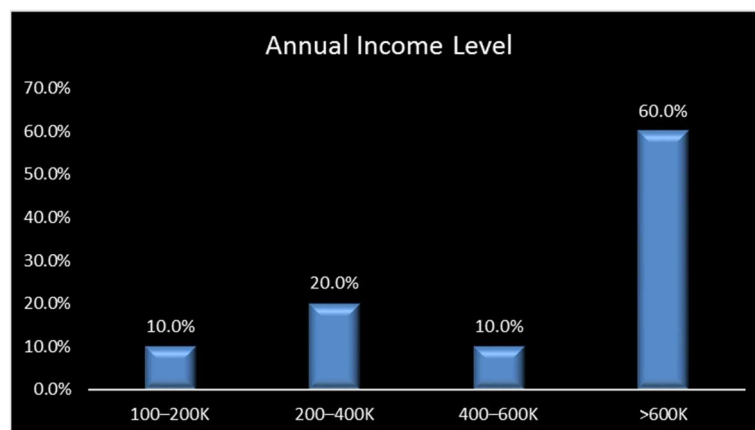
Figure 4: Annual income level of respondents

Figure 4 represents the income levels of the workers at H&K Networks. 60% of the employees earn more than 600K ZAR per year. 20% of the employees are within the 200-400K ZAR per year bracket. 10% of the employees earn between 100-200K ZAR per year. 10% of the employees are paid less than 100K ZAR per year, with another 10% earning between 400-600K ZAR per year.

In the event that salaries are affected by mergers, those most likely to be affected by acquisitions are the majority of employees (60%) who earn more than 600K ZAR per year. There is therefore also the potential that this majority group will resist change.

Figure 5: Employee gender

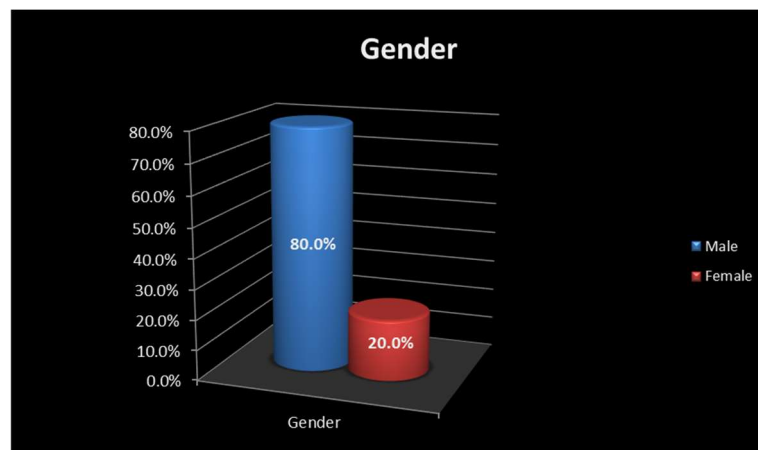


Figure 5 indicates that 80% of the respondents were male and 20% of the respondents were female. Most affected are men as they represent the largest number of employees across the section. In the event of demotivation of employees, the majority of the employees (men) have the potential of affecting productivity.

Figure 6: Length of time in current position

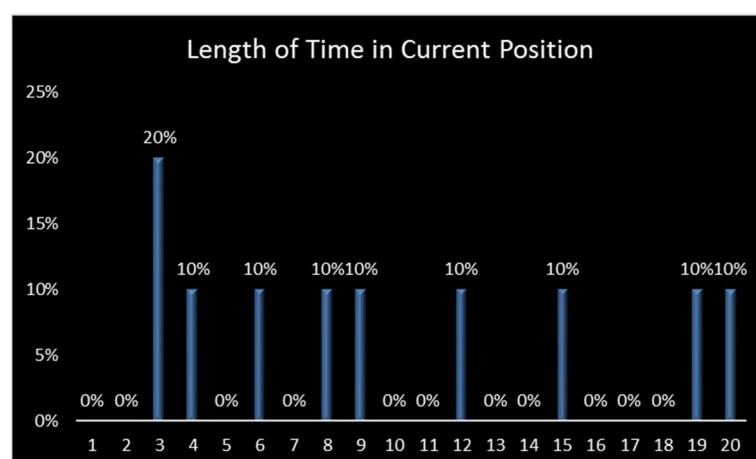


Figure 6 shows how many years the employees have spent in their job positions. 30% of the employees in the team have worked in their current positions for 1-4 years. Another 30% of the employees have worked in their positions for 5-10 years. 40% of the respondents have worked in their positions for 12-20 years. Most of the employees have been employed in the same position for a long period. This majority is likely to be affected by the acquisition and the

culture of the merging organisations. In the process, employee morale and productivity at large will be affected too.

Figure 7: Length of time in the industry

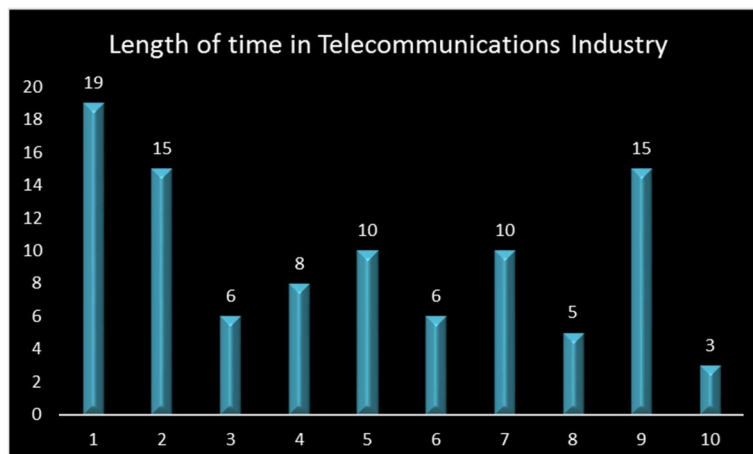
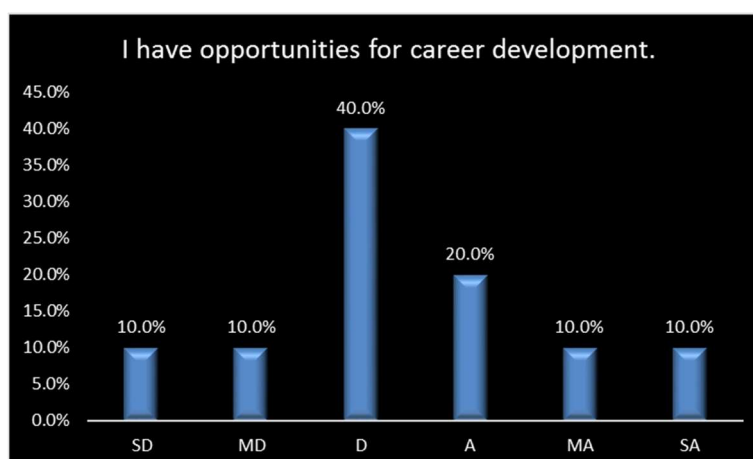


Figure 7 provides insights into the experience of the individuals working in the department relative to the industry that they serve. 10% of the team (one respondent) have less than 5 years of experience. 60% of the team (6 respondents) have 5-10 years of industry experience. 30% of the team (3 respondents) have more than 10 years of industry experience. The industry experience of this team is vast and extensive, making its employees sought after in the marketplace. The turnover of these employees would be 'costly' to the business/organisation in terms of loss of skill/training.

Figure 8: Opportunities for career development



According to Figure 8, 60% of the respondents feel that there are no opportunities for career development within the company. The remaining 40% of the respondents indicated that they feel that opportunities for career development in the company do exist.

The employees on the disagree to strongly disagree spectrum believe that new opportunities and training are only being offered to employees that worked with the previous manager. They believe that they are being side-lined, left only to work on what they had worked on previously. When interviewed, the manager stated that the specific technology courses had prerequisites for their attendance. He felt that the prerequisites were met by the candidates he selected and indicated that he would open opportunities for the rest of the team where there were fewer prerequisites. According to the manager, the business's demand for those technologies is very high, so he had to make sure the right people were on the ground to deal with those projects.

Figure 9: Fairness of hiring practices



Figure 9 indicates that 40% of the respondents are happy with the hiring practices of H&K Networks. There is a lengthy interview process and different levels of management are involved in the process, so the decision is not left entirely to the hiring manager. Candidates also have to undergo psychometric evaluations prior to the job interviews, so only the most ideal candidates are selected for interviews.

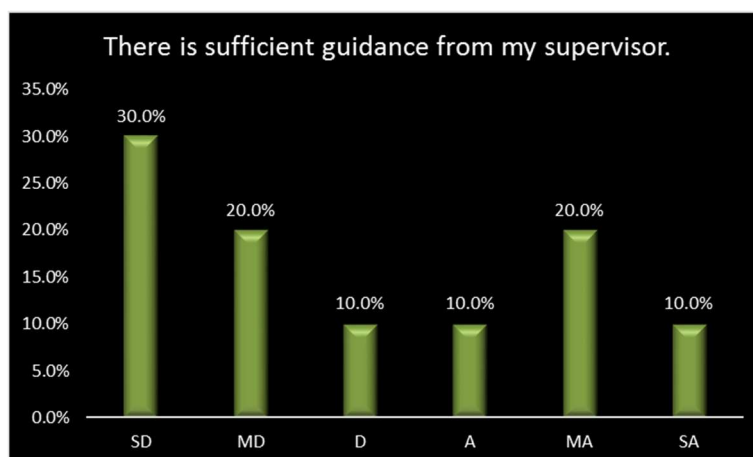
Figure 10: Guidance from supervisor

Figure 10 indicates that 40% of respondents are receiving sufficient guidance from their superior. The remaining 60% of respondents feel that they are receiving insufficient guidance from their supervisor. This disparity ultimately impacts on employee morale.

Figure 11: Authority to make decisions

Figure 11 indicates that 30% of the workers feel that they have the authority to make decisions, whereas 70% of the workers feel that they do not have the authority to do so.

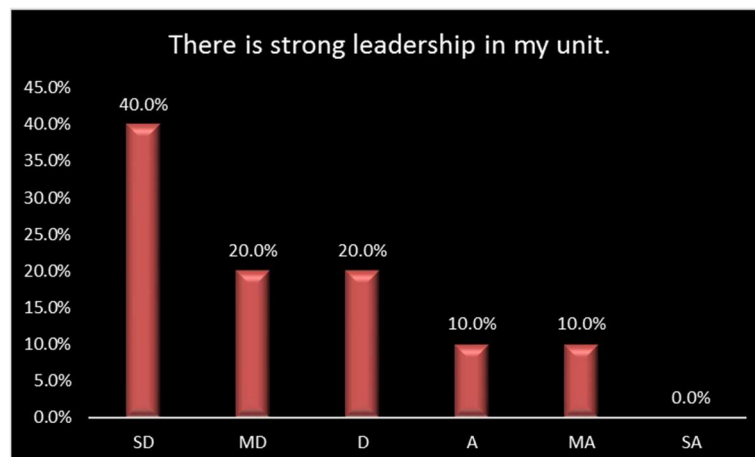
Figure 12: Strong leadership

Figure 12 indicates that only 20% of the respondents feel that there is strong leadership within the unit. 80% of the respondents feel that the unit is lacking strong leadership.

During interviews with a sample of the respondents who felt that leadership within the unit was lacking, the manager was described as constantly preaching about new and targeted technologies that were not yet available for the market. According to this sample of the respondents, current forecasting is not maintained, and the manager is taken to task in the strategic meetings, where he is unable to cope with confrontational issues. The respondents further believe that the manager is not taken seriously internally or by customers. The feeling of these respondents is that the unit's leadership is very poor and that this will lead to the detriment of the company.

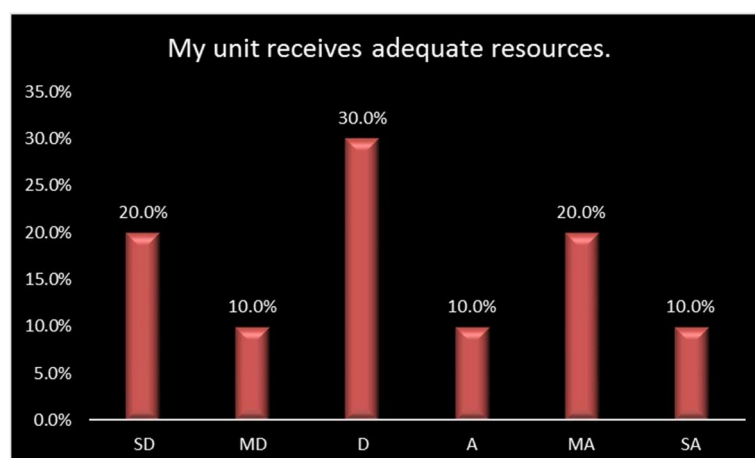
Figure 13: Resourcing

Figure 13 indicates that 60% of the respondents feel that they do not receive adequate resources and that 40% of the respondents believe that they do. According to the respondents, training is always questioned, and it is difficult to take leave as there is never a person on standby to take over. The manager feels that the current resources need to be utilised more effectively and that additional resources are not required. This point alone contributes to the demoralisation of employees. In instances like this, companies focus on productivity at the expense of workers' health concerns.

Figure 14: Company Reputation

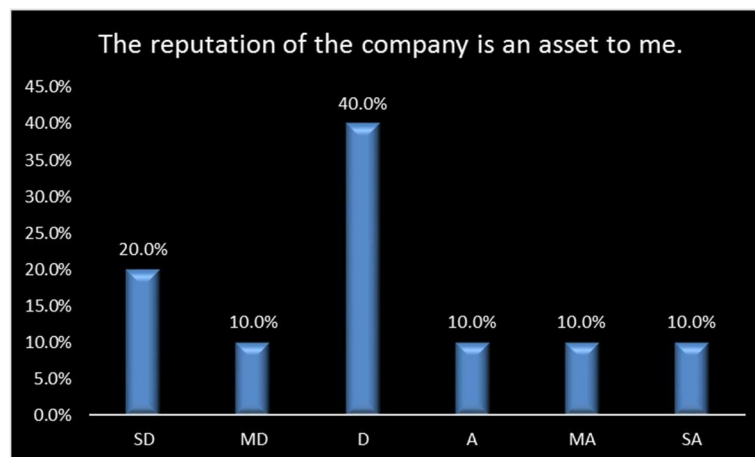


Figure 14 indicates that 70% of the respondents feel that the reputation of the company is not an asset to them, with a minority of 30% of respondents believing that it is.

Figure 15: Salary satisfaction



Figure 15 indicates that 60% of the respondents are happy with their salaries and 40% of the respondents are not.

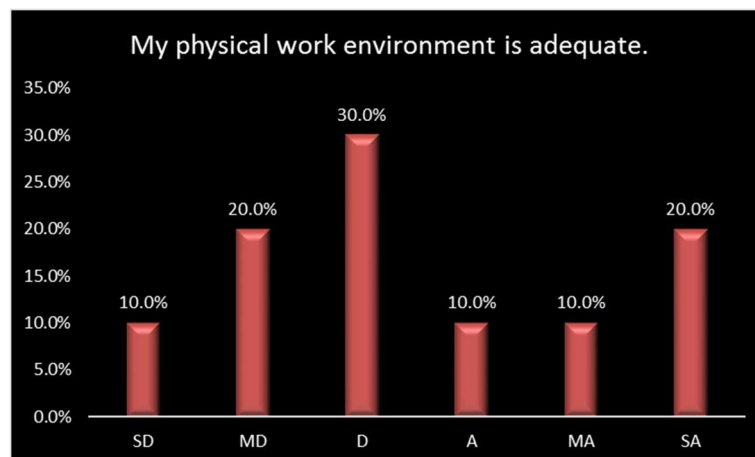
Figure 16: Physical work environment

Figure 16 indicates that 60% of the workers are happy with their physical work environment. 40% of the respondents indicated that they were not happy with the physical work environment, believing it to be inadequate.

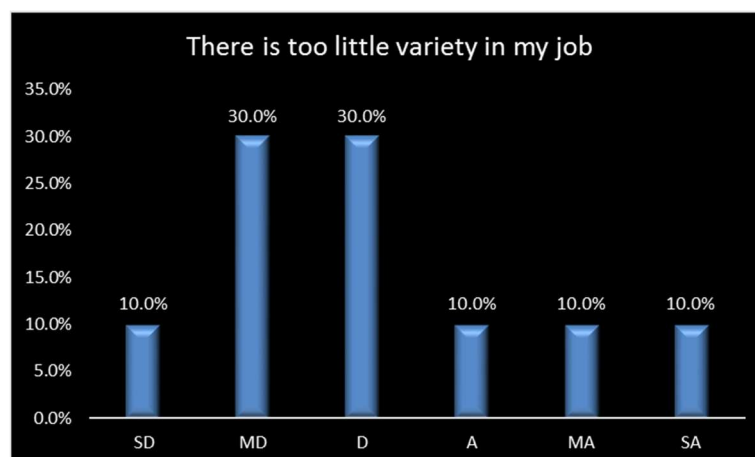
Figure 17: Job variety

Figure 17 indicates that 70% of the respondents feel that there is sufficient variety in their jobs. Only 30% of the respondents indicated that there was too little variety in their jobs. Employees have admitted that no two days are the same in their jobs; there is a lot going on and every day is different.

Figure 18: Freedom on the job

Figure 18 Indicates that 60% of the respondents feel that they do not have any freedom on the job, whereas 40% of the respondents feel that they do. This feeling of a lack of freedom affects employee morale and productivity.

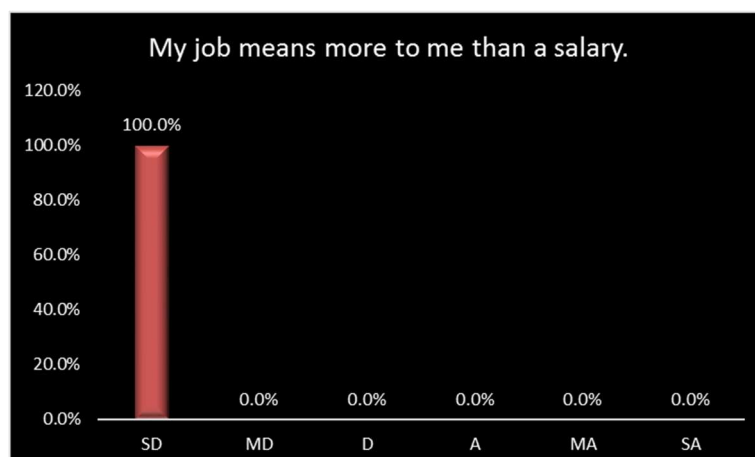
Figure 19: My job means more to me than a salary

Figure 19 demonstrates that all of the respondents (100%) feel strongly that their salaries mean more to them than their jobs. This suggests that employees have the company at heart. This attitude may be reflected in the overall productivity of the company.

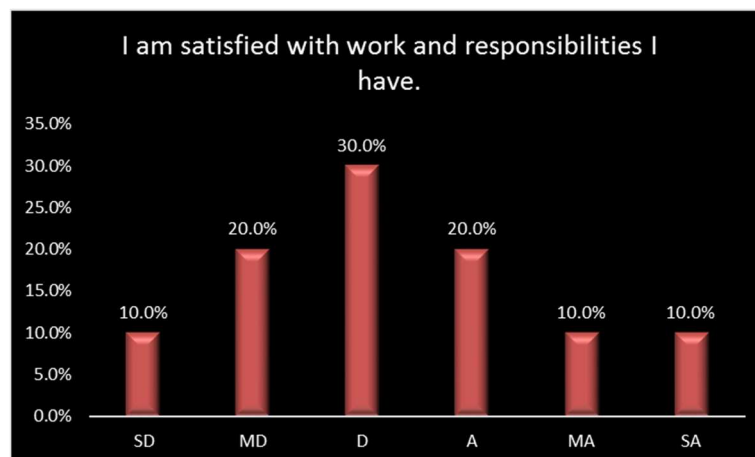
Figure 20: Satisfaction with work and responsibilities

Figure 20 indicates that 60% of the respondents are not happy with the work and responsibilities that they have, while 40% of the respondents are.

Figure 21: Better organisations to work at

Figure 21 indicates that 70% of the respondents feel that there are better organisations to work at. 30% of the respondents disagreed with this. This indicates that the majority of employees are already demotivated and that their morale is low.

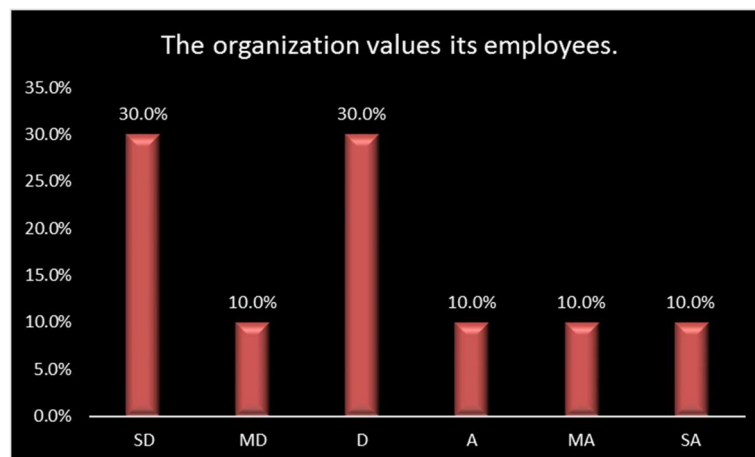
Figure 22: Valuing its employees

Figure 22 indicates that 70% of the respondents do not feel valued in the organisation and that 30% of the respondents do.

Figure 23: Sense of purpose

Figure 23 indicates that 70% of the respondents feel that there is no sense of purpose in the organisation, whereas 30% of the respondents feel that there is. The organisation's leadership seem to have overlooked employee morale at the expense of productivity.

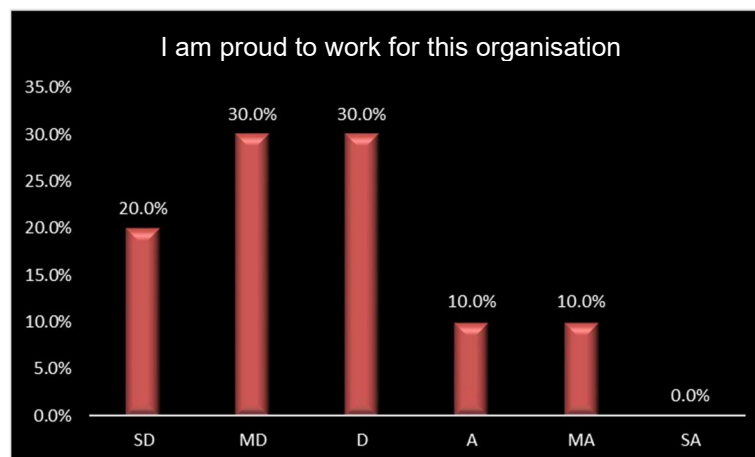
Figure 24: Proud to work for this organisation

Figure 24 indicates that 80% of the respondents are not proud to work for this organisation. With only 20% of the respondents agreeing that they are proud to work for this organisation, the morale of the organisation's employees could be at its lowest level.

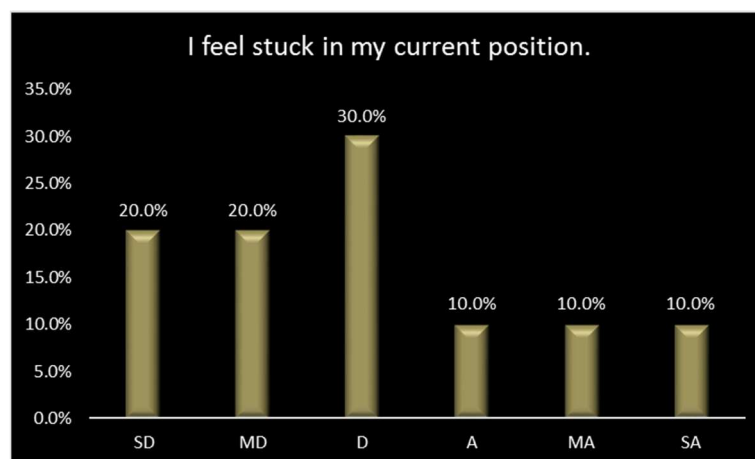
Figure 25: Stuck in current position

Figure 25 indicates that 70% of the respondents feel stuck in their current positions, whereas 30% do not. Leadership seems to ignore employees concerns while focusing on output.

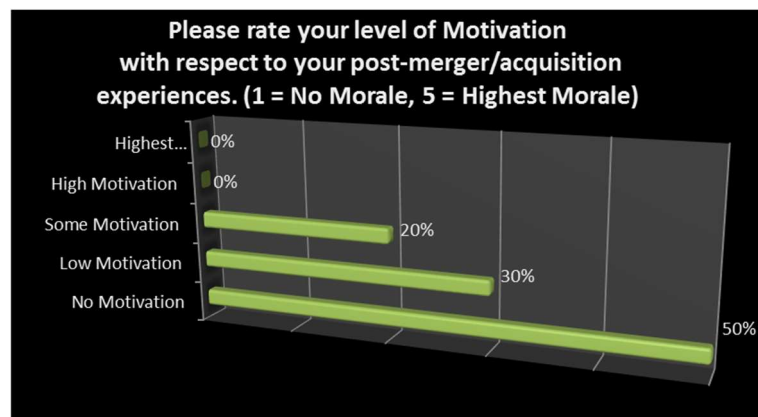
Figure 26: Motivation levels

Figure 26 indicates that 80% of the respondents feel little to no motivation. 20% of the respondents indicated that they feel “some motivation”.

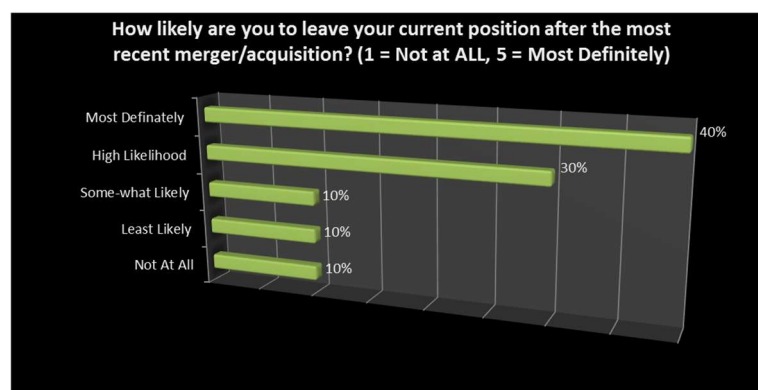
Figure 27: Likelihood of leaving the company

Figure 27 indicates that 40% of the respondents will most likely leave the company, 30% are highly likely to leave the company, and 10% are somewhat likely to leave. 20% of the respondents are not likely or not at all willing to leave the company.

5. Findings from the Survey Results

Empirical data was collected by conducting a survey in the form of a questionnaire. The goal of this survey was to find out whether the changes in the company had impacted its employees' motivation and the reasons for this. The survey aimed to give the organisation an opportunity to listen to its employees to hear their opinions on the way change should be handled and what may keep them motivated during constant change. Overall, the sample population of this research did not show high degrees of morale.

When looking at the weighted sections of the modified Edwards survey, it was observed that the segment on job-related assertions had the highest level of confirmation, indicating that significant improvement is needed with regards to job variety and freedom. It can be accepted that vague job responsibilities can prompt frustration and issues with management and can influence the execution of work and the profitability of the organisation. It was additionally noticed that the section that identified with career support had the least level of confirmation, showing that change ought to concentrate principally on fair hiring practices, improving on the guidance available from supervisors, improving on career development/promotion opportunities, and increasing employee satisfaction with their work responsibilities.

Metrics other than age, education, current employment tenure, total telecommunications tenure, company reputation, and pay were more prominent in the evaluations of morale and somewhat high appraisals of turnover intention. With reference to motivation levels and the respondents' likelihood of leaving the organisation, it is clear that a serious improvement is needed as it was demonstrated that employees are intent on leaving the company due to their motivation levels being so low.

