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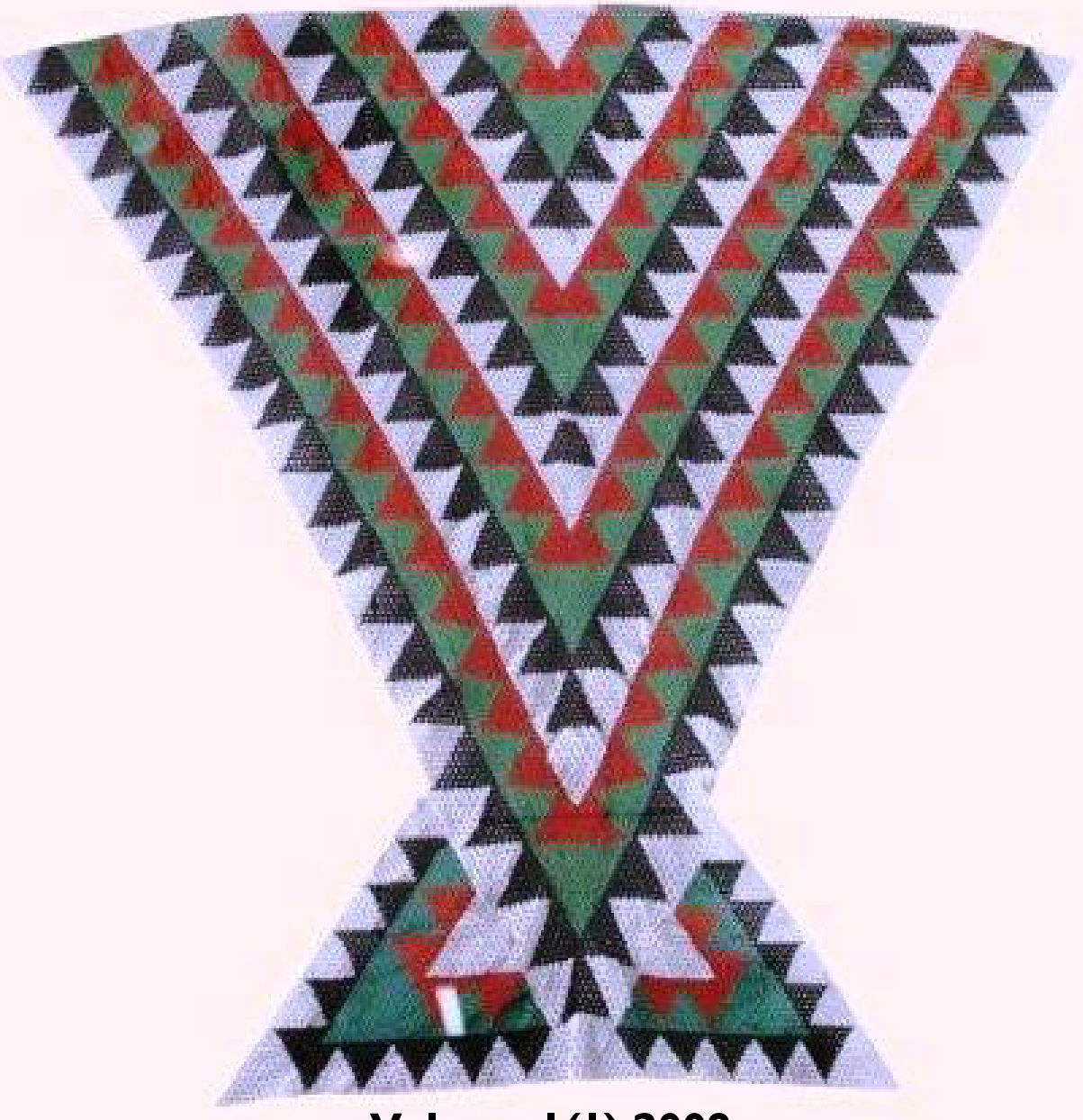

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Editor-in-Chief
Prof. Dennis N. Ocholla
Department of Information Studies
University of Zululand
docholla@pan.uzulu.ac.za

Editors
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EDITORIAL

Dear Inkanyiso Readers,

It is my pleasure to present you with this first issue of our new journal of the Faculty of Arts, *Inkanyiso* (which means light)*: The Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, launched at the University of Zululand on the 30th November 2009. The beaded threads on the front cover of the journal are worn by expectant mothers of Nguni origin and symbolize fertility and reproductivity, which this journal aims to emulate by multiplying its output in the near future. The aim of the journal is mainly to publish quality multidisciplinary research papers and short papers of general interest in the humanities and social sciences, mainly by scholars in Africa. The journal is peer refereed and will be published twice (June and December) every year. Eight articles are featured in this first issue (Volume.1, No.1). They broadly cover research, publishing, language teaching, psychology, recreation and tourism, and HIV/AIDs

The first paper, *"Challenges of doing research in sub-Saharan African universities: digital scholarship opportunities"*, written by Stephen Mutula from the University of Botswana, recognizes that research and the dissemination of knowledge should feature prominently in universities. Stephen discusses the challenges of conducting research in African universities and assesses the opportunities digital scholarship can engender for and within these institutions. Musonda Mpepo (University of Zululand) is the author of the second article - "*Some of the problems in first year students' academic writing in some SADC universities"* - which discusses problems that confront *English Second Language* (ESL) learners in academic writing in some Southern African Development Community (SADC) universities. He notes that low English language proficiency manifests itself in numerous syntactic errors and inappropriate lexical selection in students' use of the language. Musonda argues that the problem partly stems from the fact that the burden has been placed on departments of English that do not seem to want to abandon their literary tradition, and discusses what is done and what needs to be done for first-year students when they enter university in Historically Black Universities (HBUs).

In the third article, "*The vexed 'colour problem': Doris Lessing and the 'African Renaissance'",* Patricia Louw discusses the African renaissance and the revitalization of African cultures and echoes the argument that looking back on Africa's past is an important part of envisioning and formulating the African renaissance. Johannes Britz from the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee) and the University of Pretoria focuses on open access. His article, entitled *"Open access: challenges and barriers to African scholars",* recognizes the escalating cost of journals and argues that Open Access (OA) journals provide an ideal opportunity for African scholars to gain access to the global body of scholarly research. He concludes that African scholars are still in many ways marginalized when it comes to the access and use of OA scholarly materials.

Nomahlubi Makunga and Lindiwe Shangwe's article*, "Drawings as a method of evaluation and communication with bereaved children",* reflects on concerns over childhood grief when death strikes in the child's immediate environment. Their study aimed to investigate whether projective drawings could prove reliable in exploring the world of a Black bereaved child. "*The nexus between sustainable livelihoods and the ecological management of World Heritage Sites: lessons from iSimangaliso World Heritage Park, South Africa"* by Thandi Nzama focuses on recreation and tourism. Thandi's findings indicate the significance of the symbiotic relation between the sustainable use of natural resources and their protection, and suggest that integrated planning should form the basis of the implementation of the ecological management approach and enhance the effectiveness of environmental assessments. Blessing Mbatha (University of South Africa) is the author of the seventh article, "Barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of combating the spread of HIV and AIDS: the case of the University of Zululand and Mangosuthu University of Technology", where he explains why it is necessary to distribute condoms all over campus, especially in students' residences where students spend most of their time. Lastly "Language and the current challenges in the South African school system" by Elliot Mthembeni Mncwango discusses the current challenges facing the school system in South Africa with respect to language, and the role that schools can play to help achieve multilingualism. Elliot notes that in many schools, especially former Model C schools, indigenous African languages are not included in the school curricula.

I hope that you enjoy this and subsequent issues as *Inkanyiso* grows from strength to strength.

Regards

Dennis N. Ocholla

Editor-in-Chief, *Inkanyiso*

Challenges of doing research in sub-Saharan African universities: digital scholarship opportunities

Stephen Mutula[1]
Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana
mutulasm@mopipi.ub.bw

Universities the world over are responsible for research, knowledge generation, scholarship and innovation. They also serve as conduits for the transfer, adaptation, and dissemination of knowledge generated across the world. Universities are expected to guarantee the most efficient utilisation of research results and their possible application to economic life. Globally, universities are facing renewed external and internal pressure as the push for them to meet the changing needs of society intensifies as a result of trends in the transition towards a knowledge-based economy; massification of higher education; and the integration and assimilation of Information Technology (IT) into the academic environment. Moreover, the emergence and use of IT in higher education has led to an increasingly virtual education system, with implications for the dynamics and conduct of university research. Universities no longer remain sole citadels of research activities, as private or government research institutes are increasingly involved in knowledge creation and dissemination. The internationalisation of higher education, coupled with growing student mobility and increased competition for funding, has recently occasioned efforts to rank universities in terms of their academic quality and productivity at national, regional and global levels.

Despite the increased demands on universities, they remain constrained by declining state funding, increasing enrolments, limited physical facilities, etc. New technologies now offer lifelines for African universities to re-engineer and reposition themselves in order to meet these ever increasing societal demands effectively. This paper discusses the challenges of doing research in African universities, and assesses the opportunities digital scholarship can engender for these universities. The focus of the paper is on universities in sub-Saharan Africa, excluding North Africa and to some extent, South Africa. North African higher education is largely influenced by practices in Europe and the Middle East. South Africa has had a separate and distinct political history and governance that differs from other African countries. The country also has a fairly well developed technological and industrial economy, which is quite ahead of other African countries. Their system of higher education is older (most universities were established during the pre-World War II phase, while in most sub-Saharan countries, universities were established post-independence, beginning in the late 1950s) and their universities are well endowed with good libraries, well equipped laboratories, long traditions of scholarship based on European models, and a well established ICT infrastructure that is accessible to both faculties and students.

Keywords: Research, digital scholarship, e-research, e-learning, sub-Saharan Africa, higher education

Introduction

Recent university rankings generally show that African universities – save for some South African universities – are performing poorly. Other than research, ranking takes into account the teacher-student ratio, proportion of international faculty members in relation to local staff, and the number of international students (The Standard, 2006). Other criteria used include universities' research outputs and general contribution to new knowledge; levels of training and application of science and technology; presence on the Internet and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs); volume of published material on the web; visibility and impact of the universities' web pages as measured by the citations (site visits) or links they receive (inlinks); perceived quality; institutional statistics; websites and surveys of students, scholars or employers to make comparisons between institutions; the number of Nobel and Fields Medal winners; articles published in *Nature* and *Science*; articles in citation indexes; and academic performance with respect to the size of an institution.