Since none of the demographic metrics were correlated with morale, the study can infer that the merger and acquisition itself had the highest effect on low morale. What is critical to note is that workers are not greatly content with their leadership or the current union of these two organisations. The outcomes of the study suggest that the merger or acquisition of an organisation has an unavoidable, negative effect on each part of how an employee views their workplace.

6. Findings from the Interviews

The interviews confirmed that this merger/acquisition undermined the employees' faith in the organisation and trust in its future, provoking workers to think about leaving the organisation. When employees are not satisfied, negative attitudes and practices are displayed in conflicts with co-workers, low work performance, and diminished productivity and organisational commitment. Organisations need to survey and assess the outside factors that affect morale with a specific end goal to satisfactorily address turnover. The findings suggest that when confidence is low, it is more probable that a worker's morale diminishes. In this way, understanding the employee's view of business-related issues is vital for the organisation to improve employee morale.

It has been noted that mergers and acquisitions lead to talent loss. With a specific goal to start the mending process and to guarantee that employees stay connected, management should plainly express a tangible vision and plan of action. The unknown side of mergers and acquisitions creates a sense of uncertainty amongst workers and produces disdain toward the organisation. The survey and interviews have both shown that mergers generally negatively affect morale. Low morale is guaranteed to arise out of job insecurity, changes in processes and management, a lack of direction, and poor communication.

As the mindsets of employees continue to evolve, turnover remains an issue because of issues with organisational infrastructure, down-sizing, and changes in the organisation's hierarchical structure. This post-merger study stresses the significance of including HR in the integration stage to address and deal with the merging of two distinctive cultures and management styles, with an end goal to make the transition smoother.

7. Recommendations

The leaders of mergers must not focus on productivity to the extent that they do so at the expense of the employee. Change management principles must be applied to align employees to productivity. Leaders should endeavour to create a more culturally diverse environment that facilitates the cohesive interaction between managers and their employees and define a more strategic vision that encompasses evolutionary offerings towards future technologies rather than bringing the future in today.

Mergers must incorporate the cultural elements of change management within the new establishment to ensure that the human elements of these mergers are catered for. In the merger discussed in this study, for example, teambuilding workshops, seminars, and even courses should have been facilitated so that the manager could get a better understanding of his team's capabilities and so that the team of employees could have had the opportunity to better understand their manager. All parties involved in the merger need to work together to drive and maintain the business that they currently have, so as not to create doubts in the minds of their customers. This will help the new establishment to realise its strategic objectives. Managers of mergers ought to be aware of these impacts and work with their employees so as to minimise the exodus of employees.

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Emotional Intelligence as a Tool to Enhance Leadership within a Private Higher Education Institution**Jamie Murugan (Educor)**jamie.murugan@educor.co.za

Academic leaders are generally seen as the stewards of an institution, guiding staff towards achieving individual and institutional goals. Increases in technological innovation, diversified workforces, and heightened competition have resulted in leaders enduring intense pressure to meet the growing demands that are placed on them. These changes act as a catalyst for leaders to engage in an intense learning process to manage the pre-existing intrapersonal and interpersonal relations. Therefore, it is essential that leaders possess a set of significant abilities to facilitate successful and effective daily interactions. The concept of emotional intelligence is argued to be a core component for effective leadership (Baba and Siddiqi, 2017:82). The aim of this study is to investigate the awareness of emotional intelligence amongst academic leaders in a private higher education institution. The adopted research approach conforms to qualitative research. Standardised, open-ended interviews were used to collect primary data, and a thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. The outcome of the study provides informed recommendations on how emotional intelligence can be assimilated within a private higher education institution.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, effective, leadership, interpersonal, intrapersonal.*

1. Introduction

One can argue that leaders must have specific competencies to guide their actions and inspire action amongst their followers (Baesu, 2018:74). Competencies such as talent, knowledge and specific abilities allow a leader to have meaningful interactions with their staff. Baesu (2018:73) contends that leaders are central to the successful management of emotions that are displayed by the staff of an institution. It can be further insinuated that the overall success or failure of an institution can be attributed to a leader's capacity to adequately read and interpret emotions that are displayed by staff. Essentially, a leader can either channel those emotions into something good, constructive, and developmental for the individual, or a leader can allow emotions to fester and create a hostile and negative environment.

Salovey and Mayer coined the term "emotional intelligence" in 1990 and described emotional intelligence (EI) as a manifestation of social intelligence in which an individual is capable of monitoring their feelings and the subsequent emotions that they experience as well as the general emotional responses of others. EI can be seen as a skill set in which individuals are conscious of their own display of emotions. This consciousness allows individuals to enhance their level of thinking and their reactions in their interactions with colleagues (Nanda and Randhawa, 2019:157).

2. Problem Statement

The concept of emotional intelligence has been regarded as a necessary skill set for effective leadership (Baba and Siddiqi, 2017:82). Over the past decades, the need for managers or organisational leaders not to allow their personal problems to eclipse their work situation has been mentioned in empirical studies (Nafukho et al., 2016:71). Contrary to such belief, Barbuto and Burbach (2006:54) state that it is impossible for managers or leaders to avoid the influence of emotions on the behaviours or actions of staff in the workplace. Goleman (2004), cited in Baesu (2018:74), concurs with Barbuto and Burbach, suggesting that the management and regulation of emotions is crucial in promoting leadership within an institution. This highlights the need for leaders to have a more practical understanding of how to manage their emotions, build better working relationships, and manage conflict. According to Drigas and Papoutsis (2019:58), leaders face intense competition and demands on a daily basis. Therefore, a level of excellence in interpersonal relationships and teamwork is needed.

A lack of EI may inhibit an institution from achieving the abovementioned favourable working conditions. A leader that is unaware of the various models, dimensions and assessments of EI will not be aware of their level of EI or be in a position to reap the rewards associated with the practice of EI. This study aims to provide deeper insights into the academic leader's awareness of EI within a specific private higher education institution. Additionally, this study aims to provide recommendations on how EI can be assimilated into an institution of private higher education.

3. Research Objectives

- To investigate the awareness of emotional intelligence amongst academic leaders in a private higher education institution.
- To offer informed recommendations on how emotional intelligence can be assimilated into an institution of private higher education.

4. Research Questions

- Are academic leaders within a specific private higher education institution aware of emotional intelligence?
- What recommendations can be offered with regards to how emotional intelligence can be assimilated into an institution of private higher education?

5. Literature Review

According to Nafukho et al. (2016:71), there have been findings in the field of neurological research that suggest that the emotions experienced by individuals are fundamental to one's ability to reason, understand, and react. It is common practice to associate emotions with positive cognitive behaviours. Barbuto and Burbach (2006:54) contend a leader might not avoid the influence of emotions on the behaviours and actions of other staff in the workplace.

Furthering the concept of emotions, EI can be described as an individual's faculty to express his or her own feelings in a manner that is well received by others. EI additionally allows an individual to interpret the emotions that are displayed by fellow colleagues and can in this way guide their decision making (Nafukho et al., 2016:71). In the workplace, EI can be regarded as a popular albeit controversial construct that has emerged from the theory of social intelligence. EI can be viewed as the overlap between emotions and intelligence. Framed differently, EI can be regarded as "the intelligent use of emotions" (Seal and Andrews-Brown, 2017:144).

This juxtaposition between intelligence and emotions implies that an individual has the cognitive capacity to manage emotional behaviours (Seal and Andrews-Brown, 2017:144). Drigas and Papoutsi (2019:58) explain EI in relation to an individual's perspective of the emotions they experience or those displayed by others. Each individual may vary in their understanding of the emotions displayed by themselves or by their colleagues and may have different opinions on how one should manage and evaluate their emotions.

EI can be further explained in relation to its effect on cognition and metacognition. In Huang and Lee (2019:1), EI is defined as the ability of an individual to adjust, modify, and even alter a situation by simply being able to analyse and correctly interpret it. This thus extends the definition of EI to include emotion, cognition, and metacognition.

For this study, one can define EI as the management of one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others to affect positive change. Should this definition hold true, EI can be regarded as a valuable skill for academic leaders in their pursuit of effective educational leadership.

5.1 Models of Emotional Intelligence

In recent years, EI has been conceptualised and investigated using a variety of approaches, perspectives, and models. Examples of such models are the ability-based model and the mixed models. Although there are contrasts in the conceptualisation of EI, there is a consensus postulating EI as a relationship between the psychosocial and psychological factors that tend to influence the working environment (Nanda and Randhawa, 2019:158). The presence of emotionally intelligent staff positively impacts the work environment in that individuals are in control of their emotions as well as their subsequent behaviours towards each another (Nanda and Randhawa, 2019:158).

The concept of EI can be explored by first understanding the models of EI. Drigas and Papoutsi (2018:58) identified the ability model and the various mixed models as models of EI.

5.2 Ability Model

Mayer and Salovey, cited in Drigas and Papoutsi (2019:58), describe EI as the learned ability of an individual that can be associated with an individual's level of intellect. In the context of the ability model, EI can be categorised into four separate skill dimensions. The first dimension can be seen as the perception of emotions, whereby an individual will interpret emotions that

are displayed by other individuals. A smile, lack of it, or even eye rolling can be regarded as some of the facial expressions that can be deciphered. Auditory or visual emotions can also be easily interpreted. The second skill dimension allows an individual to evaluate and follow a thought process, allowing them to use EI in their general thinking pattern and reasoning. The third dimension of EI is an individual's ability to analyse and interpret communicated information that pertains to emotions. An individual will be able to better understand the hidden emotional cues whilst engaging with other individuals. The fourth and final dimension in the ability model is the apparent management of an individual's emotions. Here, an individual is aware of their emotions and the impact they have both on themselves and on the emotions of the person they are communicating with. In the fourth dimension, an individual will systematically choose emotional responses based on their own evaluation of the situation (Drigas and Papoutsis, 2018:58).

Premised on the above assumptions, McClellan, Levitt and DiClementi (2017:202) imply that the focus of the ability model is on the regulation and reflection of emotions with the intention of promoting and enhancing emotional growth. The ability model will therefore prioritise an individual being able to better understand and analyse both the emotions that they experience internally and the emotions displayed by others (McClellan, et al., 2017:202). According to the ability model, an individual is expected to be capable of prioritising their emotions whilst perceiving and appraising the emotions of other individuals (McClellan, et al., 2017:202).

According to Seal and Andrews-Brown (2017:145-146), the emotional ability model can also be referred to as a performance-based model in that a specific method of assessment is used to evaluate an individual's level of EI. The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) serves as the method of assessment and assesses the level of EI an individual possesses and is regarded as the standard emotional ability measure for EI (Seal and Andrews-Brown, 2017:145-146). The MSCEIT uses a 'right or wrong' answer format and must be administered by an expert. The MSCEIT assessment will reflect the overall potential EI capacity of the individual by producing a final score, thus providing an individual with a better understanding of how they process emotional information (Seal and Andrews-Brown, 2017:145-146).

Academic leaders that take the MSCEIT assessment will gain an understanding of how they process information pertaining to conflict, criticism, disagreement, and interpersonal relationships. Academic leaders will also be in a better position to understand the four key skill dimensions based on how they answered their questions, which can serve as a starting point for reflection.

5.3 Mixed Models

Although Salovey and Mayer coined the phrase ‘emotional intelligence’ in 1990 (Nanda and Randhawa, 2019: 158), Goleman is credited with popularising the construct of EI (Seal and Andrews-Brown, 2017:145-146). The 1998 mixed model by Goleman describes emotional intelligence or an emotional quotient (EQ) as the capacity of an individual to be aware of the feelings and emotions that they experience and to recognise certain emotions that are displayed by others. In Goleman’s 1998 model, it is further postulated that EI or EQ is a necessary faculty that can be used to complement the general intellect that an individual may possess. According to Drigas and Papoutsis (2019:60), Boyatzis and Goleman subsequently expanded the initial Goleman model to include the following key elements:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management

The assessment associated with the Goleman model is referred to as the emotional competence inventory (Drigas and Papoutsis, 2019:60). The emotional competence inventory measures the associated impact of intelligence and emotion on the everyday interactions of an individual. The emotional competence inventory uses a holistic feedback approach in which the behaviours of an individual are observed to ascertain the level of emotional competence that an individual displays. The emotional competence inventory will measure the individual’s competencies based on the individual’s level of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management, as identified by Goleman (Drigas and Papoutsis, 2019:60). Thus, one can identify behaviours that can lead to superior performance by taking the assessment (Drigas and Papoutsis, 2019:60). Academic leaders that take the assessment will be able to understand which behaviours lead to increased positive performance and can therefore prioritise the said behaviours.

The Bar-On model is classified as a mixed model. According to Drigas and Papoutsis (2019:59-60), the Bar-On model tends to follow a psychological approach to EI, in which the interpersonal skills that affect an individual's behaviour are examined. A key dimension of the Bar-On model is the emotional-social intelligence of an individual. According to Drigas and Papoutsis (2019:59-60), emotional-social intelligence is a combination of an individual's capacity to interact with colleagues, socialise with groups of people, and their general conversational competence in managing day-to-day interactions.

In explaining the Bar-On model of competencies and skills (2006), Drigas and Papoutsis (2019:59-60) cite four key abilities that form the foundation of the Bar-On model:

- The ability to be aware of the feelings and emotions that one may be experiencing;
- The capacity to successfully and constructively relay feelings and emotions to others;
- The ability to exercise self-control in interactions with others;
- Adaptability in situations so that one may be able to solve problems that arise.

The model was later changed to the Bar-On model of Emotional Social Intelligence, which includes the five key dimensions as outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Bar-On Model of Emotional Social Intelligence

Dimension	Focal area	Explanation
Intrapersonal	Self-awareness and expression	An individual will display a high degree of self-regard and emotional awareness. Individuals display independence and assertiveness. A high degree of self-actualisation is demonstrated.
Interpersonal	Social awareness and interpersonal relationships	Feelings such as empathy are displayed. Social responsibility and relationship building are evident. The focus is on how an individual will relate to another individual.
Stress Management	Emotional management	An individual's ability to practise stress control and to resist the urge to act impulsively.

Adaptability	Change management	An individual's ability to be flexible in their approach to problem solving. It requires an individual to realistically assess problems and evaluate potential solutions.
General Mood	Self-motivation	An individual should be able to express optimism and happiness in daily interactions.

Adapted: McClellan et al. (2017:202)

According to Seal and Andrews-Brown (2017:145), the Bar-On emotional-social intelligence model assesses an individual's level of EQ using a self-report. With this method of assessment, the emotional social traits that an individual demonstrates during certain situations and interactions are examined and assigned scores. The behaviours and reactions of the individual will be monitored, and scores will be assigned to the behaviours. The practitioner that administers the self-reporting assessment will compare the demonstrated behaviours/responses to the five key dimensions of the Bar-On model: intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability, and general mood (Seal and Andrews-Brown, 2017:145). This will eventually produce a final score for the individual that is indicative of the individual's EQ.

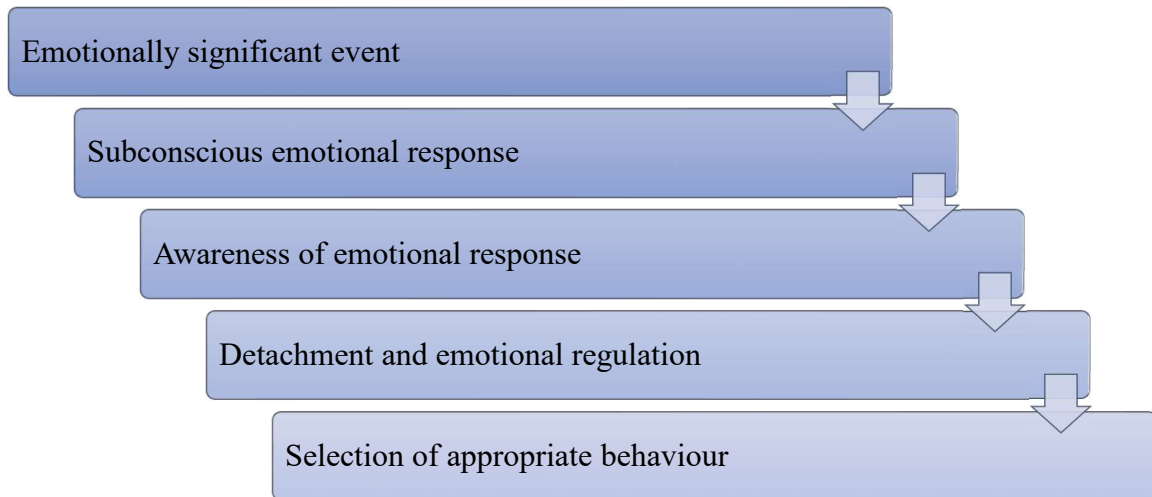
In the event of an academic leader completing the self-reporting assessment, the academic leader will come to better understand their reactions and responses to various circumstances as well as the preferred emotional patterns to apply in a given context, as per the EQ model.

5.4 Negative Emotions

The emphasis of emotional practise and training tends to zone in on the ability of an individual to manage his/her emotions (McClellan et al., 2017:202). The various models depicted in this research study emphasise the management of emotions whilst postulating for the incorporation of emotional skills and patterns to better manage circumstances. One should also prioritise understanding negative emotions. McClellan et al. (2017:202) suggest that a leader should reflect on his/her options for how to react to a perceived negative situation. This can be achieved through the management and redirection of emotions to allow for the ideal outcome to be accomplished.

It is further suggested that a practical and conceptual step-by-step emotional process be followed (McClellan et al., 2017:202). This process is illustrated in the Figure 1.

Figure 1: Steps to Follow in the Emotional Process



Adapted: McClellan et al. (2017:202)

In the event of a subordinate being rude or questioning the authority of a leader in a meeting, the leader is likely to perceive this as a negative situation and may experience negative emotions. In such a case, McClellan et al. (2017:202) propose taking the following steps:

- The leader must first acknowledge that an emotionally significant event has occurred. In this case, a subordinate was disrespectful in a meeting.
- Next, a subconscious emotional response will take place. This response will be experienced internally by the leader.
- The leader will then need to identify the possible emotional responses that he/she is experiencing. Is it anger? Embarrassment? Or frustration?
- Next, the leader should try to detach and regulate his or her emotions to provide an objective point of view.
- Finally, and probably most importantly, the leader should select the most appropriate behaviour to respond to the situation with.

5.5 Impact of Emotional Intelligence on the Effectiveness of Leadership

According to Barbuto and Burbach (2006:54), previous findings support the idea that EI is a strong requisite for effective leadership. Drigas and Papoutsis (2019:61) support the abovementioned statement, citing evidence from previous research that was conducted in the

field of scholastic intelligence. The research supports the notion that a leader's behaviours has a direct impact on the staff that they supervise. George (2000), cited in Nafukho et al. (2016:71), concurs, describing emotionally intelligent leaders as leaders who can effectively create and communicate a vision across the institution. These leaders provide their followers with a sense of inspiration and motivation for the purpose of increased collective performance. Additionally, Nafukho et al. (2016:71) state that emotionally intelligent leaders are skilled in the art of negotiation, which allows for improved decision making and more amicable solutions. In line with the preceding assertions, one can ascertain that leaders who rank high in EI can foster cooperation, team work, and synergy in an institution. Emotionally intelligent leaders will be able to demonstrate the preferred standard of communication and behaviour, thus allowing for improved relationships between all staff.

5.6 Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Effective Leadership

In reviewing the relevant literature around EI and leadership, a vast majority of discussions centre on EI and the transformational leadership style. This is partially due to the charismatic style displayed by transformational leaders (McClellan et al., 2017:201). Walter, Cole, and Humphrey (2011), cited in McClellan et al. (2017:201), however, contend that there is an obvious agreement and a positive correlation between EI and a leader's effectiveness. Walter, Cole, and Humphrey (2011) explain that previous studies investigating the relationship between EI and leader effectiveness have yielded promising results, regardless of whether the ability-based, or mixed model was used. The assessments show that a positive relationship exists between EI and effective leadership behaviour.

5.7 Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Educational Institutions

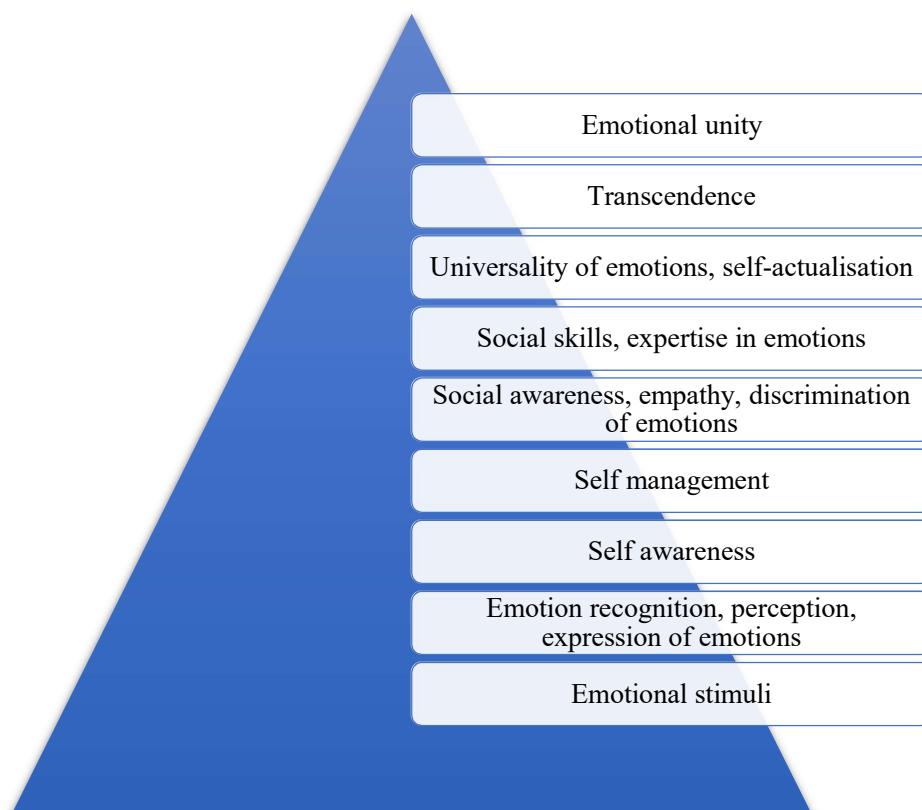
According to Drigas and Papoutsi (2019:62), it is common practice for educational institutions to group individuals with similar functions and complementary skills into a work group or team. This allows an institution to pool their resources to function efficiently based on the synergy from a group. Teams that are high in EI tend to help each other and tackle conflict and difficulties in a more constructive manner. Additionally, teams with high EI provide different perspectives and revel in diversity. Jordan and Lawrence (2009), cited in Drigas and Papoutsi (2019:62), concur, stating that a group's overall effectiveness and efficiency can be linked to the EI of the individuals that make up the group. This confirms the notion that a high collective EI allows for increased participation and collaboration amongst team members from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds.

5.8 A Nine-Layer Emotional Intelligence Model

Drigas and Papoutsi (2018:4) define an individual's level of cognition as their ability to acquire knowledge and understanding based on their past experiences, thought patterns, and sensory perceptions. An individual will then be in a better position to create new knowledge. Furthering the concept of cognition to include the ability to assess and reflect on one's own faculties and level of performance can be termed *metacognition*. Drigas and Papoutsi (2018:4) suggest the use of a nine-layer model, which incorporates cognition and metacognition, as well as the different models of EI. The nine-layered EI model was proposed to analyse an individual's EI progression from level one to level nine, with each level indicating a greater depth and understanding of EI. An individual will be able to ascend to a higher level on the pyramid when cognitive and metacognitive processes have occurred (Drigas and Papoutsi, 2018:9).

The nine-layered ascending pyramid structure of EI is based on Gardner's (2011) popularised concepts of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence and is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Nine-layered EI model



Adapted: Drigas and Papoutsi (2018:8)

The nine-layered EI model can be explained as follows (Drigas and Papoutsis, 2018:6):

- In the first layer, an individual receives information from the environment. This information can be regarded as stimuli that must be arranged in different categories to help the individual to understand the environment.
- In the second layer, an individual will be in a position to identify and assign labels to the different emotions experienced by themselves and others. Should a colleague speak in an unfamiliar rude undertone, this will be picked up. This layer relates to the correct identification of emotional cues displayed by fellow colleagues as well as the proper expression of one's own emotions.
- The third layer emphasises one's awareness of one's emotional state. At this layer, an individual will be self-aware and capable of understanding their own cognitive capacity in an objective manner.
- In the fourth layer, an individual will not be controlled by impulsive and irrational circumstances. An individual can only reach this state if they have correctly mastered self-awareness. This stage can be characterised as personal management, in that one is fully in charge of their faculties and reactions.
- Social awareness is the fifth layer and is dependent on an individual expressing empathy, a service orientation, and institutional awareness.
- In the sixth layer of the pyramid, an individual would develop a sense of social awareness. This entails the art of successfully managing and facilitating everyday social interactions.
- The self-actualisation level is the seventh level and is the culmination of all other levels being adequately demonstrated. This level is dependent on an individual and their need to progress.
- In level eight, an individual will attain a level of transcendence. This layer can be viewed in a spiritual light in that at this stage, an individual decides to serve a greater good and pass on the knowledge and learning that they have amassed.
- The final level in the EI pyramid relates to emotional unity. At this level, individuals are in complete control of their emotional behaviours and are able to constructively influence others based on their behaviour.

According to Muyia and Kacirek (2009), cited in Nafukho et al. (2016:54), EI training interventions have been consistently increasing due to the significant role EI plays in the field of team dynamics and leadership development. Dabke (2016:28) asserts that emotions are fascinating aspects of human existence due to the crucial role they play in interpersonal relationships and their impact on behavioural patterns and assumptions. It is further posited that individuals that are high in EI tend to have an edge over other individuals due to their ability to read body language, pick up on emotional cues, and their demonstrations of empathy. Additionally, individuals with a high level of EI can assist other individuals in the regulation of their own emotions in a more beneficial manner (Dabke, 2016:28). One can therefore gauge that EI is an area that warrants closer inspection, especially considering the field of EI has grown to be a multi-million-training industry. It is therefore plausible to assume that EI in leadership is gaining momentum and will need to be given due importance in private higher education institutions.

6. Research Methodology

A qualitative, interpretive approach to research was undertaken for this study. The intention was to observe the said phenomena in natural a real-life setting, thus allowing the researcher to explore the awareness of EI amongst academic leaders. Qualitative approaches allowed the researcher to gain a detailed description of the participants' feelings, experience, and assumptions, thus allowing for interpretation. Essentially, qualitative data may reveal a certain richness of detail (Rahman, 2016:104). However, the reliability of a qualitative study may be poor due the fact that two researchers may arrive at different conclusions based on the same phenomena (Rahman, 2016:105).

This study analysed the data collected by theme. Dawson (2010:34) explains that such thematic analysis is highly inductive. This research study focused on a small group and standardised open-ended interviews were employed for data collection. Dawson (2010:34) describes analysis as a process in which the data from the research study is analysed. Themes were used to analyse the data collected. The process of using themes is regarded as a thematic analysis. With this type of analysis, it is imperative for the researcher to have completed adequate readings on the phenomena to assist in the analysis and identification of possible themes. Generally, the themes will emerge when analysing the data. For this reason, this type of analysis is regarded as being highly inductive (Dawson, 2010:115).

Bhattacharjee (2012:65) describes a target population as the group that a study aims to generalise. A researcher may be prevented from gaining information from the entire target population due to factors such as the accessibility of all items in the population, the time and expense of studying all elements within the population, and the adequacy of the sample results. The researcher may therefore need to gather information from a smaller subset of the target population in such a way that the knowledge gained will serve as a representation of the total population (Bhattacharjee, 2012:66). Sampling can thus be described as a process in which a subset of a population is selected (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2019:100). A private higher education institution with 19 sites of delivery situated in different cities in South Africa was identified as the target population for this study. The target population consists of 19 academic leaders who are academic managers at private higher education institutions.