There is a significant amount of debate and controversy surrounding university rankings, especially with regard to the criteria used. Some universities feel that the methodologies used are flawed because the assessors do not visit the universities. Moreover, not all information can be found on websites, or the information used is outdated (e.g. the qualifications of faculty members obtained from the Association of Commonwealth Universities). Linking employment to the relevance of courses is also wrong, because the job opportunities available in any given economy influence the employment rates and may not directly relate to the quality of graduates. Additionally, universities in different regions face different challenges, and this in itself suggests that different criteria should be used. For example, across many institutions the number of students and the number of faculty staff or postgraduate programmes differ (Siringi, 2005). Nevertheless, university rankings are used by students and others to inform them in their decisions about universities, while at the same

1. Stephen Mutula, PhD, is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana, Botswana

time providing them with an indication of the quality of graduates. In some countries, rankings are used to determine the proportion of funding given to universities. Rankings also summarise the global performance of any university, and reflect the commitment to the dissemination of scientific knowledge. *Rankings may be used as proxies for employment opportunities as they have the potential to serve as screening devices for employers, and may also function as indicators of research quality. Employers compete strongly for the acquisition of postgraduate students from reputable academic institutions, and even offer positions well in advance of these students' completion of academic programmes.* According to the authors, evaluation has had a significant impact on the performance of universities worldwide. For example, evaluation has prompted researchers to increase their publication output in visible journals. Ranking has also increased awareness among academics on how best to make their research activities public (*The Standard*, 2006).

World university rankings are dominated by institutions in wealthy countries, particularly those situated in Europe and the United States. However, some South African universities perform relatively well and dominate in Africa. Four of South Africa's 23 universities, or 17% of the country's institutions, were placed in the top 500 globally by the 2006 Academic Ranking of World Universities. These institutions were the University of Cape Town (at 252), University of the Witwatersrand (396), University of KwaZulu-Natal (470), and the University of Pretoria (481). The only other ranked African institution was the University of Cairo in Egypt, which was placed at 402 out of 500.

Academic Ranking of World Universities – Africa Rankings

Rank	Country	University
252	South Africa	University of Cape Town
396	South Africa	University of the Witwatersrand
402	Egypt	University of Cairo
470	South Africa	University of KwaZulu-Natal
481	South Africa	University of Pretoria

(Source: Institute of Higher Education, 2006).

According to 2008's global ranking of world universities, produced by the Institute of Higher Education at Shanghai Jaio Tong University in China, only three African universities remain in the top 500. The Universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand and KwaZulu-Natal are in the top 500; however, two other universities have fallen off this list. A similar ranking by the Spanish-based Internet Lab Ranking of 30 top African universities places UCT (398); Stellenbosch (566); UP (718); Wits (720); Rhodes (738); UNISA (1449);… UZ (3724) (InternetLab, 2008)

Although African universities have been known to suffer from various constraints that affect the quality of research and learning, the ranking of universities has ruffled some egos, especially because of the impact such ranking could have on resource allocation and attracting students and staff in a globalised competitive environment. The National Universities Commission (2006) in Nigeria points out that universities in that country do not have web presence and perform poorly in webometric ranking – factors that can make them lose their esteem in the eyes of stakeholders, such as potential students and funding agencies. This in turn may affect academic exchange with reputable universities from other parts of the world for teaching and research. The National Universities Commission pointed out that Nigerian universities were performing poorly with regard to research in a digital dispensation because of the scant attention paid to presenting research findings in web-searchable forms; low impact local journals without Internet links; lack of publication in electronic journals; and the absence of Nigerian universities on the Internet (i.e. no web addresses). Most indicators used in the rankings of universities rely, to a great extent, on applications and the use of ICT. However, the International Education Association of South Africa (2008) points out that [whereas] ICT should underpin technology, innovation, research, communication and the development of the knowledge economy. In most SADC states, ICT resources are poor or virtually non-existent in sub-Saharan universities, with 80% of the region's universities inadequately connected.

Sawyer (2004) observes that research capacity development in most African countries represents an instance of market failure because explicit public policy does not exist to reinforce and ensure that higher education and research receive adequate investment from both private and public sectors for infrastructure development in the form of laboratories, equipment, libraries, and a system of information storage, retrieval, and utilisation. The poor performance of African universities in international rankings, especially with regard to research, is exacerbated by the fact that some universities do not offer PhD programmes. For those that do offer PhD programmes, the rates of student completion are too low to compete globally, let alone meet the national needs of government, private sectors and universities. This is exacerbated by the fact that it takes on average 6-8 years to complete a PhD as a result of inadequate resources and

bureaucracy in the approval process involving departments, faculties and universities (Szanton and Manyika, 2001). Due to limited staff capacity, most PhDs are based on dissertations alone, and do not include course work, comprehensive exams, and multi-disciplinary supervisory committees. Szanton and Manyika (2001) provided some statistics on the number of PhDs produced in African countries as follows: the University of Ghana, in Legon, awarded 15 PhDs between 1998-2001 in all disciplines; Makerere University granted 43 PhDs between 1990-1998 in all the sciences; the University of Dar es Salaam issued 56 PhDs in all fields between 1990-1999; the University of Zimbabwe granted 32 PhDs in agriculture, arts and social sciences in 2001; UCT produced 382 PhDs between 1996-2000; and the University of Pretoria produced 1100 PhDs between 1991-2000.

Challenges attributed to scholarly research in most African universities also include the descriptive nature of research and the lack of empirical rigour (in part due to a lack of resources); paucity of cross-disciplinary research endeavours; limited collaborations between practitioners and academics; limited linkage between research and the national development agenda (Moahi, 2007); decreasing state subsidies (Botha and Simelane, 2007); shortage of research expertise and experienced supervisors (Biermann and Jordaan, 2007); high subscription costs of scholarly journals; limited publishing infrastructure; lack of incentives for researchers; inadequate mentoring frameworks; and weak or non-existent partnerships (Lor, 1998). Moreover, research done in African universities tends to focus on local or national development issues by putting an emphasis on applied research at the expense of basic research. The focus on national or regional issues may mean that research outcomes are generally not widely applicable to international issues. This is exacerbated by inadequately equipped libraries, with limited access to modern journals and the Internet. Szanton and Manyika (2001) note that because African university libraries have suffered huge financial losses, neither doctoral students nor their local faculty supervisors are likely to have access to current theoretical and comparative literature that might provide new and valuable insights in their dissertation projects. In most libraries, books are ancient, unavailable or the pages largely mutilated. University presses are under-funded or non-existent, and university journals are either few or unavailable. Due to inadequate experience and the lack of contacts, junior members of staff find it difficult to publish in international journals. Consequently, dissertations end up being stacked in libraries, leading to inbreeding.

1960-1980s: Post-independence challenges of African universities

African countries began attaining their independence in the 1950s, and made fighting poverty, illiteracy and disease their major preoccupation in order to improve the lives of their people, who had been downtrodden and marginalised from mainstream or national economic activities under colonial governments. Soon after independence, there was heavy investment in education (especially the training of graduate and technical personnel) in order to develop adequate manpower to take up newly available positions, especially in the civil service.

Mamdani (2006) observes that the post-independence era of the 1960s and 1970s in African universities experienced a boom when many governments pumped investment into new and existing universities. For instance, in Nigeria the pre-independence era had one university with 1,000 students in 1961; 30 years later it had 41 universities with 131,000 students. Most African universities generally succeeded in providing high level personnel to the civil service, schools and to the applied sciences – medicine, agriculture and the social sciences (Halsey, 1992; Slaughter, 1998). The initial enthusiasm for higher education by governments after independence was short-lived, as this was followed by a sharp decline in the number and quality of universities, attributed to factors such as falling commodity prices, a sharp rise in the price of crude oil, trade barriers, declining GDPs, political instability, and debt crises. Sutherland-Addy (1993) observed that by the 1980s universities were in a state of crisis. The decay of physical facilities, with much of the facilities in need of maintenance and refurbishment, and the lack of modern electronic and technological infrastructure and poorly stocked and managed libraries were widespread features of African higher education. Ahemba (2006) notes that 'in Nigeria, The Ivory Coast, Kenya and Uganda, crumbling faculties and campuses, overcrowded lecture halls and hostels and depleted libraries and laboratories bear sad witness to (former and still prevalent) chronic shortages of funding and investment'. The situation was further exacerbated by poor governance, characterised by a lack of democracy, single party states, coups, detentions without trial and political assassinations.

These negative developments for universities were happening against the backdrop of the universal 'massification of universities', where according to the World Bank (2000), student numbers in African universities rose from 350,000 in 1975 to 1.7m in 1995. At the same time, most African countries faced the challenges of rapidly growing populations and declining economic growth, a slow degree of industrialisation, unemployment, disparity in the distribution of income, escalating costs, declining academic achievements, etc. The economic difficulties forced the countries to turn to the World Bank and IMF for donor support. In return, the World Bank and IMF demanded that these countries undertake Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which included significantly reducing government expenditure on social services. In addition to the SAPs, the World Bank argued that economic and social returns on primary and secondary

education were higher than on tertiary education (Psacharopolous, 1980). Universities consequently suffered reduced government funding in line with these demands. Kenya, for example, decreased its national recurrent budget on education from 38% in 1987/88 to 19% in 1988/89 (Maina, 1989:110). A further decrease followed in 1992/93 to 18% (Republic of Kenya, 1993:88). This was accompanied by government reducing per student expenditure from an average of US$6,300 in 1980 to approximately US$ 1,200 in 1995.

As a result of these declining fortunes, Szanton and Manyika (2001) state that African universities had to endure a period of approximately 15-20 years during which salaries remained flat or were lowered; research funding dried up; faculties could not maintain membership in professional associations or attend international conferences; libraries stopped purchasing books and journals; physical facilities (classrooms, hostels, labs, etc.) crumbled; the building of new structures was terminated; scholarships for faculties were either declined or stopped; pensions for staff became uncertain; and the hiring of new staff stopped while the brain drain increased. In addition, medical cover that faculties had enjoyed were eliminated, as were subsidised housing, car loans, etc. When the situation within universities became unbearable, student and faculty activism against government emerged on campuses. Feeling threatened, governments started to clamp down heavily on universities, leading to an exodus or exile of faculty staff members and students to foreign countries, especially to Europe and North America, while others were detained without trial in places like Kenya and Nigeria. Faculties that endured and remained were lured locally into consultancies to undertake applied research on behalf of donor communities, without being replenished by the universities from which they came. Blair and Jordan (1994) claim that the massive brain drain of well trained and skilled academic staff, mainly to Europe and North America, was estimated by the World Bank at 23 000 qualified academic staff leaving every year.