Cohen et al. (2007:100) differentiate between two broad types of sampling, which include non-probability and probability sampling. With non-probability sampling, some units of the population will have zero chance of being selected. Non-probability sampling consists of convenience sampling, consecutive sampling, quota sampling, judgemental sampling and snowballing (Trochim, Donnelly and Arora, 2016). According to Cohen et al. (2019:114), judgement sampling can be regarded as a purposive method of sampling in which a researcher may deliberately choose participants with predetermined non-probability criteria.

In this study, the researcher had access to the participants in the target population. The researcher had their contact details and was in general contact with the target population. The researcher deliberately chose participants that were situated in the following areas:

- Durban
- Pietermaritzburg
- East London
- Port Elizabeth
- Cape Town

The researcher wanted to ensure males and females participated in the study, hence purposive sampling was utilised. The sample size selected for the research study was five participants. The sample consisted of four females and one male.

Interviews can be described as a personalised method of data collection in which interviewers are expected to be trained on interview protocols. Interviews offer the interviewer the opportunity to make greater use of open-ended questions (Bhattacharjee, 2012:78). Open-ended questions allow participants to raise new issues and speak freely on topics; they not restrictive and provide opportunities for the interviewer to probe responses (Dawson, 2010:88). Open-ended interviews make use of a small, deliberately purposive sample. Interviews tend to be associated with qualitative and phenomenologically-oriented research study (Bhattacharjee, 2012:78).

Standardised open-ended interviews were identified as the method of data collection for this study. Cohen et al. (2019:353) describe standardised open-ended interviews as interviews in which the wording and order of the questions are predetermined by the interviewer. The respondents are required to answer the same set of questions, the responses to which are then compared. The standardised open-ended interview facilitates the organisation and analysis of data by allowing all participants to express their opinions for the same questions. Additionally, the interviewer can probe the participant in relation to existing themes that may have arisen.

Cohen et al. (2019:350) contend that an interviewer must establish rapport and ask questions in a manner that is acceptable. If the respondent is sincere and motivated, then a researcher will obtain accurate data. A pilot assessment for the interview was conducted to assess the researcher's interview skills.

The five participants for the research study were selected using purposive sampling. All of the participants were academic managers. Subsequent to the participants being chosen, the researcher requested ethical clearance from the head of research at the relevant private higher education institution. Upon receiving confirmation of ethical clearance, the researcher contacted the participants via email to inform them of the purpose and title of the study. The researcher explicitly stated that participation in the research study was voluntary. The researcher provided the participants with consent forms for the participants to use to consent to participating in the research study. The researcher also requested permission from the participants to record the interviews for data capturing purposes.

The five participants could not be easily accessed for a face-to-face interview as they were situated in different suburbs and provinces to the researcher. In an attempt to interview all

participants without incurring travel costs and time delays, the researcher used an online video conferencing platform called *Zoom*. The *Zoom* platform provides video conferencing capabilities to users, provided they have an internet connection. The participants received an email with the date and time of the interview as well as the link to access the interview. The dates and times were agreed to by the interviewer and the interviewees. In the event of the participant not being available, the interview was rescheduled at a more convenient time. The *Zoom* platform allowed the participants and the researcher to remain in their offices and join the interview by clicking on the link that was provided, allowing for a virtual face-to-face interview.

Interview protocols were observed by the researcher and the interview was audio-visually recorded on the *Zoom* platform. The researcher also recorded the interview on a mobile device as a contingency measure. All recordings and transcriptions were treated in a manner that respected the ethical considerations pertaining to research techniques. A researcher must be well versed on the limitations of using this method of collecting data. A key consideration lies in the interviewer's ability not to impose bias on the observed responses (Bhattacharjee, 2012:78).

7. Result and Discussion

In analysing the research data, a process of coding was employed. The codes were then grouped into themes. These themes were compared to the different models of EI. According to Baesu (2018:74), modern institutions acknowledge the need for EI based on the role EI plays in influencing high performance in all levels of leadership. It is further stated that leaders who are high in EI are able to display a level of self-mastery in their interactions. Leaders that practise self-mastery tend to view situations and circumstances in a constructive and positive manner for all (Baesu, 2018:74). In line with the stated objectives of the study, the five selected participants were invited to participate in an open-ended interview focused around the dimensions of self-awareness, conflict resolution, and interpersonal relationships. The participants discussed these dimensions and provided their insights.

Drigas and Papoutsis (2018:4) assert that individuals with EI can empathise, manage conflict, and solve problems amicably. Dabke (2016:28) concurs, stating that there is evidence to support the positive role EI plays in a workplace. Equally important, however, is the proper administration of EQ assessments.

There are different methods of assessments associated with the different EI models. These assessments must be administered by professional practitioners, the results of which will allow a leader to gauge their level of awareness, shortcomings, and application of EI. The assessments will facilitate discussion on best practice.

Based on the examination of the literature and primary data, the first theme identified was the need for a better understanding regarding EI. Dabke (2016:28) asserts that EI has many facets and components. Although EI has been shown to contribute to the success and productivity of a leader, one must be aware of the different models of EI to successfully practice EI. The participants' responses were categorised into codes such as, limited inference, limited understanding, self-awareness, and work experience. Participants acknowledged the role of self-awareness; however, participants lacked an understanding of emotions, the management of emotions, and the facilitation of thought using emotions. These subscales are represented in the models of EI.

The second theme was related to the first and indicates the need for a well-structured EI implementation plan that will positively influence the leader's actions through the awareness of EI. Baesu (2018:73) states that a leader is seen as the figurehead of an institution and will therefore serve as a role model in depicting behaviours that positively influence the behaviour, mannerisms, and emotional patterns of staff. This in turn allows an institution to excel. The participants' responses in relation to the management of interpersonal relationships were categorised into codes such as: policy- and process-oriented, reference to rules, and workplace perspectives. A lack of skilled techniques in managing interpersonal interactions was evidenced, alluding to a minimal awareness of EI.

The main finding of the study indicated a need for a customised EI development programme in which EI is explained and where academic leaders can have their EI assessed to aid their performance as academic leaders. Baba and Siddiqui (2017:81) explain that many authors have discovered in their research that EI is associated with effective leadership. This reinforces the notion that EI will enhance leadership. Dabke (2016:28) furthermore claims that EI can be used to predict occupational success as it influences a leader's ability to succeed whilst simultaneously helping them to cope with environmental and institutional demands. In addition, Baesu (2018:73) explains that a core component of a leader skills inventory should be a leader's capacity to manage emotions in a constructive manner.

The proper management and demonstration of emotions will allow the institution to thrive against the background of an unpredictable and volatile landscape. This confirms the need to have leaders well trained in the practice of EI.

8. Conclusion

The findings of this research study have demonstrated that academic leaders are lacking in knowledge pertaining to the various models of EI and their subsequent application. Their knowledge on the understanding and application of EI is limited to surface meaning. This was made evident in the participants' responses, which highlighted that the participants were not familiar with the emotional competence inventory of the Goleman model or the dimensions of the Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence. The participants were furthermore unaware of the means available to assess EI. The core components of EI were not fully understood, limiting the participants from fully harnessing the benefits associated with emotionally intelligent leaders and the impact that they may have on their subordinates. The participants indicated a keen interest in understanding and developing their EI, should the opportunity be available.

10. Recommendations

It is recommended that a training programme be structured in which academic leaders can familiarise themselves with the concepts, models, and assessments pertaining to EI and learn how they can best enhance their leadership style through an awareness and demonstration of EI. Training managers/institution leaders should prioritise emotional quotient assessments to afford academic leaders the ability to have their EQ assessed. Once an academic leader has had their EQ assessed, they will be in a better position to guide their staff. A further recommendation would be to investigate the EI development programmes that exist in public higher education institutions to allow for adequate benchmarking.

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The Impact of Digitisation on Teaching and Learning

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Digitisation greatly enhances teaching and learning, especially in universities and private colleges where students complete courses and assessments using online platforms. This article seeks to show how web-based technology can be used effectively in the teaching and learning process. The purpose of this article is therefore to acknowledge the effectiveness of using technology for online courses and assessments. When face-to-face learning is not possible, the internet and video-conferencing allows interactions to take place between facilitators and students in an online classroom environment. By uploading lecture notes, course materials and online assessments to online platforms such as Moodle, students are able to access their study material instantly. The online submission of assignments, tests and examinations further helps the lecturers or facilitators with the aspects of marking that are more tedious in nature. The evaluation of students in an online classroom can be more advantageous than traditional classrooms because more than one student can be evaluated simultaneously by facilitators analysing the students' online discussions.

By examining journal articles, e-Books and web pages relevant to the topic, this article clearly outlines the impact of digitisation in teaching and learning. It is hoped that this study will inform the reader on the pivotal role that technology can play in teaching and learning. More research is required in this field of study to ensure that lecturers or facilitators are equipped to provide effective online training and assessments.

Keywords: digitisation, online courses, online classes, online assessments.

1. Introduction

Digitisation is the “the process of converting something to digital form” (Merriam-Webster, 2019), “Teaching is the profession of those who give instruction in in an elementary or a secondary school or University” (Havighurst, 2019), and learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience, or being taught (Lexico, 2019). Digitisation greatly enhances teaching and learning, especially in the tertiary education sector, where online courses and assessments can be prepared by lecturers and be uploaded to online platforms such as Moodle and Blackboard for students to complete.

2. Problem Statement

According to Bansilal, North, and Umugiraneza (2018) “it is often claimed that technology can be used as a tool that can facilitate teaching and learning and contribute to learners’ achievement”. The landscape of teaching and learning has moved from a paper-based system to a paperless system of conveying information to students utilising technology. Lecturers who use paper-based notes to convey lectures to students may struggle to engage and build a rapport with students who prefer to use technology such as audio-video clips to better understand lectures.

3. Research Question

How advantageous is the internet and video-conferencing with students in online classrooms when face-to-face learning is not possible?

4. Research Objective

To investigate the extent to which technology can have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

5. Research Questions

- Why is there a need for the use of online technology in teaching and learning?
- How do the internet and online applications impact learning at a tertiary level?
- What aspects of technology have a positive impact on teaching and learning?

6. Methodology

A qualitative research approach was used to collect data. The data analysis consists of literature reviews from academic sources such as journal articles and eBooks.

7. Literature Review

7.1 Online Courses and Online Assessments

An online course can be defined as a “set of instructional experiences” that use the digital network “for interaction, learning and dialogue” (IGI Global, 2019). “An online course does not require any face-to-face meetings in a physical location” (Cooper, 2019). Using online courses, “Students can access class objectives, lecture notes, instructional materials, and exams via [the] Internet” (IGI Global, 2019). Online assessment or e-assessment can also be defined as a student completing a test or an examination online using a computer and an online application such as the Blackboard Learning System (University of Bristol Digital Education Office, 2019).

7.1.1 Blackboard Learning System

The Blackboard Learning System is software that enables lecturers to make online courses by organising the content in the online course or adding the course contents to a classroom lecture (Coetzee). In addition, PDF and Word documents, images and video clips can be placed into a Blackboard Learning System course (Coetzee). Communication features can be added to encourage interaction between students and the lecturer. These courses can also be saved and edited for later use (Coetzee).

Lecturers can present their course material using the Blackboard Learning System. Lecturers can also schedule events in a calendar and use emails, chat rooms and online discussions to connect with students (Coetzee). The Blackboard Learning System can be used to augment the teaching and learning process. Facilitators can choose from a diverse range of online features to communicate and interact with learners.

Students can view their course notes and assignments using the Blackboard Learning System. Learners can communicate with their lecturers via email, or they can “chat in real time or post messages in online discussions” (Coetzee). The Blackboard Learning System allows learners convenient access to course notes. The communication features of the Blackboard Learning System also allow learners to check their development and to communicate with their lecturers.



Figure 1. An example of a Moodle online course (Free Power Point Templates, 2019).

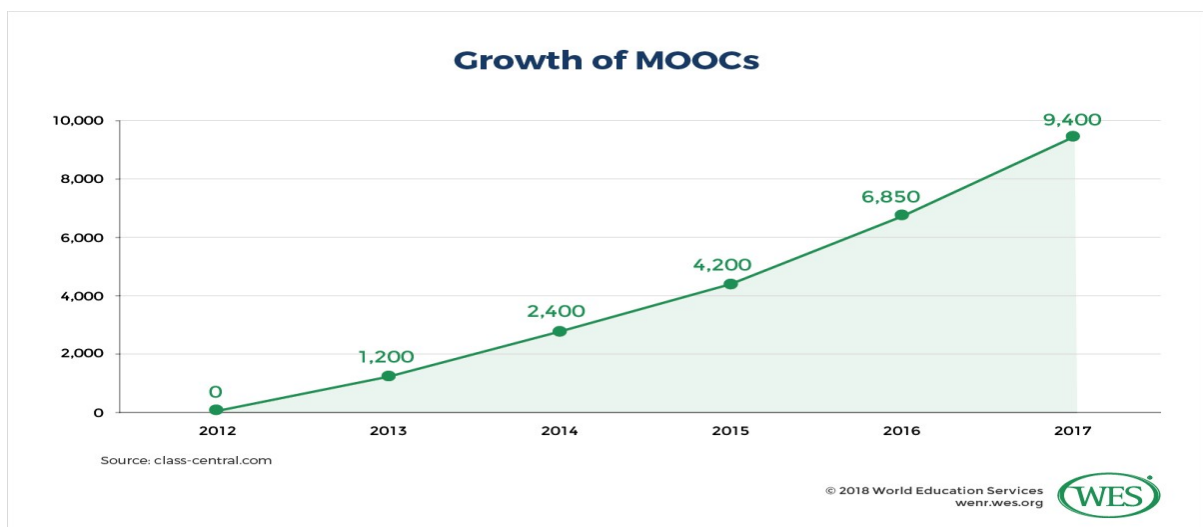


Figure 2. The rise in popularity of massive open online courses (MOOC) worldwide (Wenr, 2019).

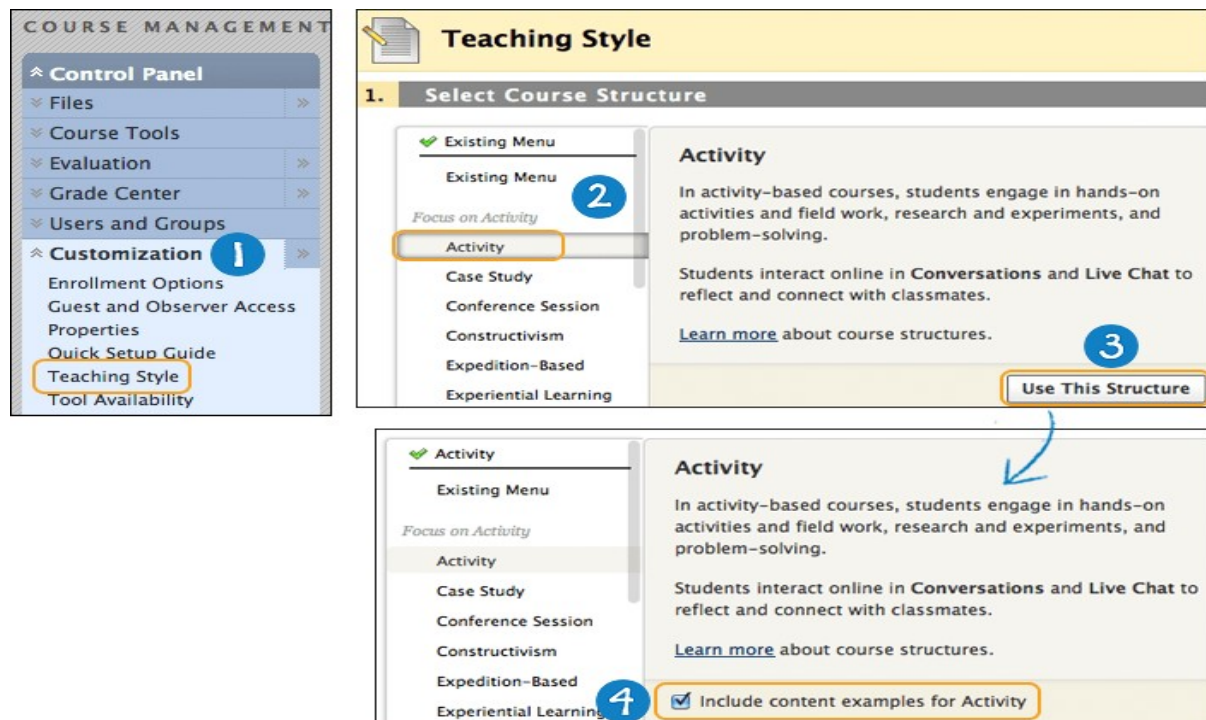


Figure 3. Blackboard's course development feature (Blackboard Learning).

Lecturers can use the Blackboard Learning System to create tests and assignments to evaluate students' performance (Coetzee). Learners can login to the Blackboard Learning System to view the marks for their evaluated assignments (Coetzee).

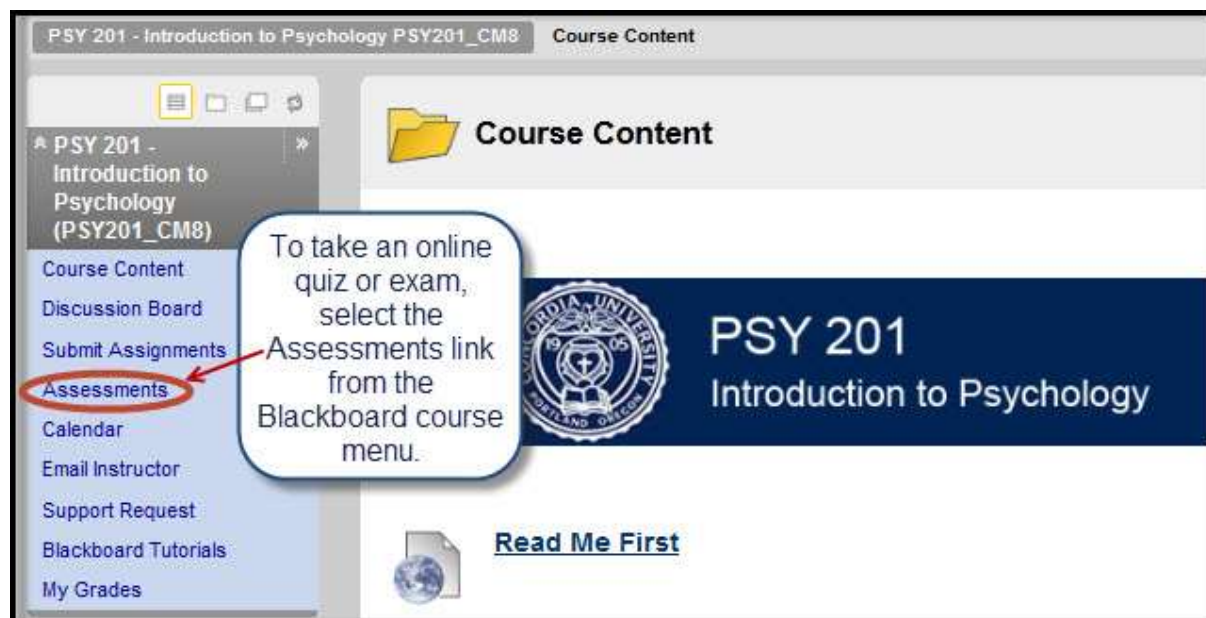


Figure 4. An example of a Blackboard Learning online assessment (Concordia University).

7.2 Online Collaborative Discussion

An online collaborative discussion takes place when a group of students hold a discussion online, during which the facilitator can assess the students individually, which can be a form of oral assessment (IGI Global, 2019). Online collaborative discussions can be analysed and marks can be allocated to the students involved in the discussion (Swan, Shen and Hiltz, 2013). The marks allocated for the students' participation in the discussion should account for a percentage of the students' final marks for their course. This will help to ensure students participate in discussion. Student participation in online discussions should be encouraged by allocating individual marks for each student involved in the discussion to promote collaborative learning.

7.3 Blended Learning

Blended learning is a method of combining online content and activities in a strategic, scholastically valuable way to add to and enhance the learning process (TeachThought, 2016). Blended learning occurs where the facilitator combines the use of web pages and audio-visual material such as online video clips with his/her lecture notes to help the learners to absorb the information presented in the lecture.

7.3.1 Advantages of Blended Learning

Blended learning can take place when facilitators provide lecture notes to students online before hosting webinars. This allows students to engage in the online discussion during the webinar (Okaz, 2014:600). Okaz (2014:600) states that "It is evident that combining technologically mediated learning with class debates helps students gain more understanding of the subject matter, and develops their cognitive and social skills at the same time". When used with the student as the focal point, blended learning can increase the learners' awareness of the course content. Lecturers can use blogs and online platforms to upload lecture notes before class discussions.

7.3.2 Disadvantages of Blended Learning

A limitation of blended learning is that there is no immediate response from lecturers as compared to face-to-face learning (Okaz, 2014:601). Learners may not be able to relate to the facilitator and economic issues may prevent students from accessing lecture notes uploaded online (Okaz, 2014:601). Okaz (2014:601) further states that a low bandwidth internet connection can be disruptive when a lecturer conducts a webinar and can result in no immediate

response from students when using live streaming (Okaz, 2014:601). Students using computers with internet access and webcams to connect with facilitators may lead to losing a ‘classroom atmosphere’ resulting in students feeling that they lack the space to have class discussions (Okaz, 2014:601). Students from lower-income families or those with a lack of IT knowledge may also have difficulty accessing online classroom material (Holley and Oliver, 2010; cited in Okaz, 2014:602).

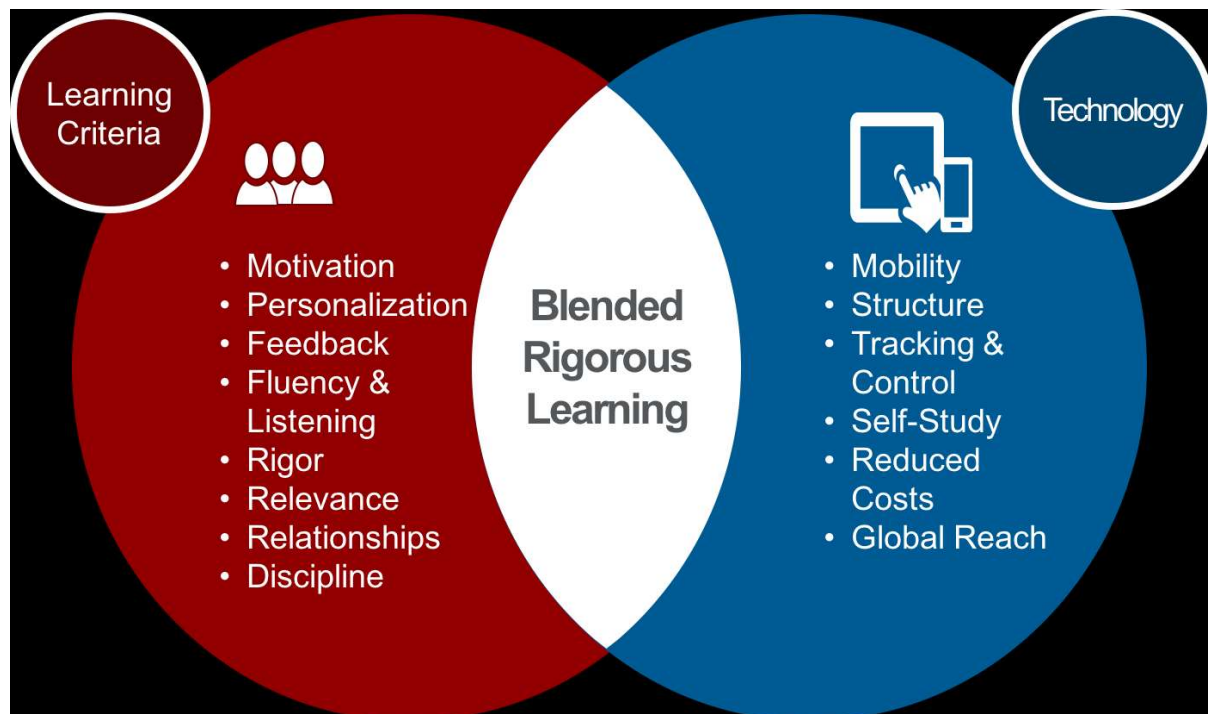


Figure 5. How blended learning can provide students with out-of-classroom support (Sheninger, 2017).

7.4 Gamification

Gamification is one form of blended learning. Gamification occurs when a lecturer converts parts of a lecture into a game to encourage student participation (Azmi, Ahmed and Iahad, 2015:18087). Gamification augments the learner’s contribution to both the online classroom and traditional classroom settings. This enhances teaching and learning in the higher education sector. Students seems to easily engage with the gamified technique while absorbing knowledge from the content because it is fun and enjoyable.

Pandey (2017) provides the following key elements used by EI Design to craft their gamification strategy:

1. Challenges (mapping to learning objectives)
2. Levels (learning path)
3. Instant feedback (to aid progress)
4. Scores or points (to impart a sense of accomplishment and gratification)
5. Badges (for significant achievements)
6. Leader-boards (for analytics)
7. Competition (to assess where the learner stands against his/her peers)
8. Collaboration (when multiple teams play)



Figure 6. An example of gamification (Pandey, 2017).

Pandey (2017) expands on this list, explaining that:

- Higher engagement (fun while learning) leads to better recall and retention.
- Instant feedback can be used to checkpoint progress and helps to improve performance.
- A safe environment is provided practise and obtain the required mastery.
- Behavioural change is facilitated through repeated retrieval and spaced repetition.



Figure 7. How gamification works (Demand Metric).

Introducing gamification in programming courses can encourage students to participate and helps the students to learn more from the course (Azmi, Ahmed, and Iahad, 2015:18087). Azmi, Ahmed, and Iahad (2015) believe that the student's achievements in gamified online assessments should motivate them to augment their interests.

In an online learning environment, students can apply what they have learned, and higher educational institutions can observe the student's level of performance. Pandey (2017) argues that since the online learning environment is very responsive, learners are motivated to impart their understanding of the content. When 'gamified solutions' meet the students' preferences,

their co-operation in the learning process increases, allowing knowledge to be retained by the learners.

Pandey (2017) regards gamification being used in online assessments as a means to enhance the students' interests and thereby heighten the learners' participation. If the gamified online assessments are tailored to meet the students' educational needs, the retention of knowledge is assured. There are, however, limitations to gamification being used as a form of online assessment. These limitations, discussed in the paragraph below, pertain to the availability of computers with internet access, the provision of electricity, and the design and implementation of gamified online assessments.

Students require access to a computer with a webcam and access to the internet in order to utilise online classrooms and video conferencing facilities. Colleges may not have the budget to purchase computers, video projectors, and other relevant IT resources. Online learning may not be accessible to students from middle-class and lower middle-class families as they may not have the relevant technological resources. Games may also be confusing when they are not properly designed and the curriculum may not be supported when lecturers do not adequately implement the gamified assessments. In showing determination to pass a stage in an online game, learners may not keep to the time specified by their facilitator. Online courses without audio-visual interfaces may not meet the learning needs of students that prefer listening to instructions (Gamification 101 Blog, 2016).

According to Zaino (2013), the tertiary education sector uses digital game to enrich business professionals' skill sets and to help students to focus on their studies. Zaino (2013) quotes Meloni, who implies that lecturers can see how far a learner advances through an activity by using measures provided by gamification.

Zaino (2013) further implies that gamification can help students to develop an interest in the content in the online assessment. Zaino (2013) quotes Karen Schrier, who states that students are awarded badges for their achievements relating to the gamified content. Students can attain the relevant knowledge that digital gamification can provide within online assessments (Zaino 2013).