Figures vary, but currently it is estimated that there are more than 300,000 highly skilled and experienced professionals from Africa living and working in Europe and North America (of these, more than 40,000 are PhD holders), comprising doctors, lecturers, researchers, nurses and professional managers (*Kenya Times*, 2006 quoting deliberations at the UNESCO Conference 14 February 2006). In Kenya alone, the World Bank reports that nearly 40% of the country's highly skilled professionals emigrate to rich countries. The rate of emigration in Kenya's case is about double that of Africa as a whole, with about 20% of its skilled workers having moved from Africa to the developed world. The migration of the highly skilled cadre of academic professionals and students has led to an acute shortage of academics in Africa's higher education institutions, especially in key fields such as science and engineering (Oketch, 2000). President Kibaki of Kenya lamented that the country was losing Ksh 20 billion (ZAR 2 billion Rand) annually in capital flight paid by students in fees abroad because of the country's incapacity to absorb all those seeking higher education locally (Siringi and Kago, 2006).

Prospects for universities in Africa

By the turn of the new millennium in 2000, there was a wind of change following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, which was followed by the increased democratisation of Africa as pressure from the international community mounted and donor funding became tied to good governance. That aside, there was also an emerging crop of new leaders in Africa with democratic credentials, such as Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Frederick Chiluba of Zambia, Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, Joachim Chissano of Mozambique, John Kuffor of Ghana, etc. The unbanning of the ANC and the release of South African freedom icon Nelson Mandela renewed the hope of many in African countries and their universities.

The post 1990s period has seen a unified international approach to alleviating global poverty (Millennium Development Goals) by increasing the use of ICT to enhance good governance (e-government), enhancing economic development (e-business and e-commerce), bridging the digital divide (WSIS), and increasing access to education (e-learning, etc), thus putting universities back in the limelight. The World Bank (2001) now acknowledges that in order for countries to deal with the challenges of the new millennium such as globalisation, reducing poverty, working within the knowledge based society and bridging the digital divide, there is a need for a highly skilled workforce, a role universities are well placed to play. The World Bank (1993) noted that any country aspiring to lay a strong foundation in socio-economic development must put the responsibility on higher education institutions to equip individuals with the advanced knowledge and skills required for positions of responsibility in government, business and the professions. Universities are perceived as important entities in helping government develop policies and strategies to meet MDGs targets, and produce much needed skills for industrialisation in the knowledge economy.

The African Association of Universities (AAU) and South African Vice-Chancellors, realising the strategic importance of universities in the new millennium, started a campaign for the revival of universities by petitioning government through the African Union and NEPAD to try to address the malaise afflicting universities on the continent. The campaign was given impetus by the increased democratisation of the continent, and the wind of economic reform as characterised by economic liberalisation, pluralist-political reforms, the emergence of multi-party democracies and the clamour for good governance by both the governed and international development agencies. Responding to the request by the AAU at the

11th conference in 2005, held in Cape Town, President Thabo Mbeki called on universities to raise their voices and actively assist development and respond to the unprecedented support from developed countries (MacGregor, 2005). The president outlined three major challenges faced by universities, i.e. the need to analyse problems and offer practical solutions; the need to set up centres to measure progress in key areas such as democracy, peace, stability, human rights and development; and the need to support socio-economic development on a continent that "now speaks with one voice" about Africa's pressing needs. Similarly, the Commission for Africa's (2005) report argued that stronger universities could help improve the accountability of governments and build participation and citizenship, and generate independent research and analysis that supports vibrant debate. This in turn can greatly improve the effectiveness of government policy and other services. Universities are also critical to tackling a chronic skills shortage on a continent that loses many, if not most, of its scholars through the brain drain.

Increasingly, most universities have now also awakened to the fallacy of solely depending on government for full financial support. Following reduced donor funding, governments in Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, etc. started to take extraordinary measures to survive. For example in Kenya, the Higher Education Loans Board was established to facilitate the financing of university education to more deserving Kenyans and improve the recovery of loans that had been advanced to beneficiaries of university education who were now in employment. At that point in time, only 20-25% of loan recipients ever paid back their loans because of poor tracking systems and follow-ups on the part of government (Woodhall, 1991:55).

Moreover, governments have started to encourage the private sector to participate in the provision of higher education. In Kenya and Zambia, tuition fees were introduced during the late 1980s, and universities were required to adopt corporate models so that they could become self-financing. Kenyan universities introduced parallel degree programmes for those in working positions who met university entry requirements and fresh students from high school who did not secure entry into universities because of the competitive selection process. Those who now gain entry to parallel degree programmes pay fees at global market rates. Saint (1992) reported that the University of Zambia and Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique established internet nodes linked to local electronic networks that sell subscriptions to non-university affiliated businesses, organisations and individuals. The University of Ghana was reported to be making a profit of 9% on a total income of US $22700 in 1991 through its consulting centre. Similarly, Nsukka University claimed a profit of US $35,238 through its consulting activities over the period 1982-1991, on a turnover of US $90398, with the consultants receiving 50% of the profits, and the university and departments receiving 30% and 20% respectively.

Most universities in Africa are now thinking strategically by developing strategic plans and mission statements that aspire to offer practical experiences to encourage innovativeness; introducing performance management systems to enhance the quality of education; and seeking partnerships with industry, government, NGOs and communities. Although the challenges of the new millennium have seen universities begin to regain their former glory, they are coming under renewed pressure of a different kind. Szanton and Manyika (2001) outline these pressures as the need to: produce highly skilled graduates who can globally compete in the knowledge economy; relate curriculum to labour demand; reconstruct the curriculum to meet African needs; increase equity of under-represented populations; support critical, basic research, theory building, experimentation and teaching; deal with HIV/AIDs; lead in social transformation rather than act as conservative or elitist institutions; forge links with industry and government in order to become more innovative and relevant to society; and participate in or form part of government policy making organs.

Digital scholarship opportunities for African universities

African universities have, for the last five years (since 2004) in a row, been ranked behind their counterparts in the global league of universities with regard to frontiers of knowledge and research. Some of the indicators used in evaluating universities are ICT-based, such as visibility, web links (in-links and outlinks), statistics maintained, webometric citations, etc. Szanton and Manyika (2001) noted that in African universities there is little emphasis on the careful collection and consolidation of information, and they attribute this to the inadequate deployment of ICTs in the learning and research environment of the universities. Moreover, given the resource constraints universities face, the record keeping of research (degrees, disciplines, completion rates and topics of research) has not been prioritised. Most research is still kept offline. Onyancha (2008) found that Africa only represents 1% (13) of global repositories, with the leaders being Europe 48% (521), North America 38% (328), Asia 8% (106), Australasia 6% (66), South America 4% (41), the Caribbean 0% (1) and Central America 0% (1). South Africa dominates in Africa with 10 institutional repositories, followed by the remaining three in Uganda (1), Zimbabwe (1) and Namibia (1). The South African institutional repositories include: AHERO (African Higher Education Research Online); CSIR Research Space; Durban University of Technology IR; Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Database of the University of Johannesburg; University of Pretoria's

Institutional Research Repository; Rhodes eResearch Repository; Stellenbosch University Institutional Repository; UCT Computer Science Research Document Archive; University of Pretoria Electronic Theses and Dissertations; and University of Western Cape Theses and Dissertations.

Tarpeh (1994), in a report for the African Association of Universities based on studies in universities in Cote d'Ivoir, Ghana, Nigeria and Zambia, emphasised the need for strengthening the statistical database of the universities. Although libraries are expected to maintain lists and also keep theses and dissertations, this information is not easily available to the university community as a whole because digital technologies have not been applied. Moreover, limited internet connectivity, low bandwidth, limited access to computers and limited support still remain challenges. The World Bank's 1998/99 World Development Report called for radical changes – such as the infusion of ICTs in post-secondary education – if Africa was to equip its labour force with the skills needed to survive in the new technological age.

African universities that choose to ignore the deployment of ICT in learning and research do so at their own peril. The academic environment in universities the world over is undergoing tremendous transformation. The teaching and research work of academic institutions, historically based on the printed page as expressed through libraries and their physical collections of books, journals and documents have been at the heart of universities. However, academic work is being transformed as the shift takes place from print media, such as books, to the internet and digital media. In addition, a different kind of student is also emerging, with greater computer literacy and a different approach to information seeking, mainly through Google (Youngman, 2007). In sum, digital scholarship is now emerging in universities. Many definitions of 'digital scholarship' abound, but Prof. Kirsten Foot from the University of Washington's Department of Communication sums it up coherently 'as any element of knowledge or art that is created, produced, analysed, distributed, published, and/or displayed in a digital medium, for the purpose of research or teaching'.

Digital scholarship may also be perceived as a 'networked, scholarly or academic environment with pervasive integration of digital technologies in everyday learning and research, the necessary physical infrastructure both on and outside campus for access, integration of university information systems such as institutional repositories, online public access catalogues and content management systems, that allow seamless access to content needed for research, publication and scholarly communication'. From these definitions, it is clear that digital scholarship is broad-based and may include one or more of the following: submission of articles, peer review and publication, all done electronically; teaching using pure or blended electronic means; evaluation and assessment of academic work electronically; electronic collaborative research; and electronic communications, e-journals, e-books, and a variety of databases and digital libraries.

The other concept closely related to digital scholarship is e-research, which, according to O'Brien (2005), refers to large-scale, distributed, national or global collaboration in research that typically entails harnessing the capacity of information and communication technology (ICT) systems, particularly the power of high-capacity distributed computing, and the vast distributed storage capacity fuelled by the reducing cost of memory, to study complex problems across the research landscape. E-research is quite beneficial in university environments. It provides researchers with opportunities to develop whole new areas of valuable research and to view existing research in new ways. Through cyber infrastructure, it is possible to link expensive equipment and provide data mining and curation, thus enabling scholars to work in large global research teams on large amounts of data. By making this form of data accessible, some of the stored data may be used up several times for different aspects of research. Access to common data can allow parallel research projects to take place simultaneously. Digital scholarship offers the opportunity to develop cyber infrastructure that is critical for collaborative research and the sharing of resources. Through e-research and collaboration, it is possible to gain access and archive global, rare field-recordings that are at risk of being lost. The archived data can also be enhanced by subsequent students' projects, where metadata is added and stored in a digitally sustainable format, further building this rich research resource. Such records can be made accessible to researchers internationally, allowing new research to occur.