7.5 Online Classes

An online class is described as “A class taught to students via [the] Internet or in an online learning environment.” (IGI Global, 2019). An online class can also be referred to a virtual classroom which learners can gain access to if they have a computer with internet access, headphones, and a webcam. Lecturers can interact with the learners in a virtual classroom using ‘online chat rooms’ and ‘threaded discussions’ (IGI Global, 2019).

8. Findings

An analysis of the findings presented in this study indicates that the utilisation of online applications and live streaming enriches teaching and learning within higher education institutions. Gamification has enhanced online assessments by entertaining the learners and increasing their learning. Blended learning has also intensified collaborative learning by combining traditional classroom lecturing with relevant online educational audio-visual clips.

9. Conclusion

Digitisation has greatly impacted teaching and learning. Web-based technology has been utilised advantageously to enhance teaching and learning by enabling learners to attend online classes. The introduction of blended learning to the classroom has helped students to better grasp information portrayed in the form of audio-video clips. Gamification encourages learners to participate in collaborative online discussions and allows lecturers to assess learners with online tests and examinations.

10. Recommendations

It is recommended that more research is conducted regarding the technological limitations of digitisation in teaching and learning. Such research could examine the provision of adequate IT resources, the availability of electricity, and other economic factors. More in-depth studies are further needed in the implementation of e-learning and blended learning in colleges and universities.

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Using the Academic Advising Centre as a Marketing Tool to Increase the Intake of Distance Learning Students: A Case of the Electrical Engineering Students at a Private Higher Education Institution

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This research aims to determine if the Academic Advising Centre (AAC) can be used as a marketing tool to increase the intake of distance learners at a correspondence college. Negative marketing can affect an institution's credibility and the AAC can be used to offset this negative marketing and increase future enrolments. The AAC could prove to be a platform for students to voice their concerns and allow the institution to grow. Complaints must be dealt with timeously and must be prioritised to show prospective students, via word of mouth, that the college cares. The AAC is the only means of interaction between the student and the college, hence this interaction is highly important. This research recommends that sales and marketing departments be kept up to date on the AAC and its benefits and that at every marketing campaign, there should be a focus on the AAC. This research has proven that the AAC is an effective marketing tool.

A quantitative approach was adopted in this research as the data required was mathematical and needed to be presented graphically. A sample size of thirty was chosen and twenty-four participants answered the survey, equating to a response rate of 80%.

Keywords: *marketing tool, distance learners, negative marketing, future enrolments, voice their concerns.*

1. Introduction

Every company, whether it provides a product or service, relies on their marketing tools to gain a competitive edge. Every business requires a market; however, this means that time and effort needs to be spent in putting together a campaign which best suits its intended audience. The Academic Advising Centre (AAC) has been operational for over a year and six months. Bonding has taken place between students and advisers. The AAC has proven to be a top influence across all brands at the higher education institution.

Students, especially distance students or students studying by correspondence, find it comforting that they can be in constant contact with an adviser who is able to assist and guide them through their entire course (Newlands, 2015:1). In assisting the student with his or her course, an adviser provides learning tips, listens to the student's complaints, and tries to help the student overcome his or her challenges. With this AAC as the first of its kind in South Africa, this research would prove that the AAC can additionally function as a marketing tool that attracts more students to the brand (Newlands, 2015:1).

2. The Research Problem

The AAC is now established and is in direct contact with students registered with the institute. As the AAC is the primary contact for students, students have been relaying their difficulties to the advisers. These difficulties include, for example, not being able to reach the college for assistance with account passwords when the original password the student received did not work. It is important to note, however, that students only hear about the AAC when they receive a welcome call where the adviser explains the AAC's service to them. Students are sometimes afraid to accept the call or assume that the call is spam and do not answer. The AAC has been poorly marketed: the institution's website does not mention the AAC, the service they provide, or how to get in contact with them. There is mention of the AAC on the college's Facebook page, but no description of its services or contact details are provided.

3. Research Objectives

- To determine the influence the AAC has on distance students.
- To determine whether the AAC can be used as a marketing tool to increase the intake of distance learning students at the higher education institution.

4. Research Questions

- What kind of influence does the AAC have on distance learning students?
- How can the AAC influence the intake of students at the distance brand?

5. Literature Review

5.1 Marketing Tools for a Service Provided

According to Business Dictionary, a marketing tool can be defined as the promotion of a product or service. Marketing tools are essential as a product or service is unlikely to sell if the prospective customer does not know it exists. To gain a consumer's interest, it is important to present the product or service being offered in an effective way.

Every company requires a marketing plan to determine how they can reach future customers and achieve better profits. A marketing strategy will help a business to tailor their message to attract future customers by putting the right mix of approaches in place to form an effective marketing plan. All competing businesses must be studied, and the service provided needs to match the market at the time (Kluwer, 2019).

Customer service is important and always needs to be at its best. It is important to engage with the customer and build a partnership. If the customer service provided is optimal, the service provided will speak for itself and customers will return and remain loyal to the organisation (Ameritas, 2017).

Private institutions have been forced to become more financially self-reliant. According to Africa Check (2016), the government subsidises students that fall between the poor or working-class financial bracket. The AAC must then be able to compete with the services offered by other private institutions (Papadakis, 2013:1).

5.2 Business Reputation

A company's reputation is based on its past actions and an estimation of its future behaviour. The reputation of a business is vital for its survival as people are attracted to great reviews. There are some businesses, however, that do not give their reputation any consideration.

A business's reputation must be taken seriously as a good reputation will aid in bringing in future customers and giving the company the upper hand over other competing businesses (Halleck, 2015).

A study of business reputation done in America identified ten of the main components of a reputation measurement system (Halleck, 2015). These are as follows (Halleck, 2015):

1. **Ethics:** An organisation whose behaviour is ethical is trustworthy and worthy of respect.
2. **Employees/workplace:** An organisation that has talented employees and treats people well is an appealing workplace.
3. **Financial performance:** An organisation that is financially strong, has a record of profitability, and has prospects for growth.
4. **Leadership:** The organisation is a leader not a follower.
5. **Management:** The organisation has high quality management and a clear vision for the future.
6. **Social responsibility:** The organisation shows social responsibility and supports worthy causes.
7. **Customer focus:** The organisation is strongly committed to its customers.
8. **Quality:** The organisation provides high quality products and services.
9. **Reliability:** The organisation stands behind their products and services, providing consistent service.
10. **Emotional appeal:** The organisation is kind and fun. The consumer feels good about them.

5.3 Reasons to Recommend a Company

It is human nature to recommend a good service or project. According to Conklin (2017), "Giving a good recommendation makes [one] feel helpful, connected, and appeals to our social nature as humans".

All businesses should try to figure out what differentiates them from the rest of the industry and stick to this as this becomes their fingerprint. The company should show potential customers that they are unique and great at what they do (Conklin, 2017). When a company is being run, every staff member must be well versed in each of the products being sold and how these work (Conklin, 2017).

5.4 Academic Advising as Customer Service

Customer service is about determining the level of customer satisfaction with the service provided (Boyd, 2012). The service provided must meet the customer's expectations. Each employee must play their part in ensuring the best product or service is supplied. Colleges have not been concerned with the level of satisfaction experienced by students during their studies but rather on whether their final degree requirements have been met (Boyd, 2012). Academic advising plays a huge part in keeping the customer happy.

5.6 Effect of Academic Advising on Distance Students

According to Young-Jones et al. (2011:1), it has been found that the interaction between the student and the college is a key factor for the student's success. The quality of this interaction can and will assist with retention of students.

Research carried out at Nigerian universities found there to be a relationship between academic advising and students' academic success. Academic advising is one of the key factors that can assist with student retention and graduation (Megbo and Abubakar, 2015:1).

Academic advising has a huge effect on distance learners. This is due to the fact that these students are largely from the working class and have personal responsibilities. Regular sessions are set up during times recommended by the students. The adviser keeps in contact with the student and continues to check on their success (Cochrane and Joseph, 2016).

5.7 Comparison of Academic Advising at Different Colleges

5.7.1 Academic Advising at Duke University

Duke University is located at Durham, North Carolina. At Duke University, students are assigned an adviser when they register. Advisers show students all of the avenues available to them and thereafter help students make decisions (Duke University, 2019). Meetings are regularly set up to guide the student through their academic goals.

5.7.2 Academic Advising at the University of Maryland

The University of Maryland (2017) describes academic advising as "a dynamic relationship between advisor and student" which offers support with regards to the student's career and educational success by assisting the student in forming a career plan.

An adviser also provides personal support by giving the student information about registration and by referring the student to career centres for career counselling (University of Maryland, 2017).

The college allows one-on-one meetings with advisers. To get in contact with an adviser, the student needs to send in a request (University of Maryland, 2017). There are advisers for each department. Therefore, if a student needs advice in engineering, for example, then that student will be directed to the adviser from the engineering department (University of Maryland, 2017).

5.7.2 Academic Advising at Carleton University

At Carleton University, the academic advising centre is open all year around and operates on a drop-in basis between the hours of 08:30 and 16:30. Because the office is busy and services a large volume of students, there may be waiting times. During busy periods, this waiting time could exceed an hour. Questions may be asked by email, but responses have a turnaround time of 24 hours. The academic advising service also offers telephone advising to students (Carleton University, 2017). Once an adviser has been assigned, regular sessions are scheduled. At these sessions, the students can determine their final academic specialisation and learn about the future obstacles that they could face. At these sessions, the student will also learn about the university's rules. Difficulties or challenges experienced by the student can be discussed in these sessions, and together the student and adviser can work towards solutions to these (Carleton University, 2017).

5.8 Challenges Faced by Distance Students

Correspondence or distance education has become highly popular all around the world (Attri, 2012:42-43). This type of education appeals to working class and adult learners as there is a degree of flexibility with this type of learning, which allows the student to attend to other responsibilities whilst studying. Correspondence education allows students to control the time and pace of the learning process. Learning via correspondence, however, does come with its limitations, such as a lack of face-to-face interaction and faculty support (Attri, 2012:42-43).

According to Mary (2017), physical separation can create a feeling of isolation. This feeling of isolation may be experienced by distance students. Many organisations build communication channels to help alleviate this feeling that learners may experience. In distance learning, some of the modes of communication that could be implemented include electronic mails and

chatrooms. These platforms increase interaction between instructor and student. These interactions are very important in a learning environment. Interactions between the student and the institution can enhance learning, promoting the student's individual growth by allowing the student to ask questions about the course and assignments.

During the registered course, students may not understand all of the topics and may need assistance from an instructor. Even if these are explained in the course notes, further clarification may be needed. Communication channels are important as the student can use this platform to voice any questions (Mary, 2017).

For distance learning students, study material is conveyed to the student via the internet, videos, or print outs. There are no teachers to direct the student as to what exactly is required of them. The study material must therefore be communicated without mistakes (Mary, 2017).

5.9 Defining Academic Advising

Academic advising is a process where guidance is given to students on a one-on-one basis. This interaction takes place throughout the student's time at the institution. The student's educational goals are realised and planned. At times, counselling forms part of the duties of an adviser (Nacada, 2014).

Academic advising is a mutual collaboration between the student and adviser and is designed to assist the student to realise their educational and career goals. The responsibility of realization of the student's goal rests with student: although the adviser can and should only guide the student towards their goals, the student needs to make the final decisions about the responsibility that comes with studying. The AAC offers the options and resources to assist students with their academic growth but the student needs to make the final decision with regards to reaching their goals. The relationship between the adviser and student is unique as each play an equal part in realizing the students' academic growth and end goal. (Rutgers, 2017).

The AAC deals with complaints regularly. These complaints are acknowledged and are dealt with timeously. This service communicates to students that they matter and are valued. Students reach out to their advisers during a time of confusion and frustration such as when

there is an error logging into the student portal, for example. Patience is therefore important when attending to customers and is important to the business as a whole (Myers 2017).

5.10 Success Stories at AAC Educor

From adviser, Nonkululeko Mngomezulu:

“I assisted a student by the name of Ronald Samakomva in 2016. As part of his National Diploma in civil engineering - he was attempting most subjects at N4 but still needed to complete the following subject at N3 level: building drawing. I began contacting him in response to an email sent in by his father requesting assistance on his behalf because he was struggling with drawing. I believe he had failed the subject three times.

As we worked together, I sent him extra notes for more understanding, and we had scheduled calls for the tasks I gave him to do for daily practise. There was a noticeable improvement - he was happy and confident. I did follow-up with after writing his exam, but unfortunately, he was quite disappointed as he had found the exam difficult. I tried to calm him down. Once he obtained his results, we were both pleasantly surprised to find that he had indeed passed. He is now on track to complete his diploma in 2017”.

From adviser, Jenevieve Marigadu:

“My first point of contact with Lobisa was a welcome call, to introduce myself to her as an academic adviser done [sic] on 06th June 2016. While speaking to Lobisa, she mentioned the following: “I don’t know why I registered to study! I can’t even understand the study guide, I am just a cleaner and I am having a very difficult time trying to learn.” The student was very discouraged, I started to ask her what she feels her challenges are. I started to motivate her and inform her that it’s not how you start but how you [finish]. I informed her that I will work with her to develop her and her study skills. From that point, she trusted me, and she made appointments with me to call her. Ever since, Lobisa has used the study skills and methods that I have advised her, to develop herself towards a goal she set. Below is the email sent to me by Lobisa’s supervisor informing me of her results for her first exam. To date I am still working with Lobisa”.

“Hi All,

I am very proud to say Lobisa got 79% for her first Intec subject.

I am very proud of her!!

Thank you”

6. Research Methodology

6.1 The Research Design

There are two type of approaches that can be used in a research study: the quantitative approach or the qualitative approach. For this study, a quantitative approach was adopted, and numerical data was gathered from questionnaires handed out to students in the target population. The quantitative approach is used to gather facts and patterns (DeFranzo, 2011).

6.1.1 Quantitative Research Strategy

In this research study, surveys in the form of questionnaires were used. According to Ong’anya and Ododa (2010), surveys are used to examine and gain the information required.

6.1.2 Surveys

To collect quantitative data, surveys were sent out to the target population. Surveys collect different types of data from the target population (Rodrigo, 2017). In this study, the researcher made use of an online option to offer privacy to the respondents.

6.1.3 Target Population

According to Explorable (2017), a target population refers to the individuals a researcher is interested in. The individuals who comprise the target population usually have varying characteristics and can also be referred to collectively as the theoretical population. The target population of this study consists of the electrical students studying at a correspondence college. There are 188 students in the target population.

6.1.4 Sampling and Sample Size

A sample of the target population is needed as it is not practical to survey the entire population. A sample of respondents is chosen to represent the total population. Using the correct sample size is crucial for any research. If the sample is large, the results may be more detailed, but a smaller sample size can avoid larger mistakes (Van Dessel, 2017:1).

In this research, a sample size of 30 students was chosen to represent the target population as this is the accepted minimal sample size for a study of this nature (Static Solutions, 2019).

A non-probability sampling method was used in this research study. The sample of 30 individuals was randomly selected and the questionnaires were distributed via Survey Monkey. This platform granted the respondents privacy and anonymity as it would not be possible to identify the respondent from the survey results.

7. The Research Instrument

7.1 Questionnaire Construction

The questionnaire used in this research study was structured to determine how satisfied students were with the AAC. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions. The respondents had to choose their responses using the following Likert rating scale:

Table 1: Likert Rating Scale

A) Strongly agree
B) Agree
C) Unsure
D) Disagree
E) Strongly disagree

7.2 Pilot Study

In a pilot study, a trial run is carried out on a small group taken from the target population. This test run helps to locate any errors in the questionnaire or processes that follow (Crossman, 2019). The following are reasons to employ a pilot study: to test the research tool and process; to test administration; and to identify and foresee any problems that could occur (Crossman, 2019).

In the pilot study undertaken for this research, the questionnaire was sent out to four students registered at the institution. The respondents indicated that the questionnaire was easy to follow and could be completed in approximately five minutes. They confirmed that the questions were clear and simple language was used.

7.3 Administration and Collection of Questionnaires

The selected sample was made aware of the objectives of the research in the email where they were requested to take part in the research. Once an indication of participation had been agreed upon, the link to the questionnaire was sent to the respondent. The questionnaires were completed using Survey Monkey, and once the students were done with their surveys, all data was available to the researcher to make the final conclusions of the research study.

7.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative studies involve the analysis of numerical data and thus form rationalised conclusions from the findings. The data collected in the study can be summarised into graphs, numbers and percentages (Dudovskiy, 2019). A comparison is thereafter made between the literature review and findings of the research.

7.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity relates to how accurately a concept is measured in a quantitative study (Heale and Twycross, 2017). For validity, the survey was designed specifically for students attending a distance college. The questions within the survey aimed to evaluate the assistance received by students from the AAC.

Reliability is another measure of quality within a study. This refers to the accuracy of the measuring instrument. If an instrument is used continuously, the results produced are more trustworthy (Heale and Twycross, 2017). To ensure reliability, the survey was tested within the target population during the pilot study.

7.6 Limitations of the Research

Carrying out research using the quantitative approach helps to produce mathematical data that can be graphically presented. This was sufficient for this study. The findings of qualitative research provide a more detailed account of the study (Susan, 2011).

A limitation of this study is that majority of the respondents chosen for the sample group were male. Of the respondents, 83.33% were male and only 16.67% were female.

7.7 Elimination of Bias

To eliminate bias and ensure that true opinions were obtained, the sample population was made aware that they would remain anonymous. The questionnaire was designed to analyse the students' opinion of the AAC.

7.8 Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from management. The target population was made aware of the purpose of the study and that their participation was voluntary. The participants were made aware that no harm in the form of stress, pain, or anxiety would come to them.

8. Findings

The aim of the research was to determine if the AAC could be used as a marketing tool to increase the intake of distance students at a College. The survey was therefore structured to determine the effect the AAC has on current students at the college. From the data received from the survey (Figure 1), it was found that most students agreed that their interaction with their academic advisers was a positive experience. The students who disagreed with this statement were students who did not need any assistance, those intended to drop out due to personal problems, or those who didn't intend on completing the registered course

It should also be noted that the majority (56%) of the students agreed that the AAC helps break the isolation felt as a distance learner. Distance students experience feelings of isolation and the interaction with advisers helps to alleviate this (Mary, 2017). The data received from the survey also demonstrates that the students agree that the AAC is knowledgeable of their course content. It should be noted that all advisers are hired on the basis that they studied the course that they advise on.

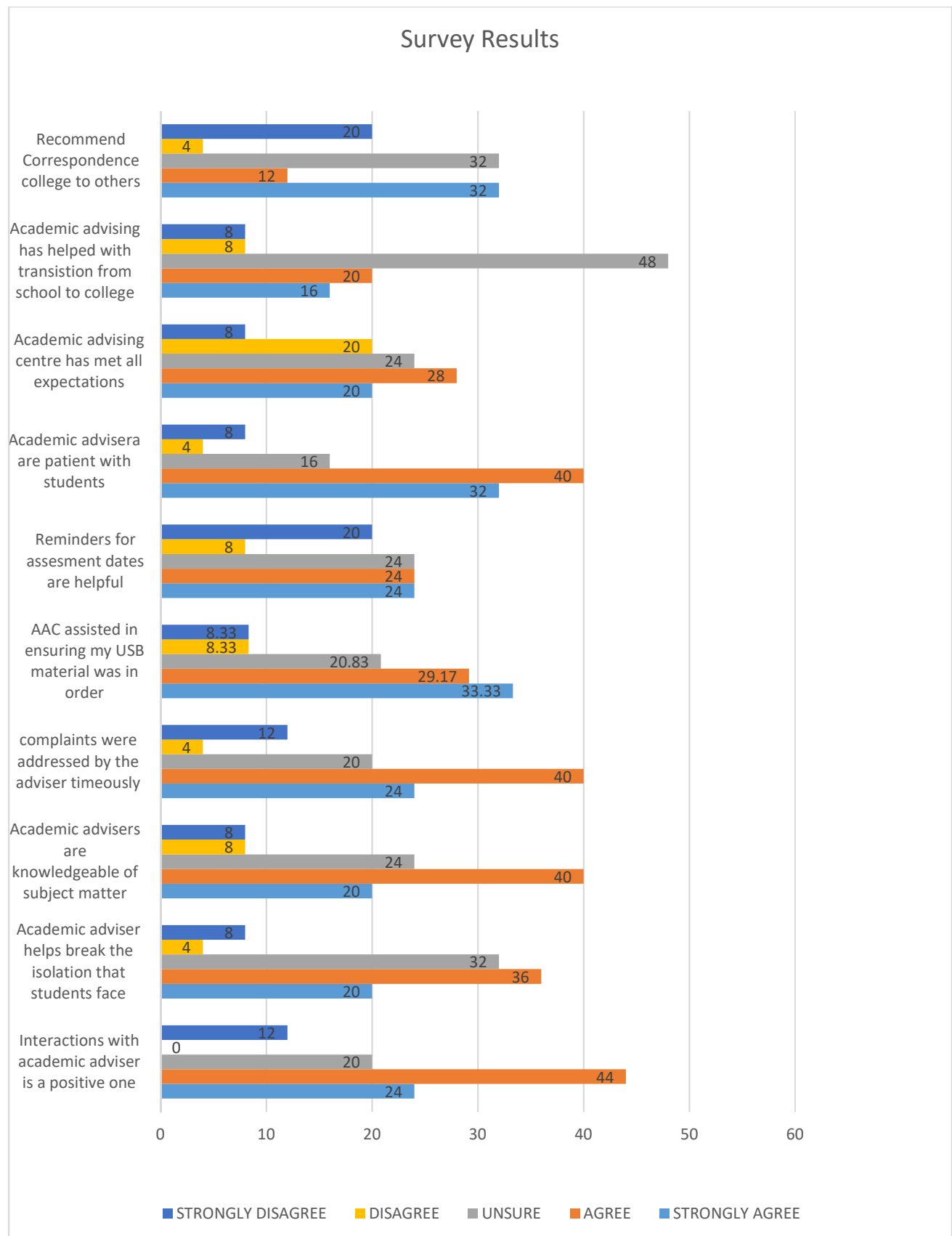


Figure 1: Survey questions and results

Customer complaints are inevitable (Everard, 2017). 64% of the respondents agreed that complaints are addressed timeously by the AAC. The 16% who disagreed with this were students with no complaints that needed addressing or who did not reach out to their adviser. Advisers call or email to ensure that study material has been received and the majority of respondents agreed that this is true. The balance of 16.66% who disagreed with this statement had not yet received their material.

At the AAC, constant reminders are given to students about their assessment dates. 48% of students agreed that this was helpful. The remaining students that disagreed or were unsure of their answer were students who could not be contacted via a phone call during the shipment activities.

72% of the respondents agreed that their advisers were patient with them. Because students usually make contact during a time of frustration, patience is required.

48% of the respondents found that the AAC had met their expectations. The remaining 52% had not really required assistance with content-based queries yet.

It was noted that the transition from school to college is not an easy change (Roux, 2017). 36% of the respondents agreed that the AAC assists in this regard; 64% of respondents disagreed. Not all students enter the college straight out of school. The majority of the respondents were 25 years old or above. This age group may therefore be old enough to grace the change.

The final question posed was to determine if the students would recommend the college. Only 44% agreed that they would, which is alarming. 56% were unsure or disagreed with the statement.

8.1 Biographical data

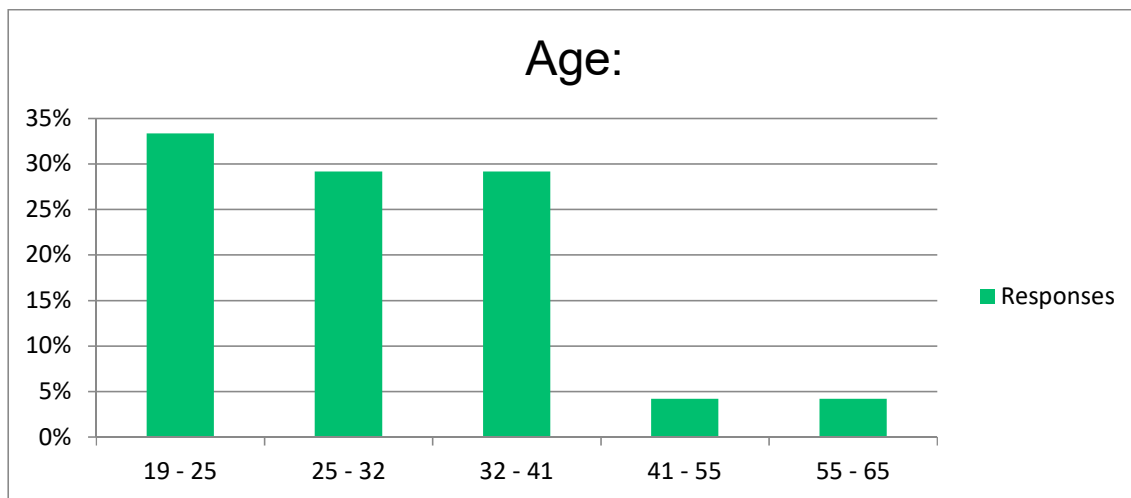


Figure 2: Age

Figure 2 indicates that 33.33% of the respondents are in the age category of 19-25 years and 29.17% are in the age category of 25-32 years. 29.17% of respondents represented the age category of 32-41, 4.17% were in the 41-55 age group, and 4.17% of the respondents were in the age category of 55-65.

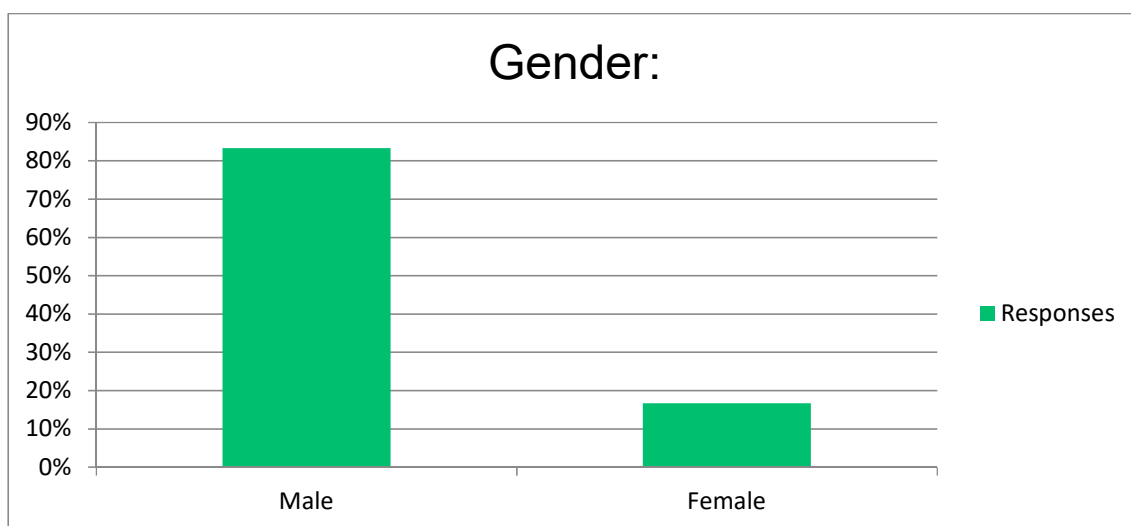


Figure 3: Gender

83.33% of the respondents were male and 16.67% were female.

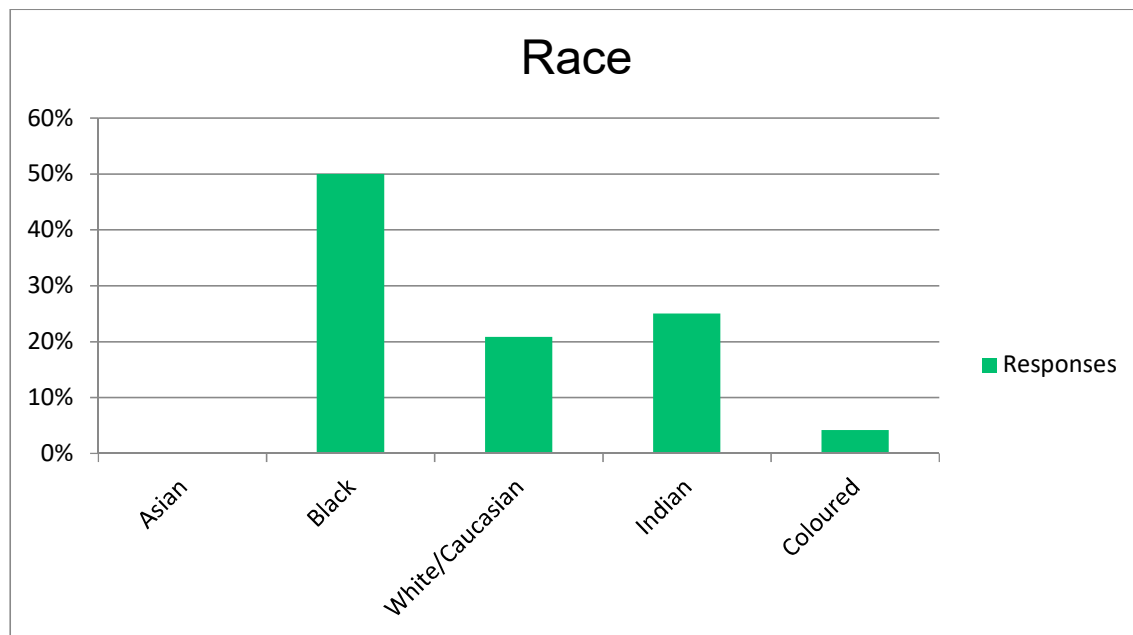


Figure 4: Race

Figure 4 shows that 0% of the respondents were Asian. 50% of the respondents are Black. 20.83% represents the number of White/Caucasian respondents. 25% of respondents identified as Indian and 4.17% as Coloured. Black students seem to be the highest consumers of the service offered by the college.

It has been noted that not all first-year students are straight out of high school as the survey had proven majority of students are above 25 years of age and are therefore mature enough to realise that the transition from school to college is not an easy one. All students' details are available to advisers via CRM (customer relationship management) and therefore all interactions are tailored according to the students' particulars (like their age, for example). The findings indicated that the AAC are doing well with addressing complaints received from students as 64% agreed with this statement.

It should be noted that 62.5% of respondents agreed that the advisers ensure the USB study material has been received and is in order. The results also show that the constant reminders provided by advisers (for assessment dates and cut-off dates) are of value as 48% of the respondents agreed with this statement.

9. Recommendations

One of the main obstacles faced by an adviser is not having the correct or up-to-date contact details for the student. This proves to be a huge problem as many of the students are not contacted. It is recommended that student contact details on CRM be constantly updated so that advisers have current information readily.

To address any further complaints received from students, an online platform could be put in place where students could voice their concerns and have these dealt with timeously. The sales and marketing department must make aware that an adviser will call to ensure the receipt of their study material. This can be communicated during the welcome call and those students who do not answer their phones can be sent an email requesting that they contact their adviser to let them know that the study material has been received.

The college needs to maintain constant communication with students about their assessment dates. This could either be in the form of email or SMS. The sale reps should introduce the AAC during their calls or send an email with the AAC's services in mind at the end of each call. A detailed description of the kind of assistance the AAC gives to all students should be placed on the college website, for easy access.

At a marketing level, the AAC is insufficiently advertised to prospective students - the first time a student hears about the AAC is when the welcome call is carried out. When the college has made no mention of the AAC previously, this is highly confusing for the student. When a student or the parents of a student go out to research a college to enroll with, the free service of the AAC should be one of the first things they notice. Not unlike the orientation guide for the face-to-face brands, which has page describing the AAC, there should be an AAC symbol on the home page of the college website as well as a tab which provides more information about the new free service. Publicity is needed before the student enrolls and is needed at the instant a student is searching for a college to join.

9. Conclusion

This research found that the AAC provides a necessary contact between the college and its students. For distance students, this contact helps to alleviate the isolation sometimes felt.

The AAC is an extra support service and an adviser is the go-to person when it comes to the needs of the student, whether this entails addressing academic or administrative queries. The results of the survey assure that the student would be assisted timeously.

Each adviser is well versed in the course they advise on, and for distance learners, this extra support is welcome and well needed. If this extra service is marketed correctly, it could bring in more enrolments at the institution.

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The Economics and Imperatives of Renewable Energy: Impact on South Africa's Competitiveness

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This study analyses the impact of Renewable Energy (RE) on South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP), social welfare, global trade and employment in South Africa. Government commitment to developing Renewable Energy Technologies (RETs) will result in a more sustainable energy supply for the economy. The study highlights the broader macro-economic benefits of deploying renewable energy – namely wind, solar and bioenergy – both for on and off grid supply.

This study also identifies the major challenges that in the implementation of RE in South Africa and offers some solutions to these steep initial costs and the investment needed to develop new skills are major challenges to the implementation of RET. However, it is important to note that these costs can easily be offset – renewable energy technologies (RETs) have lower running costs than other forms of electricity generation.

The study concludes that the deployment of renewable energies will greatly benefit South Africa. However, shortcomings were identified in terms of the implementation of renewable energy. There is therefore a need for the government to come up with a higher target and accelerate the implementation programmes.

Keywords: *Renewable Energy Technologies (RET), Gross Domestic Product; Employment; Social Welfare, Photo-voltaic.*

1. Introduction

Currently, a third of South Africa's population does not have energy access, and those that do have access often cannot afford it. According to Mulcahy (2014), the South African government is attempting to meet the electricity demands of a growing industrial sector, along with creating universal electrification

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA, 2016) notes that:

“The energy sector influences the vibrancy and sustainability of the entire economy – from job creation to resource efficiency and the environment. Major shifts in the sector can have a strong ripple effect throughout the economy as evidenced in Japan following the 2011 earthquake, or by the recent volatility in oil prices. Making the energy supply more cost effective, reliable, secure and environmentally sustainable thus contributes to the long-term resilience of economic development”.

1.1 Problem Statement

South Africa's economy has been affected by energy problems relating to its supply and cost. Most of the time, demand has been outstripped by supply, resulting in loadshedding being implemented in most places. This has had a disruptive impact on the production capability of the country. This builds a strong case for finding alternative sources of electricity which are cheaper and sustainable.

This research investigates and quantifies the impact of renewable energy on South Africa's economy. The research will adopt a two-pronged analysis that is global and has a local impact.

1.2 Research Objectives

The research aims to analyse the impact of RE on South Africa's macroeconomic variables: gross domestic product (GDP), employment (jobs), welfare (social-economic impact), and international trade.

1.3 Significance of the Research

This research is significant in that it may inform policy implementers of the importance of RE in their constituencies. It can assist them further by explaining how to develop a relevant policy framework to support RE. The research will inform players in the RE field of the opportunities that are available in the RE sectors both globally and locally.

1.4 Research Questions

- What is impact of RE on the GDP?
- What are the socio-economic impacts of the implementation of RE?
- How can RE reduce unemployment?
- What trade opportunities can be harnessed via RE?
- What are the barriers to RE?

1.4.1 Research Scope

The research will focus on the major components of RE: solar, wind and bio-energy.

2. Literature Review

The World Bank (2004) notes that 30% of the population in South Africa have no direct access to electricity. Gets and Mhlanga (2013) further argue that in addition to problems associated with the provision of electricity, access to energy has further been hampered by issues of affordability. A lack of access to energy is linked to poverty, hunger, and limited access to water and the delivery of education and health (Gets and Mhlanga, 2013).

According to the South African Industrial Policy Action Plan, although South Africa has witnessed significant economic growth, the New Growth Plan of 2010 points out that this growth has not translated into employment benefits with the economy (DTI, 2011). There is therefore a need to come up with sustainable energy production processes. According to Sadorsky (2009), there is a positive correlation between real per capita income and per capita renewable energy consumption.

2.1 Renewable Energy Case for South Africa

South Africa is well endowed with RE. It is best placed to use and implement thermal solar power, concentrated solar power, photovoltaic energy, wind energy, and biomass energy.

2.2 Renewable Energy and its Impact on GDP

The studies that were carried by IRENA (2016) concluded that the deployment of RE will result in an increase of the GDP. If the use of RE is doubled by 2030, then the global GDP will increase by between 0.6% and 1.1%. In dollar terms, this amounts to anything between a staggering USD706 billion and USD1.3 trillion using 2015 as a base year. IRENA (2016) points out that Japan is best placed to benefit from the use of RE. Its GDP is forecasted to increase by 2.3%, while South Africa is set to have a growth rate of 1%.

It is beyond dispute that the substitution of fossil-based energies will result in a decline in the economic performance of those countries whose income is largely derived from fossil fuels – countries like Venezuela, Russia, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, IRENA (2016) notes, will have reduced exports in the long run.

The following sections of this paper discuss the major drivers of GDP growth.

2.2.1 Energy Sector Investments

The deployment of renewable energy is capital intensive at the start of the project. However, IRENA (2016) notes that the running costs of renewable energy plants are significantly lower than other sources of energy generation. This is because the plants require physical assets to kickstart their operations. This resonates with the views that have been raised about South Africa's ability to raise the required capital for RE.

The affordability of RE investments as compared to fossil and nuclear technologies have been brought to the fore. However, the most compelling case for the implementation of RE is the cheap-to-zero running cost of the project. The misplaced concern that South Africa cannot afford renewable energy technologies (RETs) emanates from a misunderstanding of the basic functionality of the technologies. It is beyond dispute that fossils and nuclear energies are cheap, the major challenge emanates from the running costs and the life cycle which favours RETs.

What makes RE more favourable is the fact that RE does not exert externals as cost compared to nuclear and coal plants. The costs of renewable energy plants are falling compared to other sources. Invariably, the demand for energy has been increasing and there is need to scale up

infrastructure investments in the sector. However, the bias of the investments in the energy sector must lean towards RE.

2.3 Renewable Energy's Impact on Welfare

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA, 2011) notes that energy production accounts for 83% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These emissions are mainly driven by fossil sources of power like coal and nuclear energy. Adam et al. (2011) notes, for instance, that South Africa's Vaalputs and Namaqualand regions are nuclear wastelands. This bears many consequences to the local people. GHG emissions have a great bearing on global warming and have resulted in the volatile weather patterns that have been experienced globally in recent years. Major results of global warming have been intermittent droughts, reduced agricultural yields, and persistent droughts. South Africa has become more susceptible to floods, especially areas like KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape

Given the above argument, it is imperative that the energy mix maximise social welfare. It is beyond dispute that GDP does not adequately measure the impact of economic activities on the ultimate welfare of the citizens. According to Daly and Cobb (1989), sustainable energy is important in placing the economy on a developmental trajectory.

The International Energy Agency and World Bank (2015) note that energy access plays an important role in analysing welfare. Access to reliable, cost effective and environmentally sustainable energy can have a multiplier effect on development. It results in reduced ill-health effects, improved livelihoods, poverty alleviation, job creation, gender equality and enhanced access to water and food. This crosscutting impact of energy is at the centre of the global discourse on the Sustainable Development Goals. Globally, there are nearly 1.1 billion people who lack access to electricity and nearly 2.6 billion who rely on traditional biomass for heating.

A study by Bose et al. (2013) determined that lack of energy result in poverty. This study focused on the rural communities in Southeast Asia, where poverty is widespread due to lack of access to energy. There are great variations in costs and benefits which cannot be generalised.

2.4 Renewable Energy and Employment

There has been a decline in the levels of employment in the energy sector. This has been attributed to increased efficiency and new technologies. However, the harnessing of RETs is going to change this trend. This is because RETs are going to afford a new impetus for the electricity sector.

The World Bank (2012) points out that employment creation is instrumental in the redistribution of income and the attainment of socio-economic development. Jobs are major drivers in poverty eradication it. The creation of jobs is therefore high on the agenda of most governments. The global economy must create 280 million jobs by 2019 (International Labour Organisation, 2015).

Globally, the energy sector has played the dual role of fuelling economy-wide development and supporting a large number of jobs (World Economic Forum, 2012). AGAMA Energy (/2003) notes that the deployment of renewable energy will positively impact the employment levels in the energy sector.

2.5 Impact of RE on Global Trade

The World Trade Organisation (2015), notes that international trade is beneficial to countries that are involved in it. Over the past two decades, the level of trade has quadrupled from USD 6.3 trillion to USD 23.4 trillion in 2014. The share of exports have gone up from 20% in 1995 to 30% in 2014 (IRENA, 2016:45). Fuel exports over the same period have grown exponentially by an average of 12% annually (IRENA, 2016:45).

IRENA (2016:11) notes that the deployment of RE will tilt the trade scales for many countries. Most of the impact will be on renewable energy equipment and depleted fuels. Trade in RE equipment will scale up as most nations engage in the purchase of RE-related equipment. The impact is assessed by looking the trade balances of different countries. Countries that are poised to benefit most are the net fossil fuel importers.

Various benefits arise from the use of RE. These include the following:

- Substitution of imported energy sources in favour of indigenous sources, which are cheaper and more readily available.
- Local energy production will result in increased energy security. Many countries in the Sub-Saharan region rely on imported energy.
- The availability of electricity will enable countries to meet the growing demand for various goods and services. The demand for energy will also go up.

The same is not true for countries that are net exporters of fossil fuels. The impact will obviously vary with the proportion of the exports from the country. IRENA (2016:49) recommend that fuel exporters gradually reduce their fossil fuel exports. This will minimise the risk that is associated with the energy transition.

2.6 Barriers to the Renewable Energy Roll-Out

The uptake to renewable energy in South Africa has been slow. There are four factors that have been identified as major hindrances to the effective implementation of RE in the country. These are outlined below.

2.6.1 Political

Amerasinghe (2011) argue that South Africa's addiction to coal is underpinned by political vested interests in the fossil and mineral sector. This is also hamstrung by the proportion of the fossil fuel industry's contribution to the overall economy. Global lobbying by global coal producers have not helped matters. Appropriate skills have not been harnessed to propel the RE requirements. According to the Department of Energy, the IRP 2010 sets out 17.8 GW of renewable energy by 2030. It very sad to note that only 3,725MW have been approved by 2015 under the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme (REIPPPP and dubbed "REBID").

2.6.2 Legislative

A strong legislative framework that will support the industry needs to be put in place to enable the country to attract investment into the sector. Currently, some of the legislative processes are very cumbersome and hinder the proper flow of projects with the industry. Reformation of the legislature is needed to facilitate an increased uptake of small- and medium-sized projects. The prohibitive costs and bureaucratic processes of the REIPPPP makes it difficult for small-to-medium producers to enter into the RE (Stromsta, 2012).

2.6.3 Economic and Financial

Koplow and Kretzmann (2010) note that about US\$8 billion have been parceled out as subsidies to coal producers. This has created an uneven playing field that gives rise to a substantial economic barrier to RE projects. Foster-Pedley and Hertzog (2006) cite the high entry cost of RE as the main barrier to entry. This then gives rise to risk avoidance behaviour by potential investors. According to the DEA (2011), early project risk sharing is an important risk mitigating measure. This can be done through a feed-in tariff system (FITS). This will ensure that the operators are paid a fixed price for every kWh of electricity that they feed into the grid. The South African government must enact laws that will enable the use of clean energy as opposed to the unclean energy that is currently favoured by the current scenario.

2.6.4 Renewable Industry Development and the Grid

Gets and Mhlanga (2013) point out that the two main limitations of RE implementation are a lack of expertise and grid development.

3. Research Methodology

According to Plooy (2013), research methodology is mainly concerned with the scientific merit of applying a research design.

3.1 Research Design

The research utilised qualitative research methods. The utilisation of this methodology was best suited for the study because the quantitative method enables the researcher to look at the statistics and figures that are generated by the research (Bryman and Bell, 2013:334).

3.2 Data Collection

Sanders and Lee (2014:46) note that data collection is important in the integration of theory and reality. This therefore calls for innovation in the instrumentation and collection of data. Data collection is important to establish a link between the theory and the real world. This research was based on secondary data based on online research and statistics.

3.3 Reliability, Validity, and Data Analysis

Bryman and Bell (2007) explain that reliability refers to how well the results of a test can be replicated under similar circumstances. The research undertook to ensure that biases and personal opinions would not affect the research results.

Mouton (2001:108) asserts that data analysis entails breaking up the data into manageable patterns, themes, connections and trends. This allows one to understand the various constitutive elements of the data through an inspection of the relationship between concepts and constructs to evaluate trends that can be identified or isolated.

The researcher applied two models in measuring the impact of renewable energy on macro-economic fundamentals. The first measure applied the production economics assumption that was used by Fang (2011).

4. Key Research Findings

South Africa is confronted by a genuine problem of increasing energy demand due to population expansion and increased production needs. This calls for immediate action; the failure of which will have a negative impact on the socio-economic performance of the country.

4.1 Summary of Findings

4.1.1 Government Commitment

Government must have an unquestionable commitment to the implementation of RE. The government must come up with tangible goals. These are crucial in reinforcing investor confidence. This must be backed by well-defined policies and legal frameworks.

4.1.2 Deployment Policies

The government must come up with effective deployment policies. This includes the implementation of the feed-in-tariff system, net metering, auctions, and fiscal incentives.

4.1.3 A System-Level Policy

RE is important in the reshaping and redefining the ownership structures in the energy sector. IRENA (2016) notes that all levels of society are likely to benefit from the judicious implementation of RETs.

4.1.3.1 Skills Development

One of the major hindrances to the successful deployment of RE in South Africa is the lack of adequate skills to roll out RE projects. This requires systematic access across all layers of society to education and training in relevant fields, including engineering, economics, science, environmental management, finance, business, and commerce. Professional training, as well as school or university curricula must evolve adequately to cover renewable energy, sustainability, and climate change.

Table 4.1

Technology	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Total Jobs
Solar Thermal	8,288	24,864	33,152
Solar PV	2,475	7,425	9,900
Wind	22,400	67,200	89,600
Bio Mass	1,308	3,924	5,232
Landfill	1,902	5,706	7,608
RETs Sub-Total	36,373	10,919	145,492
Biogas	1,150	2,850	400
SWH	118,400	236,800	355,200
Bio Fuel	350,000	350,000	700,000
Other Sub-Totals	469,550	589,650	1,059,200
Total	505,923	698,769	1,204,692

As indicated by Table 4.1, the deployment of RE will have a positive impact on employment.

4.2 Recommendations

In order to harness the full potential of renewable energy, the government must create an enabling environment for RE. This includes coming up with incentives to attract inward investment in the sector, especially institutional investments. The government have been subsidising coal and nuclear energy production. It is time that resources be channelled towards renewable energy. There is also a need for a clear legislative framework. RE projects must be given priority in terms of the allocation of funds. The success of the sector depends on the development of the right skills. This means that academic institutions must come up with courses that will impart the necessary skills to utilise the technology.

5. Conclusion

This paper extended the ideas and findings of IRENA on the global impacts of doubling the deployment of RE. These finding were then extrapolated and applied to the South African case. The results indicate a long-run positive relationship between real GDP or real GDP per capita, total renewable energy consumption or share of total renewable energy consumption, real gross fixed capital formation and the employment of the countries. The estimations indicate that a 1% increase of renewable energy consumption will increase GDP by 0.022% and GDP per capita by 0.033%, while a 1% increase of the share of renewable energy to the energy mix of the countries will increase GDP by 0.019% and GDP per capita by 0.027% (Inglesi-Lotz, 2013).

The findings present a compelling case to move to RE as the benefits exceed the traditional viewed environmental issues but the benefit can be quantified in macro-economic models. The governments must therefore come up with enabling policies for RE investments.

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Building Trust between Academic Advisers and Students in the Academic Advising Centre at a Private Higher Education Institution**Menzi Masengeni (Educor)**menzimasengeni@gmail.com

In any academic institution, the aim is to see students graduate within the stipulated duration of the course. To achieve this goal, a professional trust relationship between students and academic advisers should exist. “Time and time again, research has demonstrated one of the most significant contributors to success and retention in college is the establishment of positive relationships between students and college faculty and/or staff (Nutt, 2003)” (McClellan, 2014). Therefore, this article investigates how a relationship of trust between students and academic advisers can be developed at a private higher education institution. The study followed a quantitative approach and questionnaires were utilised as a data collection method. SurveyMonkey was used to analyse the data collected. The findings of this study indicated that trust is critical in building a meaningful relationship with students and that the establishment of trust between academic advisers and students leads to the creation of an environment where students can openly talk to advisers about their academic challenges without any fear that the advisers may hold the college’s interests above their own. The results revealed that the adviser-advisee relationship is built on a foundation of respect, care, and honesty, and that competence in the sharing of knowledge is essential in the development of a holistic relationship of trust which promotes student success.

Keywords: *trust relationship, academic adviser, students, academic challenges, student success, Academic Advising Centre (AAC).*

1.1 Introduction

In the article, “Could Academic Advising Fix Higher Education?”, Hunter and White (2004:21) assert that well-developed and well-structured academic advising that aims at building trust is “perhaps the only structured campus endeavour that can guarantee students’ sustained interaction with a caring and concerned adult who can help them shape a meaningful learning experience for themselves”. According to Pascarella and Terenzini (2005:522), the interaction between students and academic advisers plays a pivotal role in students’ overall academic experience. However, students tend to take such interaction for granted and not take full advantage of having an adviser who is willing to offer academic support.

Scholars in the academic advising have emphasised the need to define academic advising. Academic advising can be described as continuous academic engagement that takes place between students and advisers (Himes, 2014; Schulenberg and Lindhorst, 2008). In academic advising, engagement between the adviser and student is critical for student success. However, such engagement cannot happen effectively until a relationship of trust is built between the student and the adviser. Trust between academic advisers and students in the advising relationship is facilitated through mutual respect, the academic adviser’s knowledge of the subject the adviser teaches, and the honesty of the academic adviser about the student’s academic performance.

The aim of any academic institution is to provide support for students and to help students finish their academic programmes within the stipulated period. However, in academic advising, the aim is much broader than simply supporting students in passing at the end of each year. The emphasis is rather on building an environment for students to be able to reach their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. According Pargett (2011:8), “the goal in advising is not to increase or decrease a particular rate, such as decreasing the dropout rate and increasing graduation rate; rather, the goal in advising is to create a relationship with the student so that the student is getting the most out of their education.” Therefore, building trust is critical to the academic advising relationship.

This article focuses on exploring ways to build a relationship of trust between students and academic advisers at a private higher education institution. In so doing, the article will address the following questions.

- What is trust?
- What is the role of trust in advising?
- How can a relationship of trust be developed in academic advising?

1.2 Problem Statement

The purpose of academic advising is to reach out to students, to create a continuous relationship with students, and to provide them with expert academic advice. Academic advising is more than just advising on tests, assignments, and exams. Advising is about building relationships for student success, both academically and professionally.

According to McClellan (2014), effective advising requires trust between advisers and students. Global literature has further asserted that effective trust relationships between students and academic advisers are critical to students staying at the institution until they graduate (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005:404). A student's intention to stay or leave the institution, or even talk openly about his or her academic challenges, is largely influenced by the trust the student has in his or her academic adviser.

Establishing a relationship of trust between academic advisers and students can lead to the creation of an environment where students can openly talk to their advisers about their academic challenges without any fear that the advisers hold the college's interests above their own. According to McClellan (2014), "Once advisers establish trust, a foundation for supportive interaction emerges that improves the willingness of students to converse openly about challenges they face, as well as personal and professional goals."

The challenge which led to this study, was poor engagement between academic advisers and students at a private higher education institution. As an academic adviser at an institution of private higher education, I have experienced many situations where students do not want to engage with me about their academic challenges. This is perhaps because the concept of academic advising was still new to students, and worse, the engagements I had with the students took place telephonically. This made it difficult to assist and support the students academically.

It is worth mentioning that when the Academic Advising Centre in question first opened its doors in December 2015, it was the first of its kind in South Africa. The students still had doubts about academic advising as the AAC was still new to them. As a result of this, students were reluctant to share their academic challenges with their academic advisers. Questions such as, “Who are these people called academic advisers?”, “Why do they want to help us?”, “Can they actually help us?” still play in minds of many students.

1.3 Research Objectives

- To investigate ways to build trust between advisers and students.
- To provide recommendations on how academic advisers should build relationships of trust with their students to improve student engagement.

1.4 Research Questions

- What is trust in academic in advising?
- What is the role of trust in academic advising?
- How can trust be developed?

2. Literature Review

In academic advising, the engagement between the student and the academic adviser plays a critical role in the student’s academic success. However, for this engagement to be effective, a meaningful relationship of trust must exist between the student and the adviser. According to Pargett (2011:2), continued interactions between the adviser and the student offer opportunities for students to raise any academic challenges they may be experiencing. These interactions do not end with academic support, however; advisers also play a role in the student’s career development and offer them emotional support.

The interactions between the advisers and students are conducted on a one-on-one basis and take place across the duration of the programme for which the student has registered. Although students interact with various academic staff (e.g. lecturers and tutors), academic advising remain critical because of its nature of providing personalised academic support.

This section aims at exploring literature which examines the definition of trust, the role of trust in academic advising, ways of developing trust in academic advising, and approaches to academic advising.

2.1 Trust

According to Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995: 712), “trust can be described as a willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party”. In other words, trust is the belief a person has in another person. In any relationship, is critical for several reasons. Firstly, trust allows parties to interact openly without any fear of being betrayed. Trust manages expectations, minimises conflicts and misunderstandings, and creates an environment that promotes win-win situations.

Trust is an essential requirement for the effective management of all relationships between groups, individuals, organisations and communities. According to Joe Paterno, “Whether you're on a sports team, in an office or a family, if you can't trust one another there's going to be trouble” (Covey, 2006:11). According to Clark and Mills (1979), as cited by Kelman (2005: 640), in exchanges and communal relationships, trust play a central role in harmonising the interactions between the parties. In exchange relationships, such as the adviser-advisee relationship, trust is something that does not happen automatically. It is built and tested over time. In a communal relationship (like marriage), trust is implicitly given (Kelman, 2005:640).

2.2 Role of Trust in Advising

Numerous scholars and practitioners (such as Sankar [2003], Vasher [2010], Spencer-Oatey [2005] and Pargett [2011]) have repeatedly asserted that the establishment of trust between students and advisers is one of the most significant contributors to student retention and to the academic success of students.

In an advising session, the academic adviser aims to assist and guide the student. To do so, advisers need to establish trust by demonstrating trustworthy behaviours. According to Fielstein (1994), as cited by McClellan (2014), meaningful academic engagement between the student and an academic adviser can occur if academic adviser proves to be academically knowledgeable and trustworthy. Therefore, in all advising settings, advisers should demonstrate competence and communicate trustworthiness to earn trust.

2.3 Developing Trust in Academic Advising

Trust between the adviser and the student is not a given; it must be developed over time. According to O'Banion (2003), in building a relationship of mutual trust, advisers must extend trust to students and earn the trust of students through their own trustworthy behaviour. In academic advising, building trust depends entirely on how the academic adviser conducts him/herself during interactions with the students (Sankar, 2003).

There are three characters an academic adviser brings to any academic advising session. Firstly, the adviser brings his or her personality. Secondly, the adviser brings pedagogical skills, and thirdly, the adviser brings his or her subject matter knowledge. The combination of these attributes plays a critical role in building trust. If, for example, students realise that the adviser does not know what they are teaching, their trust in the adviser is lost forever. Students will not speak openly about their academic challenges with an incompetent adviser.

In addition to competence and character, there are other trust-building behaviours that academic advisers should master in order to build a relationship of trust with students. According to McClellan (2014), "If advisers wish to demonstrate both forms of integrity, they must strive to (1) understand other's values and (2) demonstrate respect while clarifying and communicating their own values and striving to live in accordance with them." Academic advisers play a critical role in building trust relationships with students. The adviser must understand different students' values and behaviours in order to offer the appropriate support. It is a role of an academic adviser to demonstrate acceptance of these values in to build trust in their relationships with the students.