Among the many transformations taking place in universities is the increasing tendency to deliver information online, with libraries responding by making attempts to digitise material that was once only in print format. This action is necessary because it enables collections to be delivered to users 24/7 via intranets, the Internet and other fast and emerging networks. Similarly, digital information resources are increasingly being relied on as primary or complementary information sources of scholarship. Scientific journals that were, a few years ago, produced largely in print format, are now rolled out first as e-versions. Libraries are also transforming their print collections through digitisation or subscription to e-journals, with or without print alternatives, as a strategy to make them more accessible and to enhance resource sharing.

The potential for digital scholarship is enhanced by the increased sophistication of search engines and global library digitisation projects, such as the one that was undertaken by Google in 2004. Moreover, the net generation students also

enhance digital scholarship because they are digitally literate and largely dependent on Google or other search engines for discovery of information resources rather than consultation of library web pages, catalogues and databases as the main sources of information (Lippincott, 2005). Besides, the possibilities offered by Web 2.0 for modern libraries expand the opportunities for implementing digital scholarship projects. Web 2.0 refers to second generation, internet-based services, such as social networking sites, wikis, communication tools and folkosonomies that emphasise online collaboration and sharing among users (O'Really, 2005). Web 2.0 provides new possibilities for creating metadata, virtual references, information literacy, digitisation, and creating digital repositories.

Through Web 2.0, it is possible to develop e-research opportunities. E-research is defined as a collection of distributed computing resources (data repositories, specialised scientific equipment, computing power, knowledge services etc.) that appear to users as one virtual system (OBrien, 2005). The concept of Library 2.0 has emerged to refer to libraries that integrate all e-resources into a single point of access with a uniform interface, OPAC (consisting of federated search engines), RSS (used for cataloguing and searching results), a 'physical' library that is a loud space for collaboration and conversation through the use of mobile devices, and the integration of the library with e-learning. Likewise, the Patron 2.0 concept enabled by Web 2.0 is making it possible for patrons to not only be content consumers, but creators as well (Pienaar, 2008).

In order for digital scholarship to be institutionalised, a number of interventions are required, such as: an e-strategy; a research portal that would facilitate data transfer; knowledge sharing, including protocols of uploading; open access standards; institutional repositories; digital scholarship/e-research librarians responsible for training, re-orientation and liaison; digital curation services, including standards, software, marketing and training; and portable access/cyber infrastructure (Pienaar, 2008). The e-research strategy would help focus the organisation, keep the organisation on the cutting edge of new developments, provide a framework for capacity building, define operational standards, integrate e-information applications in the organisation, cater for adequate cyber infrastructure, define information products and services, enable the creation of digital repositories, define procedures for digital archiving, define the mandate for digital scholarship, explain sustainability issues, provide quality assurance, and define open access procedures, to name a few. Pienaar (2008), citing the context of the University of Pretoria, maps out the e-environment for scholarship as: e-research, e-learning, e-resources, open scholarship, digitisation, Web 2.0/Library 2.0, institutional repositories, and Library Web.

According to Pienaar (2008), the e-research component is responsible for:

- Digital data curation (data acquisition, creating meta data, annotation, provenance, data storage, data cleansing, data mining, curation and preservation)
- Liaisons with other institutions
- Developing the virtual research environment, and
- Establishing digital scholarship advocacy.

E-learning would be responsible for developing e-skills, the seamless integration of library information, and carrying out information literacy. Digitisation would be responsible for developing digital preservation strategies, equipment requirements, and providing space for digitisation, while open scholarship would be responsible for developing strategies for open scholarship and integrating accredited journals with journals that support open access. Repositories would develop strategies for digital repositories and integrate various e-resources. Library web is basically the portal and gateway to the information in the repository. Web 2.0/Library 2.0 would develop strategies that enhance the user environment i.e. content creation, learning spaces, etc. E-resources would deal with acquisition, the organisation of e-resources, and transforming resources into interactive interfaces. For effective operationalisation, each of these components may be assigned a group of specialists in the area, or a committee.

O'Brien (2005) proposes the following requirements for e-research:

> *Technical infrastructure and services* – ICT infrastructure (high performance computing), networks, data management and storage, repository management, grids, digitisation, data mining, statistical support, data preservation, authorisation and authentication mechanisms, and help desks.
>
> *Leadership and coordination* – brokering the needs of academics by providing connections to necessary support structures or expertise on campus; providing a management structure for e-research across the university; and collaborating with other relevant bodies on campus to foster knowledge and resource sharing across campus communities.