In the study conducted by Bernthal and Lewicki (2006), as cited by McClellan (2014), the following five behaviours were considered most important in building trust:

- Honestly without distorting information;
- Keeping promises;
- Treating others as skilled, competent associates;
- Listening to and valuing what others think, whether one agrees or disagrees;
- Performing tasks and following through with planned activities.

The above behaviours may be integrated into the advising process to build a relationship of trust with students.

McClellan (2014) explains that “the advising process consists of a series of phases that occur in both a linear and nonlinear fashion. These include preparation, welcome, rapport building, exploration and clarification, guiding students, wrapping up, and following up (McClellan and Moser, 2011; NACADA, 2006b)”.

2.3.1 Preparation

Preparation may be defined as the “anticipation of a future event, where preparation helps to make something ready to be utilized” (The Law Dictionary, 2019). Preparation plays a critical role in the success of any endeavours. In academic advising, preparation must occur before the adviser meets with the student. During the preparation stage, the adviser gets to evaluate what was done in the previous session with the student - what worked and what didn't work. Furthermore, the adviser gets to know where student is in terms of his or her academic development and plan appropriately for areas that need attention in the student's academic development. According to McClellan (2014), during the preparation stage, an adviser must demonstrate a high level of competence in identifying areas of concern in the student's development and come up with appropriate intervention plans.

2.3.2 Initial Contact (Welcome)

In any initial contact between two people who have never meet before, trust is always weak. Therefore, the first interaction between a student and an adviser is a critical first step in building trust. How an adviser welcomes the student to the AAC, how the adviser explains to the student what AAC the adviser is about, and how the adviser breaks down how the advising sessions will be conducted is critical in establishing the student's trust. According to McClellan (2005), “researchers have demonstrated that lasting impressions of others are typically established within the first few seconds of interaction”. Therefore, the first interaction between the adviser and the student is critical in informing their future interactions and engagements.

2.3.3 Establishing Rapport

According to Spencer-Oatey (2005), rapport may be described as the “relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people”. In academic advising, building rapport with the student plays a critical role in harmonising future interactions. Building rapport differs from adviser to adviser. Some advisers prefer to talk about their own past academic challenges so that the student feels comfortable to share their academic challenges. Other advisers prefer asking students questions that will prompt discussion. As McClellan (2005) explains,

“Regardless of the approach, rapport building represents an essential component of all advising interaction and is a critical element of trust building”.

The purpose of building rapport in academic advising is to create an environment where the student feels comfortable to share his or her academic challenges with an adviser without any fear. Building rapport helps advisers to be seen by students as people who care and who have their best interests at heart.

2.3.4 Guiding Students

During the guidance stage, it is critical for an adviser to understand the needs, concerns, and expectations of students. Upon understanding such factors, the adviser can effectively begin advising the student (McClellan, 2014).

There are a multitude of approaches to advising. The adviser can choose either developmental advising, prescriptive advising, or teaching as advising to guide the student (McClellan, 2014). The technique or advising approach used, however, is not as important as building trust with the student.

2.3.5 Follow Up

In academic advising, following up with the student plays a big role in demonstrating care for the student. Consider a teacher who gives students homework and does not ask for it the following day. Clearly this teacher does not care whether students have completed the assignment or not. The purpose of making appointments for follow ups in academic advising is to show sense of care and to find out where students are struggling. According to McClellan (2005), keeping appointments, returning calls and emails promptly, and honouring office hours is another way of showing care for the student and building trust for future interactions.

2.3.6 Respect

Everyone wishes to be treated with respect, and absolutely everyone dislikes when others exhibit disrespect. But what does the word *respect* mean? According to Pavlina (2017), the simplest definition for respect is to have due regard for another person.

Respect is the cornerstone of every relationship; without respect, it is not possible to build a trusting relationship (Vasher, 2010). Advisors can exhibit care for students by respecting them (Vasher, 2010). This respect must be demonstrated right from the beginning of the appointment when meeting students in the waiting room. This can be exhibited by shaking their hand and thanking them for coming to the meeting (Vasher, 2010). Respect must be demonstrated even during the busiest time of the year, when the adviser is inundated with emails, forms, and administrative tasks (Vasher, 2010). Respect and care for the student must always take centre stage.

In academic advising respect is a two-way street. Respect is expected from the student and it is also expected from the adviser. The adviser is expected to respect the students by ensuring that they come to the academic session prepared and always show care for the student. The student is expected to be on time for their sessions with the adviser and to have completed the work that has been given to them. Respect in academic advising plays a critical role in ensuring the relationship between the student and the adviser remains conducive to academic engagement.

2.3.7 Maintaining the Relationship

The final stage of the advising process involves keeping the advising relationship going. Maintaining an academic advising relationship refers to all actions taken by an adviser that show concern and care for the student. This includes regular communication from the adviser during the course of the student's programme. Advisors need to communicate with students on a regular basis to maintain the relationship (UL Grad School, 2019). This may include sending emails at the beginning of every academic week to remind the student about the learning units to be covered and identifying areas of the learning unit that they may find challenging. These small remainders play a critical role in demonstrating to the student that the adviser cares about their academic wellbeing

2.3.8 Honest and Straight Talk

"Straight talk" means being honest and direct. In any relationship, honesty and integrity play a central role in ensuring all parties in the relationship continue to interact (Vasher, 2009). In academic advising, honesty plays a big role, especially when the academic adviser provides feedback to the student.

According to Vasher (2009), advisers are required to be honest whenever the adviser deals with a student. The feedback supplied to students should demonstrate the true reflection of where student is academically and the areas that require improvement. Being honest does not mean being rude or too critical; rather, it is about being direct and honest about what the student needs to do to improve their academic performance. As Vasher (2009) explains, honesty and integrity are key to organising and maintaining trust in relationships. Advisers must be sincere about the student's overall performance. Being trustworthy and direct to students does not mean berating the student for their mistakes but being straightforward about what students need to do in order to be successful in future.

2.3.9 Active Communication

In academic advising, active communication involves maintaining regular follow ups with the student. As previously mentioned, academic advisors should make regular contact with students to discuss their academic progress. Academic advising evolves through a manner of exploration and discovery. It requires energetic communication between the adviser and advisee. When possible, advisors should make appointments with students to discuss their performance, challenges they might have faced, and choice of subject, etc. Advisers should engage in the advising relationships by asking open-ended questions and listening attentively.

In Ohrt's study (2016), an interview was conducted at a mid-Atlantic university. The interview examined three students' experiences with their academic advisers. Each interview took approximately forty-five minutes and discussed each student's interaction with their advisers. One participant said he used to be unwilling to open himself up to a relationship with his adviser because he believed the advisers held the department's interests above his own. The two other students said that they found their engagement with their tutorial advisers to be beneficial, despite the negative stories they had heard about the advisers when they first arrived at the campus. Ohrt (2016) determined that "despite a campus culture of distrust of advising at this mid-Atlantic university, all of the interviewees were exposed to positive interactions with academic advisers and were able to establish trusting relationships with them".

2.4 Approaches to Advising

There are multiple approaches to academic advising. This paper will focus on three of these approaches: the advising as teaching approach, the development approach, and the prescriptive approach.

2.4.1 Prescriptive Approach

The prescriptive approach of advising is authoritative in nature. The student asks questions and the adviser provides answers. This approach works well for first year students as they are in the early stage stages of becoming self-directed students. According to Brown and Rivers (1994), as cited by Ohrt (2016), “prescriptive advising can help advisers establish trust and is imperative in building effective relationships with first-generation students.” As students mature and become more self-directed, they grow to appreciate a developmental approach to advising.

2.4.2 Developmental Approach

Developmental advising is more of a partnership between the student and the adviser (Baker and Griffin, 2010:5). In this approach, an adviser encourages active learning by allowing the student to take part in the learning process rather being spoon-fed answers (Baker and Griffin, 2010:5). The premise of developmental advising is that the student must be an independent learner, meaning the student has a duty and responsibility to find answers themselves and demonstrate how they arrived at them (Pargett, 2011:12). The adviser gives prompt feedback on student performance and gives the student the opportunity to identify their weakness and strengths (Pargett, 2011:12). Developmental advising moves towards a two-way relationship between the adviser and advisee.

2.4.3 Advising as Teaching Approach

Ryan (1992) explains that the assumption that advising is teaching is hardly new. According Lowenstein (2005), the advising as teaching approach was first entered into the advising vocabulary as a part of the title of a seminal article by Crookston (1972). Crookston (1972) argued that during teaching and advising, the teacher or authority ought to play the role of a supporter of learning by helping students to develop problem-solving and decision-making skills (Ryan, 1992).

The advising as teaching model encourages students to be self-directed learners, meaning that students are encouraged to actively engage in the learning process. This model shares some similarities with developmental advising; however, the developmental approach takes advising as teaching one step further. According to Baker and Griffin (2010), while advising as teaching focuses on providing a caring, personal relationship by demonstrating a positive attitude toward the student, developmental advising focuses on enhancing student learning.

Advising approaches play a critical role in building relationships with students and in the student's overall satisfaction. The approach used differs depending on the student's expectations. Students might solely want to be advised on their course structure. Others might need to be contacted on weekly basis, be asked how things are as they approach tests and assignments, and may use the adviser as a resource for educational and career matters (Anderson, Motto and Bourdeaux, 2014: 37). Whether students expect a developmental or prescriptive approach to their advising, advisers need to demonstrate a high level of knowledge in order to earn trust and build relationships with the students.

3. Research Methodology

This study investigated the ways of building relationships of trust between students and academic advisers. The study followed a quantitative approach, “a research paradigm within which objective knowledge are gathered and analysed numerically” (McMillan, and Schumacher, 2014:5). Rahman (2016) argues that the advantage of following the quantitative approach is that the study sample can be generalised to the total population or a sub-population. This helps to form a reliable study.

The target population for this study consisted of 60 academic advisers, including faculty heads and a centre manager, across five faculties - the Business, Creative, Technical, Information Technology (IT), and Education faculties. Questionnaires were used collect data. In an effort to improve the validity of the questionnaire, the questions were clearly worded. A Likert scale ranging from “agree”, “disagree”, and “neither agree or disagree” was applied to identify the respondents' perceptions about the statements in the questionnaire. The response rate to the questionnaires was 76%. The data collected from the participants was analysed using SurveyMonkey.

3.1 Elimination of Bias

“Bias is defined as any tendency which prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question” (Pannucci and Wilkins, 2011). In research, bias might result in the researcher deliberately or inadvertently favouring something or skewing the findings toward a certain direction (Pannucci and Wilkins, 2011). In this study, questions were thoughtfully displayed and delivered in a way that allowed participants to reveal their true feelings (Sarniak, 2015). Phrases related to age, race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and stereotypes were omitted. The questions were clearly worded, and acquiescence bias was avoided by replacing questions which may have implied

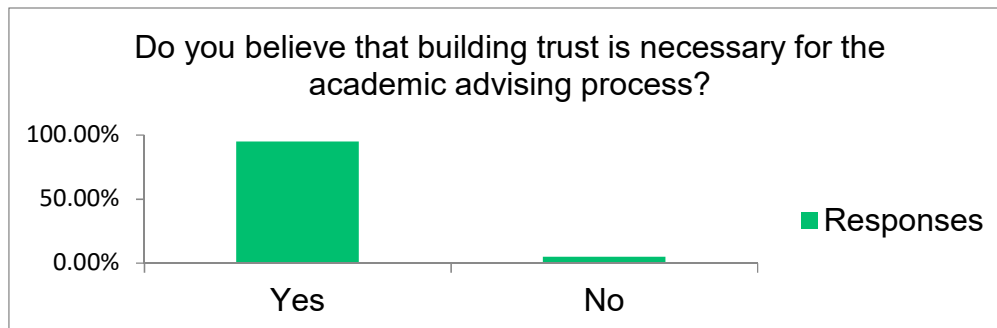
that a 'right answer' existed with ones that evaluated the respondents' true opinions (Sarniak, 2015). The researcher re-evaluated his impressions of the respondents and challenged pre-existing assumptions and hypotheses to avoid conformation bias (Sarniak, 2015).

4. Research Findings

The findings of this research study are intended to inform and guide the AAC and other stakeholders (e.g. academic departments on campus level, academic support services, retention services, student services and counselling services) on the development of trust between advisers and students and how this can enhance academic advising practices.

The findings of the study were gathered using a questionnaire. In analysing the research data, participants indicated that there is a need to build relationships of trust with students. As shown in Figure 1, 95% of respondents indicated that there is a need to build trust with students. This evidence supports the study by McClellan (2014) which found that meaningful adviser-advisee relationships are based on a foundation of trust.

Figure 1: Do you believe that building trust is necessary for the academic advising process?



As indicated in the figure above, a total of 95% of the participants agreed that building trust is necessary in the advising process. Only 5% of the participants disagreed with this statement. These results clearly indicate a need to build trusting relationships with students.

The results further indicated that advisers should work hard on being true to themselves rather than imitating others in their effort to influence students and earn their trust. Trust, according to most of the academic advisers, was the most significant element of the advising process - one necessary for establishing and sustaining advising relationships.

Figure 2: Do students fail to talk openly about their academic challenges with their advisers because they don't trust them?

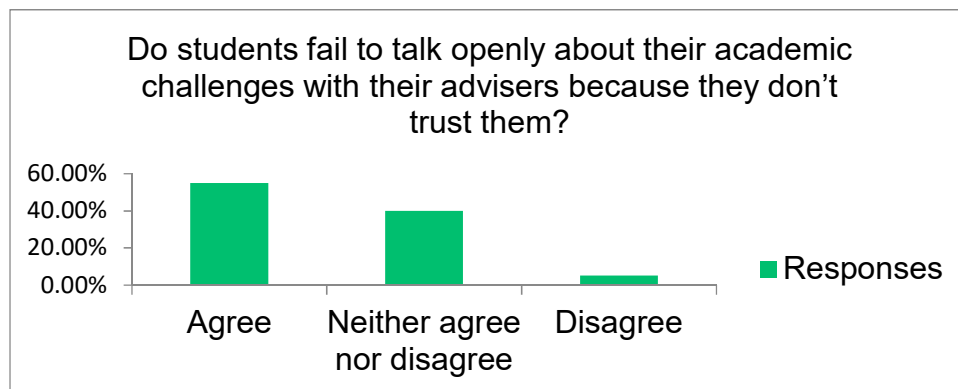


Figure 2 reveals that more than half of the respondents (55%) indicated that students fail to talk openly about their academic challenges because they do not trust their advisers. 5% of the respondents disagreed with this and 40% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. These results suggest that adviser-advisee relationships need to be strengthened.

Figure 3: If an adviser and advisee trust each other, communication can be effortless.

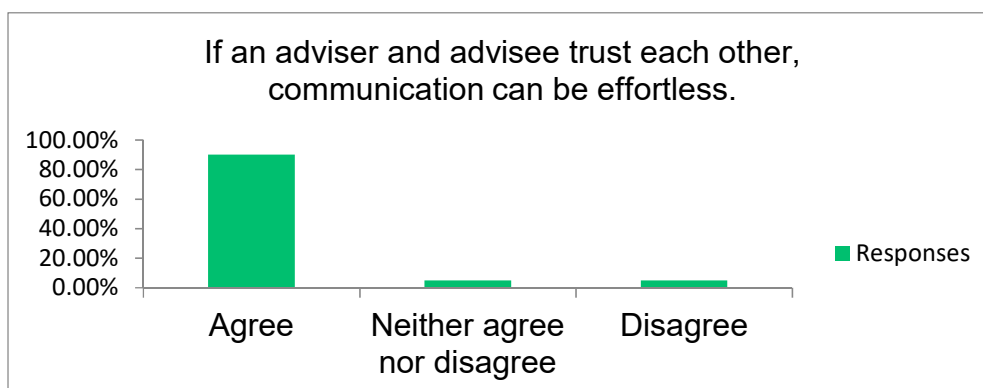


Figure 3 indicates that 90% of respondents agree that communication can be effortless if advisers and advisees trust each other. 5% of respondents disagree with this, and 5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. This supports Covey (2013) and Holmes' (2004) findings that when there is trust between the student and adviser, communication can be easy and effortless. According to Covey (2013) and Holmes (2004), when people trust each other, communication is easy and small infractions or misunderstandings are easy to overcome.

Figure 4: Building a trust relationship with a student starts with an adviser being honest and trustworthy and communicating this trustworthiness to the student.

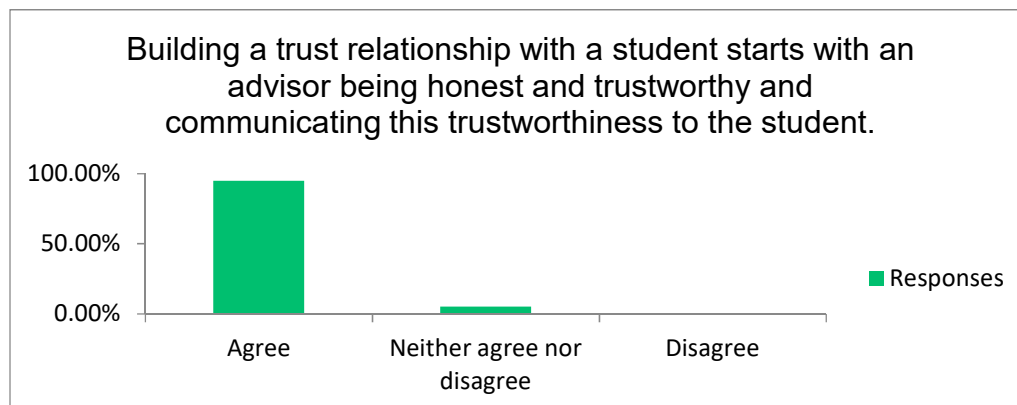


Figure 5 indicates that 95% of respondents agreed that developing trust with students starts with an adviser being honest and trustworthy and with communicating this trustworthiness to the students. 5% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

5. Recommendations

Based on the research problem, literature review, and research findings, this study proposes the following recommendations:

The result of the study indicated that trust is the cornerstone of building a relationship of trust between students and advisers. It is therefore recommended that academic advisers be agents in fostering trusting relationships to encourage student success.

The results showed that building trust is necessary in the academic advising process. According to McClellan (2014), an adviser's first interaction with the student is critical in building trust, and it is therefore critical that academic advisers are given a proper training on how to handle their initial contact with the student and on how to build rapport. A specialist in the field of customer relations must conduct the training.

The results of this study further indicate that academic advisers must create an environment that allows students to talk openly about their academic challenges. In any interaction with a student, advisers must convey their interest and acceptance of the student. This includes an adviser being honest about the student's academic performance and the development of proper intervention plans to help the student improve on this.

Proper planning and honouring all appointments requested by students promptly also serves to demonstrate an adviser's trustworthiness.

A student will trust an academic adviser who demonstrates a high level of knowledge. Therefore, academic advisers must be researchers, scholars, and lifelong learners. Demonstrating a high level of knowledge and expertise in their specialised field and other fields of study can help advisers to earn the trust of students. With that being said, no adviser is perfect or knows everything (Vasher, 2009).

5.1 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While this research provides important contributions as to how the academic advising process can be improved, it is not without limitations. The study is limited to the academic advising centre (AAC) and did not include other academic departments on site. Only one department was selected to participate in the research study, limiting the generalisability of the findings.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, an adviser-advisee relationship that is built on a foundation of respect, care, honesty, availability, knowledge sharing, and competence is essential in ensuring a holistic, trusting relationship. The development of trust ensures that effective advising happens and puts students first. Furthermore, "the capacity of advisers to demonstrate and communicate trustworthiness and to engage in trust-promoting activities [is] based on their understanding of trust, its role in advising, how it is developed, and how they can develop trusting relationships with their students"(McClellan, 2014). Whether or not the theory of academic advising has been developed adequately by scholars in the academic advising community, the results of this study suggest that trust is the cornerstone of the academic advising relationship.

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Cultural Tourism as a Tool for Cross-Cultural Understanding**Thabiso Mathabathe (Damelin: Boksburg)***Thabiso.Mathabathe@damelin.co.za*

Cultural tourism is a distinct form of tourism that continues to show exponential growth. Many regions of the world are experiencing an upsurge in the development of cultural villages, cultural music, social events, hospitality, and tourists' quest to understand people different from them. Many people continue to show pride in their cultures and express a willingness to teach other people about their cultures. Even people who do not take pride in who they are now show signs of wanting to be ambassadors for advancing cross-cultural understanding.

This study recognises various types of tourism that allow tourists to experience tourist-host encounters. This speaks to the primary purpose of cultural tourism. While the study recognises that cultural tourism is the main tourism tool in addressing cultural misunderstandings between different cultural groups, it appreciates that this form of tourism is not the only one which bridges the gap in cultural misunderstandings of people of different cultures. People incidentally come into contact with the host communities (also known as locals) during their stay or visit to their tourism destinations. The type of tourism mentioned earlier (cultural tourism) provides a platform for interaction and the sharing of information between the hosts and the tourists. The study reveals that cultural tourism should be capitalised upon as with more people in the world traveling than before, it is one of the fastest growing forms of tourism.

The research design for this study is explorative and descriptive in nature and the research instrument is a qualitative research design. The study is ethnographic as the focus is on the experiences of tourists and hosts, and the perceptions and meanings attached to those experiences, as presented by the researcher from the tourists' and hosts' points of view.

Keywords: *tourism, culture, community, hospitality, events, music, tourists-hosts, heritage, education, nature, sports, adventure.*

1. Introduction

Cultural tourism, where people travel to experience cultures that are different from their own, is an important contributor to the economic growth of any country in the world. Cultural tourists contribute a fair share of the percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP) of many developing countries, most of which depend on tourism to improve their people's livelihoods. It should be noted, however, that many developing countries are yet to capitalise on the benefits brought by tourism due to the fact that they have not prioritised tourism as a tool to advance economic development (Department of Tourism [DoT] and University of Pretoria [UP], 2019).

Higgins-Desbiolles (2003:243) asserts that tourism is a major promoter of cultural interactions between people all over the world. Tourism brings together various cultures in various ways and in various contexts. The western academic epistemology on Africa and other developing regions of the world has been informed by themes such as violence, promiscuity, masculinity, patriarchy, bad eating habits, and dress codes (Arthur, 2008). This study will look at some of these stereotypical representations.

As one of the subsystems of tourism, cultural tourism plays a major role in addressing cultural misunderstandings through tourists-host interactions. Cultural tourism involves travelling for essentially cultural motivations, such as performing arts, festivals, and cultural events (Ivanovic, 2008). There are, however, some cultural misunderstandings that still exist, and cultural tourism should be considered in the list of strategies to address these shortcomings. It should be noted that cultural tourists visit destinations primarily to experience the way of life of their hosts or to get a glimpse of the cultural area. Those who visit specifically to learn and appreciate the way of life of their hosts are normally those who actively take part in anything cultural – be it dancing, singing, or cooking – and maintain close contact with their hosts during their stay. Those who visit just to relax on their own normally become passive participants; however, just by visiting a local community, these tourists do get to understand the culture of the hosts even though they do not establish close contact. In addition to cultural tourism, other types of tourism too provide tourists the opportunity to come into contact with the locals of their destination. These types of tourism include religious, educational, sports, adventure, gastronomic, and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) tourism (South African Government, 2019).

Regardless of their motivation for their trip, tourists come into contact with the host-communities of the places they visit (Reisinger, 2009). For instance, a person may visit Brazil to appreciate nature. This person is very likely to meet and mingle with the locals. When a person visits a destination for a sporting event, the visitor will come into contact with the hosts during the event and establish (and perhaps even maintain) contact with the host-community following their visit.

This study will look at the issues that cause cross-cultural misunderstandings between people of various cultures, the encounters in which these misunderstandings are manifested, tourists' and hosts' experiences, the impact of tourist-host encounters on bridging cultural divides, and how the issues that pose challenges to cultural tourism can be addressed through cultural tourism.

1.1 Significance of the Study

The study is significant in that it will contribute to the literature on cross-cultural misunderstandings caused by stereotypes and suggest possible ways to correct these misunderstandings. It will add to the body of knowledge about this subject and therefore is worth undertaking. Authors such as Wels (2002), Papen (2005), Boonzaaier and Grobler (2012), and Davies (2011), among others, have contributed immensely to the subject of culture and its relation to and role in tourism.

This study will serve to interrogate issues of cross-cultural misunderstandings and look at possible ways that cultural tourism can address the existing cultural gaps between the people of the world. It will link cultural tourism with other types of tourism and examine how tourism can aid in addressing cultural misunderstandings. The study serves to make tourists aware of the vulnerability of some of the cultures of the communities they visit, making them more sensitive to contributing to preserve them. It also serves to inform hosts about the importance of accepting the cultures of others. These will ensure that both tourists and hosts ultimately benefit from cultural tourism. Most importantly, the study emphasises that through cultural tourism, tourists and hosts can learn a lot from each other culturally. The suggestion is therefore made that governments invest more resources into cultural tourism.

1.2 Research Methodology

According to Unrau, Krysik and Grinnell (1997:251), research methodology refers to the use of qualitative and or quantitative approaches to find answers to specific questions. This study focuses on the experiences of tourists and hosts and the perceptions and meaning attached to those experiences from the tourists' and hosts' points of view. As part of the qualitative research design, a literature review was undertaken to obtain information on cultural tourism. Research on cross-cultural interactions in cultural tourism and other aspects of tourism relevant to cross-cultural interactions tourism was undertaken.

Searches on cross-cultural interactions were performed using information databases, and more specialised databases were accessed for relevant abstracts, indexes, and tourism journals. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and United Nations (UN) websites and a book by Ivanovic (2008), among others, were consulted. Relevant sections and chapters of these websites and books were examined for this study. These sources were chosen because they are peer-reviewed, legitimate, and accredited sources written by experts in the field of tourism and because they were considered important in helping to achieve the objectives of this study on cross-cultural misunderstandings.

Noble and Smith (2015:34) note that qualitative research is often criticised for its lack of scientific rigour. According to these authors, qualitative research offers a poor justification of the methods adopted and a lack of transparency in analytical procedures, resulting in the findings being merely a collection of the researcher's personal opinions and subject to bias. According to Anney (2014:278), qualitative research data collection requires the researcher to submerge him or herself in the participants' world. To enhance the analysis and understanding of the construction of others, researchers adopt triangulation to involve several investigators' or researchers' interpretation of the data at different times or locations (Johnson, 1997).

On research design for cross-cultural interaction studies, Kay (2004:200) poses the following question: "When and where should the research of cultural event by tourists be undertaken: for example, at home in their country of origin; or at a destination; before and after attendance at the event; on-site at one cultural event or across several cultural events?" For facilitating and promoting cross-cultural communication and understanding it is advisable that this be done at an event (or across several cultural events) where tourists seek to understand other cultural groups.

During a study on cross-cultural communication between the hosts and guests, the researcher may consult written documents. Written documents, as Creswell (2014:239-240) states, may include public documents (e.g., newspapers, minutes of meetings, official reports) or private documents (e.g., personal journals and diaries, letters, e-mails).

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to determine whether cultural tourism can act as a promoter for better cross-cultural understanding. The objectives of the study can be broken down as follows:

- To investigate tourists' level of understanding of the culture they are visiting prior to their interaction with the hosts.
- To examine whether tourists feel they have a deeper understanding of the host culture following their interaction with the hosts.
- To examine the question of whether stereotypes may sometimes be true perceptions of real group differences.
- To determine how cross-cultural misunderstandings can be addressed through cultural tourism.

1.4 Research Questions

- Do tourists feel like they had a realistic or authentic experience of the host culture?
- Do tourists feel they get a better understanding of certain aspects of the culture of the host because of cross-cultural interaction?
- What type of stereotypical views do tourists have of locals prior to visiting?
- What role can tourists, hosts, and governments play in promoting cross-cultural understanding through cultural tourism?

2. Literature Review

According to De Vos (2005:123), "a literature review is aimed at contributing towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified". The literature review provides the reader with information from other studies that are closely related to the study being undertaken. It relates a study to the larger, existing literature, filling in gaps, and in the process, motivating for more studies to be done (Okoli and Schabram, 2010:3-4). Gopaul (2019) asserts that a literature review equips the researcher with a comprehensive justification for the ensuing steps, as well as a sense of the significance of the undertaking.

The literature review, Gopaul (2019) further explains, informs the underlying assumptions behind the general research questions, and allows the research questions to be refined.

Research in the area of intercultural communication in relation to cultural tourism is inadequate. However, within tourism literature, the views of Bruner (1991) should be considered. According to Bruner (1991: 242), tourists “only spend a few days or weeks in any one locality and then move so rapidly that there is little opportunity for sustained interaction with local people”. The existing literature acknowledging the power of tourism to encourage greater intercultural understanding between people around the world is encouraging. These include the writings of Ivanovic (2008), Steiner and Resinger (2004), Piller (2012), and others.

Other pertinent studies have been centred on culture shock in tourism (Pearce, 1995; Hottola, 2004), their key argument being that tourists immediately experience a sense of shock when they arrive at their host destination, and that only during the course of time, does this develop into any form of host-guest relation.

One interesting study on the subject of cross-cultural communication is Steiner and Resinger’s (2004) study, *Enriching the Tourist and Host Intercultural Experience by Reconceptualising Communication*. Their view diverges from the traditional theory of communication’s part in the achievement of common ground between the hosts and guests, of the issues that are experienced during hosts-guests encounters, and of conformity and consensus between cultures. Heidegger’s theory (1962) states that communication within tourism should be interpreted more as the *acceptance of cultural differences*.

One area of tourism research that is relevant to this study is that of tourism for world peace. Tourism brings together people from various backgrounds and of different cultures. During their travels, people can get together for a common need; they can share facilities, experiences, ideas, and interesting facts about their cultures. This movement was established by D’Amore (1988), who suggests that increased communication and understanding across cultures can be supported and advanced through responsible tourism practices, which then ideally lead to peace in the world.

Yalom and Carstensen (2002:199) indicate that little research has been undertaken on the stereotypes of European-American men and women, who are often depicted as symbols of the dominant, privileged culture. Reisinger and Turner (2003:6) indicate that few scholars have done studies on culturally diverse visitors and the role of national cultural identities. A focus on cross-cultural understanding appears inadequate in the tourism literature.

Reisinger and Turner's *Cross-Cultural Behaviour in Tourism* (2003) makes a significant contribution to the topic of cross-cultural communication as it allows people to appreciate cultural differences across nations and the role of host and guest behaviour. However, Reisinger and Turner (2003:6) predominantly focus on the concepts, definitions, and measures of cultural constituents that advance tourism. The book does, however, provide a point of departure for those who want to pursue a study in cultural tourism – as Turner and Reisinger (2003) explain, the book assists in explaining the complexities around the role of cultural behaviour and outlines the statistical tools that can be used to analyse cross-cultural behaviour (Reisinger and Turner, 2003:6).

3. Stereotypical Images

3.1 Historical Legacy

Historically, Yancey and Lewis Jr. (2008: 92) explain, individuals with mixed race parentage were subject to many stereotypes that were firmly entrenched by white supremacy. Individuals of mixed racial backgrounds have for many years been stereotyped to be sexually immoral and out of control. This is a type of biological stereotype (Yancey and Lewis Jr., 2008: 92). Another stereotype that originated long ago in the United States is one which views biracial and multiracial individuals as more attractive than other groups. This historical stereotypical image sees biracial and multiracial groups as more physically appealing than other racial minorities because they look “more Anglo” (Yancey and Lewis Jr., 2008:92). Yancey and Lewis Jr (2008) acknowledge the negative inference here by noting that the notions of biological distinctiveness perpetuated against racially mixed individuals can be used to justify an idea of European-American superiority.

Stereotypes regarding certain cultures exhibiting bad eating habits appear to be widely shared by Europeans visiting developing countries. Some cultural groups in the developing world are furthermore stereotypically portrayed as taking pride in warfare. In the developing world, warfare between various cultural groups is regarded as part of the inherited culture of the

current generation of the group. This is not always a true view because pride in warfare might be influenced by the way some parents raise their children currently. So, when a certain ethnic group takes pride in war, one cannot attribute that only to their forefathers; the values taught to them by their parents now ought to be considered.

It cannot be overemphasised that history is important when analysing stereotypical images of various cultures. History is contained in various accounts shared by various people, some of whom are cultural conservators who advocate sharing their culture with the current generation. History is *what* was practised, *why* it was practised, and *how* it is practised and shared today.

3.2. Stereotypical Representations

The culture of host communities and various ethnic groups is portrayed in various forms of media. This includes digital and print media platforms such as television, radio, magazines, various tourism brochures, mail, and others. Some representations deployed using these forms of media may be viewed as positive. Negative representations are those that are sometimes written by master propagandists (Wilcox, 2005:7). Those who portray negative stereotypical images of a destination and or its people are not always aware that they are perpetuating stereotypes and that these representations have an impact on tourists' visits to the destination.

Several destinations have experienced reduced tourism due to the ways in which violent behaviour has been used to portray the people of a certain tourism destination (Pratt, 2015:978). An area that is perceived to have high level of crime is less likely to experience visits from tourists, while an area that is portrayed as being safe has the potential of promoting itself (Inskip, 1991:92). One can use the KwaZulu-Natal province as an example. The province is regarded as being riddled with crime, and the media has compounded this issue by negatively stereotyping the province as being a province where people thrive on crime. It is furthermore a stereotype whereby a certain ethnic group is labelled as the one that commits most crimes. Many people have expressed their unwillingness to go on holiday in KwaZulu-Natal because of this perception. This goes to show the extent to which a negative representation of destination can inhibit its tourism growth.

Until the advent of digital media, postcards were one of the most widely used tools for promoting tourist destinations. These postcards often featured stereotypical representations of various cultures. Special attention is therefore paid to them under this subheading on

stereotypical representation. Postcards, as Pritchard and Morgan (2005:56) have explained, contain minimalistic and simplistic representations which convey cultural difference in such a way that indigenous people are repeatedly identified only by a costume or single cultural artefact.

Katutura, a township in Namibia, means “the place where we do not have any permanent habitation” (Papen, 2005:88). The representation of the township as a place where tourists can experience the diversity of Namibia’s history and existing cultures typifies the tourism dilemma faced by developing countries. Papen (2005:89) indicates that tourists who visit the township want to experience the Katutura face to face; however, this does not necessarily mean they want to look at the interior of people’s houses. Social problems such as poverty, malnutrition, sickness and death at Katutura do not lend themselves to the beautification of the tourist gaze. Urry (2002:2-3) explains that tourists normally gaze at every interesting thing visually objectified or captured through postcards, photographs, literature, magazines, and videos, and so on. In its tourist information guide, the Windhoek Municipality celebrates Katutura’s African spirit by noting the government’s recent achievements in improving the livelihood of the people and tackling unemployment in the area (Papen, 2005:89).

Activities and performances that include stereotypical recognisable features of traditional African culture (such as traditional dress and dance) are, according to Boonzaaier and Grobler (2012:61), the elements that are easy to promote and that are of interest to many tourists. This is said to be because of long-established marketing trends pertaining to African cultures in films and advertising. According to Urry’s (2002) notion of the tourist gaze, tour operators also play a role in this regard through their distribution of postcards that portray the supposed ‘authentic’ way of life of the hosts. The problem here is that when tourists arrive at the destination, they don’t always get what they saw on the picturesque postcards. Boonzaaier and Grobler (2012:62) note that the stereotypical representation of cultures is not confined to Africa. Stereotypes of those living in First World countries also exist. These representations and performances do not reflect true (authentic) culture but a false and distorted view of these destinations and their peoples (Boonzaaier and Grobler, 2012:62).

3.2.1 Promiscuity

Discourses surrounding promiscuity are said to play a major role in controlling and policing women's sexual behaviour and identities. (Klesse, 2007:79). Klesse (2007:79) further asserts that attaching labels such as 'promiscuous', 'slut', 'slag', or 'whore' encourages associations of impurity, unchastity, and dishonour and are used as an attack on women's values. In Africa, it appears that women have long been stereotyped as promiscuous. According to (Klesse 2007:80) accusations of promiscuity are adopted as a strategy to promote offensive and unacceptable any form of female sexuality that does not subject to men's control. Since women play a major role as cultural symbols in representing a nation, ethnic group, or community, their sexual behaviour has been regulated for the sake of the interests of nationalist, ethnic or racial projects.

This is the case with tourism promoters who showcase undressed African women in their tourism brochures. According to Wels (2002:57), the fact that women were walking around bare-breasted could be seen as proof that they are primitive and intensely reinforces the stereotype of the sexual willingness of African women.

Even though any woman may be stereotyped as promiscuous, it appears that in the past, this stereotype was most often used against certain groups of women (Klesse, 2007:80). Working-class Jewish women have been portrayed as being sexually wicked and transgressive (Klesse, 2007:80). This can be compared to the case of Shangaan women who are seen by men of other ethnic groups as being sexually immoral. There is a famous expression that is used to label them in this regard, *tzhoha o ndire* (wake up and please me). Sexual promiscuity is a common form of stereotype that is tossed at racial minorities in general, and it happens almost everywhere, according to Yancey and Lewis Jr. (2008:92).

Lastly on this stereotype, Wels (2002:57) says: "African women were usually considered to be sexually willing". More studies need to be done in order to confirm this.

3.2.2 Bad Eating Habits

In some African local communities, people eat from the same pot. This is not just part of their cultural heritage but also a form of *mana*, as indicated by Berno (1999:11). According to Berno (1999:11), the basis of *mana* is love, faith and hope; it can be inherited from the ancestors, given directly from the gods. Eating from the same pot also shows a sense of brotherhood

(*ngwana wa mma*) if a relative or a family member is visiting. If the host eats from the same pot as his or her guest, this is taken to be a form of hospitality – a warm reception is provided to the visitor and appreciation for the visit is shown. To tourists who have not visited these local destinations before, seeing people sharing food from the same pot can be a cultural shock.

Regardless of whether those who eat from the same pot wash their hands before they eat, some tourists still find this to be a bad eating habit. Curtis (2004:147) says although eating habits are somewhat an individual's choice, these choices are also informed by the living conditions at the destination area and the community in which people live. Reisinger and Turner (2003:56) indicate that in bed-and-breakfast establishments, even the ways in which cutlery is handled can cause some discomfort among tourists. This can lead to difficulties in interactions between tourists and their hosts.

Cultural differences fuel difficulties in interactions and shape the perceptions of tourists. Reisinger (2009:88) says one can differentiate or infer cultural differences between Europeans and Americans by observing how they hold forks and knives at the dinner table. One can say that cultural misunderstanding might occur where Europeans do not know why Americans hold forks and knives the way they do (or vice versa). One group will think they hold forks and knives in a proper way and that the other group holds them in the wrong way, not realising that it is how they do it in their culture. Table manners are determined and defined by one's culture.

Let us say, for instance, that tourists are visiting a local community to witness a cultural event, ritual, or dance. At one of these cultural activities, the hosts slaughter a cow to provide the attendants and participants with food to eat. To some tourists, witnessing the process of slaughtering a cow and seeing how it is washed and cooked, might result in him or her refusing to eat the meat of that cow when it is later served. The meat is cooked in big pots with water and this may come as a cultural shock to the visitor. This is a form of cultural misunderstanding that has led to situations where when tourists visit such cultural activities, they bring their own food or ask if there is shop nearby where they can buy food. Other tourists don't have problem with eating the cow's meat because they want to feel part of the culture of the hosts during the time of their visit.

Wels (2002:57) indicates that the European impression of the eating habits of Africans has always been perceived as cannibalistic. Reference is made to the well-known stereotype of Africans dancing around a cooking fire in preparation for dinner (Wels, 2002:57). I think Europeans do not understand that this might be a way that some African groups bless their food before they start eating.

3.2.3 Violence

Abundant stereotypes exist of oppressed groups. The list of them is exhaustive so here I look at those that have long been deployed, particularly in the United States.

The media, the tourism industry, and agencies involved in representing various oppressed groups have portrayed them as violent (Cai, 2011:69). This does not mean they are all violent or that oppressed groups in the US are violent; it could just be a misrepresentation by the aforementioned institutions. Cai (2011:69) calls this “the politics of image making”. Notorious stereotypes have been perpetuated to influence the popular views and mindsets (and consequently, the agenda) of the dominant group. African Americans have been stereotyped as being violent. Cai (2011:70) says they were stereotyped as violent and ferocious pagans who benefitted from the civilizing influence of Christian shareholders. This representation may be like the Sambo stereotype (stereotype in America) used to provide justification for the enslavement of African Americans.

In the United States, Arabs have for a long time been stereotyped as radicals, who are diabolically clever, hostile and violent, or as terrorists who systematically work to infiltrate the United States. A consequence of portraying all Muslims as fanatics or terrorists will undermine the campaign against terrorism as it will confuse friends and foes (Cai 2011:70). It should be noted that stereotypical representations of violence are not always intended for propaganda but also for the promotion of tourism. Those who portray certain groups as violent do this knowing very well that tourists are interested in knowing why specific groups are so prone to violence. Representing certain groups as prone to violence is not wholly harmful to promoting tourism of the area(s) in which these people live as some curious tourists may travel to these places specifically to find out if the representation is accurate or just a stereotype.

Steward and Strathern (2002:44) note a plethora of stereotypes of characters involved in violence. The authors explain that these are evolving cultural stereotypes. These stereotypes symbolise the steps in which violent acts are institutionalised and come to be the privileges of roles and social statues of people. 'Hard men', 'gunmen', 'butchers', 'doctors', 'stiffs', 'ghosts', and 'black men' are labels that were used to portray men in Rwanda. 'Hard men' were portrayed as physically strong men who fought with their fists and took physical risks with their bodies. 'Gunmen' came later and transgressed this pattern by being more powerful than 'hard men'. The Shankill, who murdered many people (including Protestants after mistaking them for Catholics), is a common stereotype perpetuated by many who wrote on 'butchers' with regard to stereotypes on violence (Steward and Strathern, 2002:44).

It appears that Muslims have been the most stereotyped in many countries in Europe. Din (1989) is cited in Chhabra (2010:272) as saying that Muslim are stereotyped by Western media as symbolising terror, danger, intolerance towards other religions and ethnic groups. However, most terror related events are blown out of proportion, thus advancing a negative impression of the Muslims to the world.

Most of the stereotypes of violence attributed to ethnic groups are based on exaggeration (Yang, 2000:116). The question is, how does this impact on tourist travel to those regions where people are stereotyped to be violent and unwelcoming? Islam obliges Muslims to be friendly and most them are said to be friendly. This contrasts with the stereotypical portrayal of Muslims by Western media as being conservative and unfriendly (Chhabra, 2010:272). A true picture of the friendly disposition of Muslim communities and their religion could be communicated through tourism promotions such as postcards, magazines, travelogues etc.

3.2.4 Conception of Time

There is a saying that time is money. Well, that is true, but some people and certain groups of various cultures may not have a full understanding of this. There is also a saying used when a black person arrives late for work, a meeting, or a lecture, which describes him or her as operating on 'African time'. Africans are perceived not to be concerned about time and the majority of them are said to have a difficulty in managing time (*modikologa*). According to Reisinger (2009:88), one's culture determines one's approach to time management. In other cultures, timekeeping and promptness are taken very seriously (e.g. Germany). People of various cultures take their time when they do things. Therefore, people of any culture cannot

necessarily be inconsiderate with time management. During visits and or stays one can observe and tell that various ethnic groups are used to taking their time when doing things. In a Pedi language, they say *lebelo le a bolaya*, meaning ‘take your time when doing certain things’.

In other cultures, people do not bother about time; they would rather manage their life based on what time of the year it is. India and Latin America are cited as classical examples of where being late for appointments and the non-observance of schedules is tolerated (Reisinger, 2009:88). This supports the case I made with regards to Africans’ approach to time management. The difference is that in Africa, arriving late for appointments, meetings and lectures will not go down well with those in charge and is seriously discouraged.

Some of media’s representations of other cultures’ time management may be true and reflect what others have observed and experienced. ‘Black time’ is when a person is late for work, a meeting, or event. This is a generalisation as not everyone struggles with time management. Some people are not concerned with time management and even find it unnecessary to explain why they are late for work, appointments, or lectures. Through cultural tourism tourists can better understand why people of other cultures take time when they are doing things. Misconceptions about a culture’s time management can therefore be reduced when tourists come into contact with and communicate with people of other cultures.

4. Images of Asians and Americans

Huang (2005) indicates that Asian men have long been stereotyped as asexual and effeminate. Other stereotypes of Asian men include the “wise kung-fu master” and the cold-hearted shrewd businessman (Louie, 1993). These are some of the stereotypes perpetuated by media forms such as television and Asian action movies. Asian males are also perceived by Africans to be overly studious, socially inept, weak, cunning, hostile and unemotional (Jackson et al., 1997). The literature shows that most of the stereotypes on Asians have been portrayed negatively more on women.

When it comes to Asian women, Mayall and Russell (1993) and Louie (1993) indicate that they have been portrayed as “sweet young lotus blossoms” or objects of servitude. Popular novels portray them as sexual and domestic. Here one can see that negative Asian women are portrayed negatively to the world.

People of Asian origin are often stereotyped as having a strong culture, an attribute of their strong roots. Africans have recognised the stereotypical image of the dragon lady as the wicked witch of the East. This description was first deployed the *New York Times* (a newspaper in the United States). Aoki and Takeda (2008:154) indicate that at the opposite end of the spectrum from the Dragon Lady is the Lotus Blossom stereotype, a perception of Asian women which has spawned the entire Asian marriage industry.

Some stereotypes of Asians may not be true. The literature indicates that the media deploys false and distorted images of Asians for the promotion of their product. Hollywood, a film style that relies on intensely heterosexual identification, is a good example in this regard. These stereotypical images of Asian men and women are false and distorted, most of them are negative and few are positive. In other parts of Africa, people are exposed to stereotypical images of Asians portrayed by Westerners and these images stay longer and sometimes in the minds of Africans. They perceive Asians the way the Westerners perceive them.

Most stereotypes of Asian culture have focused more on gender; many studies support this. In the African and Western conception, the Asian race is portrayed as thinner, shorter, and as having more hairless bodies as compared to the white race. Asians are further viewed as being respectful, their modest behaviour perceived to be conforming to their ancient culture (Huang, 2005:84). Huang (2005:84) posits that on one hand, Asian women are perceived to be subservient and exotic beings acculturated to suffering and accommodating to men. Asian men, on the other hand, are perceived as effeminate and sexless beings, for exactly the same reasons that Asian women are perceived to be hyper-feminine and over-sexed.

5. Positives of Cross-Cultural Interactions in Cultural Tourism

Tourism has positive and negative impacts on host communities. There are cases where the positive impacts outweigh the negative impacts, but the situation may be vice versa. This section discusses the positive impacts of cross-cultural interactions that are predominant in cultural tourism – events, rituals, and dance performances. First and foremost, cultural tourism activities advance cultural understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous people (Butler and Hinch, 1996:0). As Butler and Hinch (1996:5) explain, visitors' experiences of indigenous cultures improve their awareness, understanding, and appreciation of indigenous people and their way of life.

When tourists visit local communities, they become the audience in upholding the local heritage and way of life (culture) (Robinson and Picard, 2006:31). Close interactions between tourists and hosts provides a platform to dispel myths and stereotypes on both sides (Robinson and Picard, 2006:31). In a Canadian case, visitors realised that Aboriginal cultural tourism provides positive experiences that aid in expanding the level of understanding and appreciation for Aboriginal cultures and their heritage (Hodgson, 2007:45).

In visiting third-world countries, tourists experience the diversity, beauty, and liveliness of local cultures; at the same time, they get to see the problems associated with poverty and environmental degradation (Robinson and Picard, 2006:310). Most tourists from developed countries notice the challenges faced by the communities they visit and start to get more involved to assist where they can. Together with the tourism industry, tourists to other countries have become more actively engaged in improving the social, environmental, and economic well-being of host communities by educating them about child labour (a serious challenge in developing countries), sex tourism, and animal cruelty, and actively engaging in environmental management programmes (Robinson and Picard, 2006:31). Some tourists, on the other hand, only experience the culture of the host passively during their visit. Here one can talk about a limited interaction between the host communities and the tourists.

According to Robinson and Picard (2006:31), passive participation may be a reflection of the culture of the tourist visiting a local community. A passive participant can be considered as one who does not want to experience close interaction with the local population, is unwilling or has no desire to experience cultural difference and diversity, or who assumes it to be risky to actively engage with local populations. Passive interaction is said to be inhibited by cultural perceptions, which limit direct and active engagement with local communities unless arranged formally by a tour operator (Robinson and Picard, 2006:31).

Piller (2012:11) posits that cross-cultural misunderstandings predominantly occur due to limited proficiency in one or more of the languages of the participants in the inter-ethnic interaction. Language barriers, along with a limited awareness of various contextual cues, pose some challenges.

Davies (2011:73) notes that tourists that participate in cultural events can possibly gain a better understanding of the culture that is being practised or showcased and this can possibly lead to greater inter-cultural understanding. This process may promote peace between the people of the world (UNESCO, 2009:5, 6, 45).

Men, as previously mentioned, like to express their prowess to boost their pride. Some tourists try to figure out why such is the case. Through cultural tourism, tourists gain a better understanding of cultures where this is prevalent. In many cases, it is said that expressing prowess is a cultural factor derived from the status indigenous men receive when they are from the mountains. There is a negative side of this as some indigenous men tend to take this social standing that they assume to the extreme. This is mentioned under the negatives of cross-cultural encounters as reported by tourists who have visited communities for cultural tourism purposes.

6. Negatives of Cross-Cultural Interactions in Cultural Tourism

Coming into contact with people of various cultures also has certain implications for both tourists and their host communities/destinations. Tourists might intrude on the sacred aspects of the community/destination – for instance, when tourists take pictures of things that are of special interest to them during visits to host communities .e.g. tourists visiting the Maasai community. This won't always go down well with people in the host community/destination. Host communities may resent tourists when they notice that tourists have no regard for their culture, let alone sacred grounds and resources. Robinson (1999:9) provides a table where he summarises both the positive and negative impacts of cross-cultural encounters. In this section, the focus is on the negative aspects. They are listed below, as they appear in Robinson's text (1999:9):

- Developing negative attitudes about each other
- Tension, hostility, suspicion and misunderstanding
- Isolation, segregation, and separation
- Clashes of values
- Difficulties in forming friendships
- Feelings of inferiority and superiority
- Communication problems
- Ethnocentrism

- Culture shock
- Dissatisfaction with mutual interaction

Another possible negative impact of cross-cultural interaction is that the people of the destination might be marginalised and they themselves might alter some of their cultural aspects to suit tourist tastes. The commodification of some elements of their culture is sometimes influenced by the fact they fear that the tourists might see them as less significant and inferior.

There are negatives attached to these aspects by those who portray these various groups. For instance, during cross-cultural interactions, clashes of values and communication problems might arise because of prejudice between visitors and hosts. An example would be when a male host holds the view that he does not have to listen to what the female visitor has to say. The male host's behaviour could be caused by a difference in values between him and the female visitor. This problem can only be solved if the male host recognises and accepts that there are cultural differences between him and the female visitor and so they cannot always see things the same way.

When it comes to superiority and inferiority, visitors might lead to a competition for social status among the hosts. Some may want to assume every responsibility in terms of hospitality in order to solely benefit from the income they can receive from the tourists. The competition for superiority amongst the hosts discourages sharing and mutual benefit. Locals who open up more to the tourist gaze may stand to benefit more from tourist visits than locals who are culturally conservative. On the other hand, the culture shock emanating from cultural misunderstanding can cause antagonism on the part of the tourists toward the hosts. In such an instance, the tourists may be subjected to undue treatment for the remaining part of their stay.

7. Contexts of Cross-Cultural Interaction

Most cross-cultural interactions occur at the host destination, where visitors form the audience for the hosts to showcase their interesting ways of life. At the host destination, there are various contexts where these cross-cultural interactions are apparent. In South Africa, there are typical contexts that allow for such interactions to take place and which form part of cultural tourism. A typical example would be cultural villages.

Cultural villages that come to mind include the Bapedi Cultural Village, the Ndebele Cultural Villages, the Tsonga-Kraal Cultural Village, the Basotho Cultural Villages, and the Bakone Malapa Cultural Village. Cultural villages provide an opportunity for hosts and tourists to come together to engage, learn, appreciate, understand and reciprocate (Van Zyl, 2005:102, 143).

According to the Turtle Island Tourism Company (2006:26), cultural information is interpreted and delivered to the visitors in various ways, including cultural performances, guided and self-guided tours, interactive workshops and audio-visual presentations. During these interactions, cultural activities are performed such as storytelling, elder teachings, oral history, historical displays and exhibits, traditional food preparation, and historical re-enactments (Turtle Island Tourism Company, 2006:26).

The cross-cultural interaction contexts provide the hosts and visitors an opportunity to come together. Here one can talk about the environment as being a stakeholder, in the sense that it is a space or stage where the hosts perform their cultural activities to the visitors. The environment is an enabling element for cross-cultural interactions as it provides tourists and hosts with the space to interact.

Reisinger and Turner (2003:52) distinguished between three major types of cultural encounters. These are as follows:

- Where the cultural background of individuals is the same, or similar.
- Where the cultural background of individuals differs, but the differences are minor and supplementary.
- Where the cultural background of individuals differs, and the differences are large and incompatible.

The first two types of cultural encounters demonstrate common cultural commonalities. Their social interaction is said to be effective. The third type of encounter has a lot of complexities as it is the one that occurs often between the hosts and visitors. Participants in this type of an encounter are divided by large cultural differences and therefore their interaction is more difficult and less adequate (Reisinger and Turner, 2003:52).

In some cross-cultural contexts, the participants do not know how to communicate and respond to each other because of cultural differences. These cultural differences can generate tourist-host friction, misunderstanding, and even aggression (Reisinger and Turner, 2003:54). This situation can be further exacerbated if the hosts do not welcome and appreciate the tourists' visit to their environment. Reisinger and Turner (2003:52) make it evident that in a destination where tourists are seen as intruders, the residents perceive the tourist to be different from them in a variety of social characteristics. However, some tourists are found to be the ones who find it very hard to interact with hosts because of cultural differences. These difficulties are fuelled by various cultural backgrounds and occur during cross-cultural encounters, as indicated by Reisinger and Turner (2003: 54) below:

- Interpersonal communication and behaviour (e.g. fluency in language, polite language usage, expression attitudes, feelings, emotions);
- Non-verbal signals (e.g. facial expressions, eye contact, spatial behaviour, touching, posture);
- Rules and patterns of interpersonal interaction (e.g. greetings, self-disclosure, making or declining requests).

The context of the interaction allows one to infer the cultural differences between the hosts and the tourists and also allows them to identify these differences so that they can try to resolve them.

8. Conclusion

This study discovered that cross-cultural encounters can assist in challenging the stereotypical views hosts may have of tourists and vice versa. This should be done to encourage return visits and to correct the false or distorted images of the hosts and tourists portrayed by the media. The hosts should take the interests of the tourists into consideration as tourists try to understand and appreciate their culture. The tourist ought to do likewise.

Tourists who visit communities to attend cultural activities stand to develop a better understanding that slaughtering and that the way it is done for a traditional ceremony is part of the culture of the people who do it, and so when served, they appreciate and the enjoy traditional food and eat the same way as the locals. At one stage I experienced this with a tourist at a traditional ceremony in Modjadji. I personally witnessed some tourists eating from the

same pot as the locals while others saw this as unhygienic. This is where cultural tourism comes in, because it allows for the hosts to understand that eating from the same pot is strange to visitors whose culture is different from that of their own. However, for tourists this is something meaningful that they can learn and take away with them having engaged with their hosts during their visit.

Most stereotypes pertaining to various ethnic groups are distorted and these have to be addressed. According to Aoki and Takeda (2008:154), stereotypes may signify a struggle to control one's identity and character. They further assert that stereotypes have profound effects and cannot be eradicated overnight but that having measures in place to eradicate them are a step in the right direction (Aoki and Takeda, 2008:154).

According to Gudykunst (2003:230), individuals identify cultural differences and learn to interact despite these differences. To further address cross-cultural misunderstandings, the suggestion is that a respect for or willingness to accept differences and overcome stereotypes must exist between people of a different culture. Respect and acceptance play a pivotal role in initiating an intercultural friendship, and - as explained by Gudykunst (2003:230) - are expressed in everyday ordinary exchanges, such as appeals for more information or in expressing a curiosity to learn about the one other. Gudykunst (2003:230) further asserts that social stereotypes concerning intercultural relationships are corrected through seeking or building social systems for support.

Cultural tourism should be promoted as a mechanism that can and should be utilised to correct the cross-cultural misunderstandings created by the media and the general public. It should be promoted as it has a potential to advance and propagate for peace all around the world as it allows people of different cultures to come together for common goal. Cultural tourism should advance the provision of more spaces for active and passive engagements and towards better understanding between cultures.

Cultural tourism advocates for addressing the challenges encountered during and through cultural tourism encounters around the world. Surmounting these challenges will lead to peace between tourists and hosts and eventually a peaceful world. Other types of tourism can also be advanced for the purpose of advancing cross-cultural communication.

No matter the type of tourism, tourists come into contact and mingle or engage with the people of the places they visit.

Tourists should be provided with enough information with regards to their acceptable conduct during visits. It is the responsibility of the hosts to educate tourists about what is allowed and not allowed during visits. The media has misused the tools for the representation of cultures in the sense that the images portrayed of other cultural groups has negative effects on cross-cultural interactions between host communities and tourists in some parts of the world. Even though some representations are false and distorted, they can still help in addressing the cross-cultural misunderstandings that exist.

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Automatic Text Summarisation Using an Advanced Stemmer Algorithm: A Case Study of the Xhosa Language**Zukile Ndyalivana (Damelin: Menlyn)***Zukile.Ndyalivana@damelin.co.za***Zelalem Shibeshi (University of Fort Hare)***Zndyalivana.zshibeshi@ufh.ac.za*

In today's world, digital content is becoming significantly abundant. Finding ways to come up with a tool that can aid with this is of fundamental importance. People are faced with what is referred to as information overload. A tool that can make a summary of a text without losing its message, coherence and cohesion is vital. We live in a digital age and that technology saves us time. This means that users can only focus on points they are interested in. This is one of the research areas in natural language processing/information retrieval which this work tries to contribute to. It tries to contextualise the tools and technologies that are developed for other languages to automatically summarise textual Xhosa news articles. The work specifically aims to develop a text summariser for textual Xhosa news articles based on extraction methods. In doing so, it examines the literature to try to understand the techniques and technologies used to analyse the contents of a written text in order to transform and synthesise it. The study also examines the phonology and morphology of the Xhosa language, and finally, designs, implements, and tests an extraction-based automatic news article for the Xhosa language. Two approaches were used to extract relevant sentences: term frequency and sentence position. The Xhosa summariser is evaluated using a test set. This study has employed both subjective and objective evaluation methods.

Keywords: *Automatic text summarisation, single document summarisation, sentence extraction, isiXhosa language, Stemmer, Pre-processing, Stop-words, Natural Language Processing.*

1. Introduction

Textual information has grown tremendously in the past decades, especially the form of electronic versions. This has made it cumbersome for users to get information that is of use to them very quickly. This has resulted in what is known as the information overload. Textual information exists in many domains and in many different formats. Most of this text is lengthy and full of detail. Although this might seem positive, some users do not need or want to read such long and detailed textual documents, meaning they are forced to read content that is not of interest to them (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi, and Botha, 2014).

As much as this occurrence of information overload has shown its presence across the globe, Xhosa language speakers are prone to such occurrences. A large number of agencies produce Xhosa content electronically. Some examples of this lengthy and detailed content include textual statistics, online news articles, online reports that are produced by legal authorities. This content is abundant, and so it would be helpful to develop a tool to help to reduce the length of this content while keeping its meaning intact. This is where summarisation comes into play.

There is a shortage of automated textual content summarisation offerings in the Xhosa language that can minimise the time readers take in shopping and reading, meaning that readers have been spending more time going through content that they have no interest in. The work that is presented in this paper serves to contribute to developing a natural language processing tool for IsiXhosa language (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi, and Botha, 2014).

This work therefore increases the scope of textual summarization research. Moreover, this work has been specifically based on the Natural Language Toolkit, which has built in modules that are very useful when doing textual analyses. One of the modules that is used is the tokenisation module, which helps to split sentences into tokens. Coupled with this are two statistical methods: term frequency and sentence position. Finally, this work is fine-tuned by attaching a language-based tool known as the advanced Xhosa stemmer. This too is used to strip phrases into their root form.

2. Problem Statement

The rate at which electronic information has grown has made it difficult for users to obtain important information in the shortest possible time. In other words, users are highly affected by information overload. Information overload results in users having to read unnecessary details, thereby wasting their time. Often, users read documents that they are not even interested in, in too much detail. People who speak different languages around the globe are facing this problem, and this is true for people who speak the Xhosa language.

These days, many agencies produce a large amount of textual information specifically for Xhosa speakers. These include online news publishers, national newspaper publishers, and media bodies, such as the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) that broadcasts the news in the Xhosa language. This also includes reports from government offices, especially from the Provincial Legislatures of the Eastern and Western Cape Provinces. Most of these items are of more than five paragraphs, which in this busy world is not appropriate for users.

As mentioned above, newspapers and other news releases in the Xhosa language reach readers from many sources. It is evident that it is important to read news articles to keep well informed of what is happening in the world. However, because of the busy lives that people lead and their day-to-day activities, there is frequently insufficient time to read entire documents, resulting in important information being overlooked.

Automatic Text Summarisation (ATS) systems are still scarce, especially for the Xhosa language. It would be advantageous if the agencies that release news in the Xhosa language, some of which host daily shows, had a tool that could provide users with a shorter version of the original text as there is a real need to design a tool that is able to deal with the problem of information overload, especially in the realm of news in the Xhosa language. This study presents a possible solution to this particular problem. This work also contributes towards developing Natural Language Processing applications, which can be used by Xhosa native speakers. This work investigates text summarisation applications for Xhosa to increase the scope of the text summarisation research for this language.

3. Research Objectives

- To understand the field of automatic text summarisation and to analyse the related research.
- To investigate the existing methods and algorithms used to develop extraction-based automatic summarisation.
- To develop a prototype Xhosa news summariser that will serve as a model for a full-scale/operational Xhosa text summariser.
- To develop a test set to evaluate the system.
- To draw conclusions from the results of the research.
- To suggest how the system could be used in the future for other documents written in the Xhosa language.

4. Research Questions

- How can a computerised system select key sentences?
- How can language-based rules be used to extract salient sentences from a text and condense its content?

Xhosa (isiXhosa) is one of the main languages that is spoken in certain provinces in the Republic of South Africa. IT one of the country's eleven official languages (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi and Botha, 2014). According to the report by the Census Bureau of SA, approximately 18% of the South African population speaks Xhosa (Statistics South Africa, 2012). The language is widely spoken on the Eastern and Western side of the country. It is closely related to Zulu, the second most widely spoken language in the country (Niesler, Louw and Roux, 2005). Xhosa falls under the umbrella of the Nguni languages. It forms part of other Nguni languages like Swati, Ndebele, and Zulu, which share the same linguistic structures. These languages form part of a superior class denoted as Bantu languages (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi and Botha, 2014). Bantu languages, including Xhosa, have been studied in schools since 1857.

Gxilishe (2011) states that the Xhosa language, like other Nguni languages, has a rich morphology. Xhosa has many dialects, which include Mpondo and Gcaleka, and has a Latin-based orthography. Xhosa is a tonal language, meaning that the same sequence of speech sounds have a dissimilar meaning depending on whether a high or low tone is used

(Pascoe and Smouse, 2012). Xhosa is also an agglutinative language, meaning that a variability of prefixes and suffixes are used to change the basic meaning in the root word.

The Xhosa language is used as a medium of instruction in some provinces in the country. It is mostly used as such in the Eastern and the Western Cape. An abundance of work has been published in the language and is available in the public. This includes literature, online newspapers, and religious documents (Pascoe and Smouse, 2012).

6. Literature Review

This section investigates the experimental methods that have been used to build automatic summarisation systems.

The inception of automatic text summarisation work can be traced back to the 1950s and 1960s (Hovy and Lin, 1998). The literature confirms that the first author to develop an automatic text summariser was Luhn (1958). Luhn explained how the summarisation works. In a nutshell, he proclaimed that a document may contain words that appear very often and that often, such words contain a very insightful meaning. In his later work, Luhn did however mention that there are words that appear often in any document but bear no meaning. The author stated that such unnecessary words could be eliminated from the document. Luhn devised a fixed threshold that so that he could do this. His work was mainly based on technical documents. Luhn coupled his automatic summariser with methods such as term filtering and word frequency. Ever since its inception, Luhn's work has remained an accepted text summarisation system.

Edmondson (1958) elevated the work of Luhn (1969). Edmondson (1969) cautiously outlined the human extraction ideas and noticed that the place of a sentence in a text gives some clue about its significance. As a result, the author advocated word frequency, cue phrases, title, and heading words and sentence place as an extraction feature.

GreekSum is an automatic text summariser developed by Pachantouris and Dalianis (2005) for the Greek language. It is built and is based on the algorithms developed by *SweSum*, a Swedish text summariser (Dalianis, 2000). A version of *SweSum* that is language independent, called Generic (without Greek keyword dictionary), and the customised version of the summariser for the Greek language (*GreekSum*) were compared. A subjective evaluation method was

carried out to evaluate the summariser. In the experiment, it transpired that using the keyword dictionary was significant in determining how the summary was presented. The summariser with the inclusion of the dictionary showed a sixteen percent improvement. This summariser outperformed the summariser with no dictionary included in it.

The work by Hassel (1999) tried to create an automatic text summarisation machine for the Persian language (*FarsiSum*). This text summariser is web-based textual content summariser based totally on the Swedish textual content summariser, *SweSum*. The Persian text summariser summarises Persian newspaper text/HTML in Unicode format. *FarsiSum* makes use of the same structure as *SweSum*, with the exclusion of the lexicons (Dalianis et al., 2003). Again, some adjustments were made to make it appropriate for Persian texts in Unicode format. This automatic text summariser makes use of a simple stop-list to filter and classify the noisy elements in the text.

Baxendale (1958) identified a certain feature that can help in ascertaining important sentences in certain parts of the document: sentence position. Baxendale (1958) took to experiment 200 paragraphs and got amazing results. 85% of the paragraphs' topic sentences came first. The topic sentence was the last in the paragraph only 7% of the time. Baxendale (1958) consequently concluded that the exact method of selecting a topic sentence would be to select one of the two.

At present, there is no research in automatic text summarisation for South African languages. This work therefore contributes towards developing natural language processing applications for South African languages. It increases the scope of text summarisation research by investigating its application to South African languages. The methods used in this study include term frequency and sentence position with language-based lexicons (stop words and stemming). A small corpus of 200 news items was collected and prepared. This work is based on the stemmer created by the Nogwina, Shibeshi and Mali (2014), which previously catered for Xhosa nouns and now caters for verbs.

7. Research Methodology

This study proposes the development of an extractive text summariser for the Xhosa language. An iterative design method has been used to achieve this. Documents were used to test the Xhosa text summariser. To complete this task, a literature analysis of books, journal articles, and some websites that publish their news in Xhosa language was conducted.

7.1 Preparation of Xhosa Corpus

A corpus was prepared for the evaluation of the Xhosa text summariser because there is no previous work on the development of a corpus of isiXhosa news items. The corpus comprised two hundred news items from different sources. In order to gather the Xhosa news corpus, electronic versions of the articles were downloaded and changed to a plain text format (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi and Botha, 2014).

The summariser was developed using Python programming language. The Natural Language Toolkit library was used for textual analysis. The Python programming language was used because the authors wanted to make use of the modules in the Natural Language Toolkit. These modules are good for textual analysis.

Table 1: Basic Statistics of Xhosa Corpus (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi and Botha, 2014).

Feature	Amount
Number of articles	200
Number of words	50901
Total number of sentences in the file	3289
Total number of characters in the file	50901
Total number of paragraphs in the file	1301

7.2 Summarisation Method

Kaili and Pilleriin (2005) state that ever since its inception, research on summarisation methods has continued to rely on text extraction to build a summary. Many more summarisation methods can be used to characterise text summarisation.

This study uses the extraction method (selecting salient sentences as they appear in the original document) to summarise Xhosa news text. The extraction technique can extract sentences as they are from the text document and display a summary to the reader. Making use of this type of method does not require the use of deep linguistic analysis to construct the summary and the sentences do not need to be rewritten.

The extraction of important sentences from the text to be summarised can be weighted using cue phrases. Using an extraction method entails using sub-methods like sentence location and finding the sentence with the most frequently used words in the text document. The sentence that has the highest weight will then be selected and a summary will be constructed.

7.3 Evaluation Method

The nature of evaluating a summary is subjective. It is not an easy task to ascertain if a summary is bad or good. It is necessary to use both human evaluation methods and automatic (machine-based) evaluation methods when evaluating summaries. This study makes use of one of the automatic text summarisation evaluation methods called the intrinsic method (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi, and Botha, 2014).

This study has used two methods that are often used in any research study: subjective and objective evaluation. According to the subjective evaluation method that has been used in this study, there are matrices that have to be considered, namely the linguistic quality, informativeness, coherence, and cohesiveness of the summary.

Many authors have used subjective evaluation methods to look at the outcomes of their research work. Pachantouris and Dalianis (2005) used a subjective evaluation method to evaluate their automatic text summariser. The authors devised a guideline or matrices during the evaluation to ensure that the auto summary conformed to the requirements of manual summarisation. They looked closely at the readability of the text and its fluency.

Subjective evaluation looks specifically at the performance of the system itself. It also looks at how the system is able to extract and salient sentences. The pilot system is measured is based on recall and precision. The evaluators of the summary (researchers and experts) look at both the system summary (i.e. the summary created by the automatic text summariser) and the

reference summary (i.e. the summary created manually by the human beings). The evaluators look at the relevancy (how closely the two summaries match) of both summaries.

Making use of predefined guidelines (i.e. in formativeness, coherency and cohesion), judges (lecturers, students, and Xhosa news presenters) allocated a score using a predefined scale to each summary that was under evaluation. The judges therefore assigned quantitative scores to the summaries based different qualitative features (e.g. content, fluency, etc.). At this stage, human evaluation methods and automatic evaluation methods were used.

7.4 Implementation

The Xhosa text summariser, *IsiXhoSum*, is based on the work presented by Luhn (1958) and Edmondson (1969). The two authors used term frequency and a stopword list to fine tune the effectiveness of their summariser. Modifications have been made to suit the requirements of isiXhosa language. A Xhosa stopword list made sure that redundant words were eliminated from the document. A Xhosa synonym list was used to make sure that duplicate words and sentences were summarised as one or were treated as the same. This summariser is mainly based on the Xhosa advanced stemmer. The principles are not the quite the same and a lot of adjustments and improvements have been made.

After the collection of the corpus, the text was divided into segments: the test set and train set. A train set is used to train the system to understand patterns in a specific language; the test set is used to ascertain whether the system is able to read those patterns and decide on the results.

The Xhosa corpus was read using Plain Text Corpus Reader class. This Plain Text Corpus Reader is used to read unprocessed text or data. Following this, the stopword list was loaded to nltk_data. The stopword list can be imported using the nltk. corpus class. For the summariser to support the text summarisation, significant changes were made to the Xhosa stemmer. This resulted in the creation of a new stopword list for the Xhosa language.

7.4.1 Xhosa Stopword list

Stop words are words that bear no content at all. They do not play any significant role in a given text document. These words are not supposed to be stemmed. Common stopword lists include conjunctions, prepositions, articles, and so-called particles.

The following stopword list was compiled by the authors with the help of a few websites for Xhosa grammar.

Table 2: Xhosa Stopword List (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi, and Botha, 2014)

Word	Meaning
Ngaphezulu	Above
Ngaphantsi	Under
Ngaphambi	Before
emva	Back
Kwaye	And
phambi kwe	Before the
emva kwe	Behind the
Ukuze	So that
Kufuphi	Nearby
Phakathi	Inside

7.4.2 Xhosa Stemmer

In this particular study, the authors used a lightweight stemmer for isiXhosa. Nogwina, Shibeshi and Mali (2014) originally developed this stemmer. The stemmer uniquely stems only nouns, but for a better coherency in the summary, some simple improvements have been made. The modified stemmer takes a number of Xhosa verbs. This is important because regardless of the language used, nouns and verbs give meaning to an entire sentence. The stemmer used in this research was highly influenced by the Porter stemmer. The Porter stemmer is an English stemmer used to work with English words. This stemmer stems words by taking out common morphological and inflection ends of the English language. This the biggest stemmer in the information retrieval field (Tartarus.org, 2006).

The stemmer has a predefined list of nouns and verbs. The original stemmer developed by Nogwina, Shibeshi, and Mali (2014) was purely developed in Java programming language. However, since this study was based on the NLTK library, which consists purely of Python programming language, the stemmer was then converted to the Python programming language.

Table 3: Stemmed Xhosa Words (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi, and Botha, 2014)

Word	Stem	Meaning
isiXhosana	isiXhosa	Xhosa
Umlambokazi	umvambo	river
Isikhomokazi	isikhomo	gender
Indlwana	indlw	house
Isimbonono	isimbono	habit
Ixhegokazi	ixhego	old man
Intokazi	into	thing, something

7.4.3 Summarisation Process

The Xhosa summariser uses the extraction method as the basis for making automatic summaries of the Xhosa language. In every automatic text summariser, there are three common major steps that are carried out: pre-processing; the ranking of sentences; and eventually, the creation of the summary.

7.4.3.1 Pre-Processing

Like other text summarisers, *IsiXhoSum* also makes use of pre-processing tasks to prepare the document for processing. The pre-processing steps include tokenising, stop word removal, and stemming.

When making use of a stemmer, a word is split into its stem and affix. Affixes can be replaced by another affix or replaced by white space as per the rule it matches with. The design of a stemmer depends highly on the language in question. This entails having a deeper understanding of the linguistic side of the of the language (Islam, Uddin and Khan, n.d). A typical simple stemmer algorithm eliminates suffixes using a list of frequent suffixes, while a more complex one would use morphological knowledge to come up with a stem from the words (Paul et al., n.d). Since Xhosa is an extremely inflectional language, stemming serves as important tool when calculating word frequencies (Islam, Uddin and Khan, n.d).

7.4.3.2 Sentence Ranking

Once a document has undergone all the pre-processing steps, the collection gets broken down into a set of sentences that will then be ranked. Ranking is done taking note of two important features: term frequency and sentence position.

Ever since research started on automatic text summarisation, term frequency has been the first method used to try to tackle a long text. The method has its basis in the fact that most often, there are words that appear frequently in document that contain significant meaning. These words must therefore be prioritised (Dalianis, 2000). Dalianis (2000) explains that this can only happen when stop words are not included in the document.

With the TF (term frequency) method, the importance value (score) of a sentence (IVs) is given by:

$$IVs = \sum tf$$

IV is simply a total score of an importance value and is greatly based on the tf, where tf is the term frequency.

The positional value (score) of a sentence is calculated in a way that the first sentence of a text (with the highest score) will take the first position in the paragraph. The last sentence (with the lowest score) will be the in the last place of the summary.

The total importance value (score) of a given sentence, s (TIVs), is given by:

$$TIVs = IVs * c$$

Here, c is a constant multiplicative factor. The value of c is therefore two for the first statement of the first paragraph and 1.6 for the first sentences of the other paragraphs. Only the term frequency score weighs all other sentences. In addition to TIVs, the total score of the importance value of a sentence is based on term frequency and position value.

7.4.3.3 Summary Generation

Summary generation is the last stage in the summarisation process. The summary is made when the sentences have been ranked based on their score. The sentence with the highest rank occupies the first line of the paragraph. In addition to that, the sentence that appears first in the

original document appears first in the summary. This is made possible because the first sentence in of a news article always contains the most information about the document.

7.5 Our Algorithm

The algorithm to make the Xhosa summary goes like this: firstly, the format of the file should be in a text format. The next stage is to make sure that the paragraphs are split into sentences. Then the sentences are split into individual words and the non-character letters are removed. The word should also be tokenised using the tokeniser module in the NLTK. The text file should be cleaned by removing the stop words. Stop words are removed using a stopword list. Once the text document has been cleaned, words have been tokenised, and stop words have been removed, the words need to be stemmed using the Xhosa stemmer. The final step is to rank the words using the above-mentioned formulas.

8. Results and Discussion

To test our Xhosa text summariser, we collected 200 news items documents from the Xhosa online newspaper, IsiGidimi.co.za. The documents were downloaded and saved in a text file format. The authors considered only one reference summary for the evaluation of each document in the corpus. The evaluation of the system-generated summary was done by comparing it to the reference summary. There was a fixed percentage for auto-summarisation (50%) which reduced the text to half of its original length (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi, and Botha, 2014).

Figure 1 shows the interface of isiXhosa text summariser.

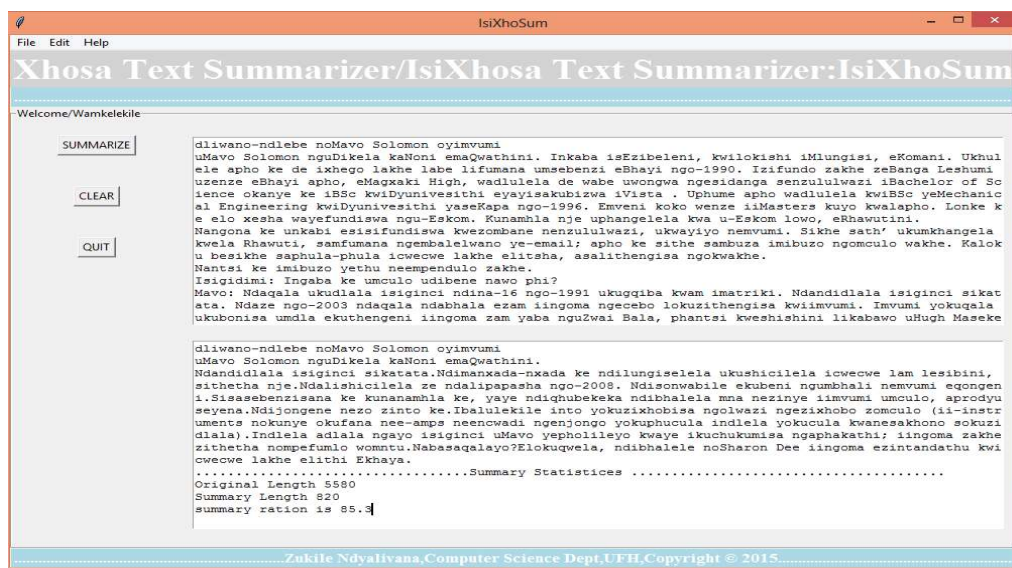
Figure 1: The Xhosa Interface

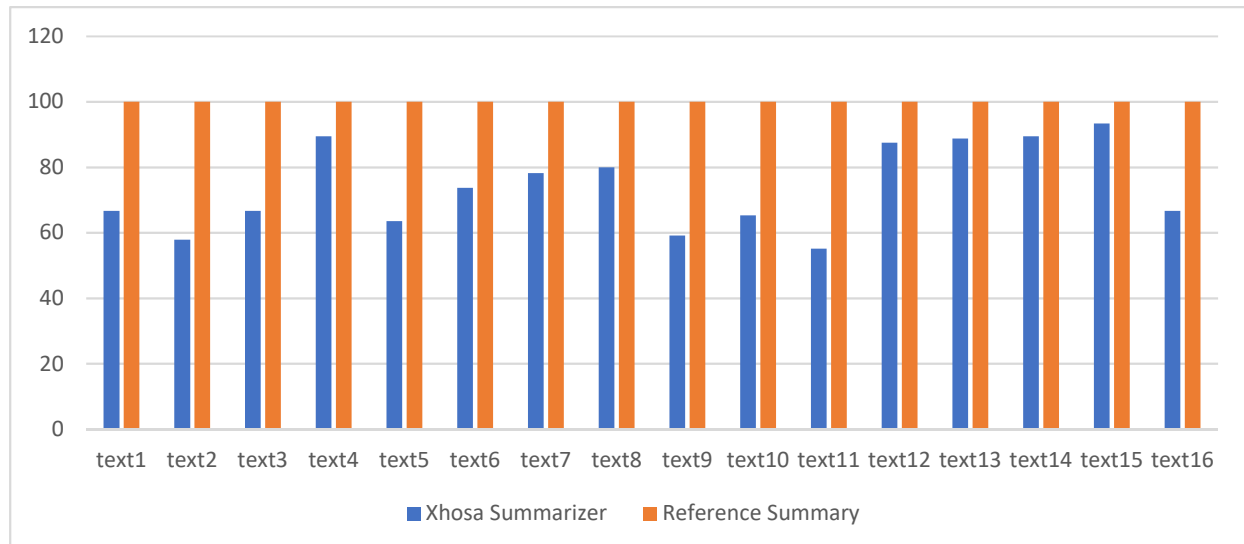
Table 4 shows the results from our text summariser, *IsiXhoSum*.

Table 4: Results of the Xhosa Text Summariser (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi and Botha, 2014)

Text ID	Original Length	Summary Length	Summary Ratio
Text 1	2572	855	66.7
Text 2	2160	909	57.9
Text 3	2574	855	66.7
Text 4	2166	226	89.5
Text 5	4359	1587	63.5
Text 6	3046	661	78.2
Text 7	1650	329	80
Text 8	2280	932	59.1
Text9	2040	706	65.3
Text 10	1862	836	55.1
Text 11	1864	232	87.5
Text 12	1549	173	88.8
Text 13	4070	424	89.5
Text 14	2915	191	93.4
Text 15	2572	855	66.7
Text 16	1422	638	55.1

Figure 2 shows a comparison of our system with manually summarised texts (Ndyalivana, Shibeshi and Botha, 2014).

Figure 2: Relevancy of our system with manually generated summaries



9. Conclusion and Future Work

Automatic text summarisation is one of the fastest growing fields as it is used on a daily basis. People are subjected to information overload. They lead busy lives, which makes it difficult to do long readings. A concise text format is therefore a solution to the problem. In this work, the focus was on coming up with an automatic tool that could help the Xhosa community to be able to read news in a condensed format. This work highlighted the abundance of electronic versions of text that are available online to date. Related work on text summarisation was accessed and critiqued. The extraction method used as the basis for this current work was highlighted. This work further mentioned how statistical methods are fused with linguistic methods.

The objectives of this work were to come up with a tool that would be able to select important sentences from a lengthy Xhosa news items. The summariser used statistical methods (like term frequency) and linguistic methods (like including of Xhosa stopword list and Xhosa stemmer). The results explained in the results section above show that the Xhosa summariser became more effective when the language-based lexicons were included.

Specific guidelines, like coherence, informativeness and cohesion, were used by the evaluators when comparing the manual and automatic summaries. The automatic summaries were found to fulfil these guidelines.

The summariser was evaluated using a specified number of stop words and the stemmer used a specified number of verbs. This so far limits the summariser to only work on a specified number of words. With more language-based rules, which means the addition of more stop words, adding verbs and other Xhosa parts of speech will improve the summariser's effectiveness. This is part of our plan for future work.

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