Buchhorn (2004) posits that researchers' e-research requirements include:

- Access to storage and computational resources
- Access to computational software and services
- Videoconferencing and collaboration tools
- User-friendly, application-specific, web-based portals
- Shared access to large data repositories for searching, replication and updating
- Assistance with organising and managing research data sets
- Collaborative steering of remote research experiments and the ability to collaborate in international projects

Digital repositories form one of the most important components of the digital scholarship environment. A digital repository enables easy access to scholarly literature and provides the quickest means of accessing and also disseminating research output. It increases the visibility of authors, making their works widely read. Pienaar and van Deventer (2007) observe that institutional repositories enhance researcher efficiency; integrate systems (across the entire research cycle) and cut out personal duplication; facilitate the utilisation of colleagues' results, which cuts out duplication across organisational boundaries; enable real time communication of research results; and help students and staff easily identify research areas. Repositories can vary in scope, and may be departmental, institution-wide, individual, disciplinary or governmental repositories. Institutional repositories can enable access to documents such as theses and dissertations that are often not disseminated widely. Technical reports can also be archived, including standards, best practices, etc. Such repositories can help prevent the duplication of research work, facilitate access to local content, enable the publication of local content, and make contributions to global scholarly knowledge. A list of institutional repositories can be found through search IR directories such as Directory of Open Access Repositories (DOAR) and Register of Open Access Repositories (ROAR) (Onyancha, 2008).

The digital scholarship environment can facilitate access to a wide range of literature in electronic databases, digital libraries and the institutional repositories of other universities, and consequently help address the dearth of information resources that universities in Africa are faced with. Through digital scholarship, it is possible for universities to enhance *quality research; make* contributions to global knowledge; enhance content development; help bridge the digital divide; provide access for greater numbers of students to higher education; and make access to higher education more democratic and liberalised.

Kraut *et al*. (2003) note that the Internet has changed communication and is enabling researchers to observe new or rare phenomena online and conduct research more efficiently, enabling them to expand the scale and scope of their research. The Internet has also enabled scientists to collaborate by increasing the ease with which they can work with geographically distant partners or share information (Walsh & Maloney, 2002). Research enabled through the Internet lowers many of the costs associated with collecting data, especially with regard to human behaviour, as ICT enables the hosting of online experiments and surveys, allows observers to watch online behaviour, and offers the mining of archival data sources. Through online research, data can be collected from thousands of participants with minimal intervention on the part of experimenters, for example through Internet chat rooms and bulletin boards, which provide a rich sample of human behaviour for studies on communication (Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002).

Challenges of digital scholarship

Despite the potential ICT offers in research, there are several challenges facing researchers in a digital environment, especially within the context of the developing world (in this instance, in Africa). Mutula *et al*. (2006), in an empirical study of e-learning at the University of Botswana, identified the following problems facing students:

- A shortage of computers
- Lack of clarity of online content
- Poor Internet connectivity
- Difficulty in finding information on the Internet
- An inability to cope with the workload
- Poor formats of presenting online content
- The lack of appeal of online content, etc.

When asked how well the materials were presented online, some felt that the presentation was inadequate. As to whether the online course was designed with their needs in mind, 58 (67.4%) of the 86 respondents said yes, 17 (19.8%) said no and 11 (12.8%) did not know. Gerhan and Mutula (2005), in a study on the bandwidth problems at the University of Botswana, similarly found that a shortage of computers is often cited as a major setback hampering effective e-learning. In addition, students often complain of poor Internet connectivity.

Digital dispensation places a heavy demand on library and information professionals. Stueart (2006) notes that information facilitators in the information age are being called upon to help people use resources; enhance outreach services to various users, such as faculties; and work with users at the desktop to show them how to use databases. The librarian is also being seen as an information consultant involved in behind-the-scenes activities, such as helping software designers develop systems that fit users' information seeking behaviour. They are also increasingly getting involved in developing and imparting information literacy while also acting as negotiators responsible for identifying needs; facilitators for providing effective search strategies; educators familiar with literature and information in many formats; and information intermediaries responsible for providing current awareness services and liaisons between the information seeker and the information itself. The librarian is now also perceived as a knowledge manager responsible for supporting the knowledge access process by directing users to other knowledge experts.

Doing research in the digital era is made difficult because there is currently no sampling frame that provides an approximate random sample of Internet users. Unlike what can be achieved by randomly dialling telephone numbers, which provide an approximate sample of countries' populations, the problem associated with achieving a reasonable level of 'representativeness' is exacerbated by the fact that online surveys and experiments rely on opportunity samples of volunteers. As a result, it is not clear how one should go about the task of appropriate generalisation (Kraut *et al*., 2003). Moreover, Internet–based surveys pose challenges of generalisation because response rates to online surveys are typically lower than comparable mail or telephone surveys and, when given the choice of Internet or paper questionnaires, respondents still overwhelmingly choose paper (Couper, 2001). The researcher also does not have control over the environment in which the research is conducted, especially when compared to other experimental settings, given that when people are not identified, they feel less accountable for their actions (Sproull & Kiesler, 1991). The basic ethical principles underlying research involving human subjects, namely respect for persons, beneficence and justice; are difficult to uphold in Internet-based research. This is because, as pointed out by Kraut *et al*. (2003), Internet research involves two potential sources of risk: harm resulting from direct participation in the research (e.g. acute emotional reactions to certain questions or experimental manipulations), and harm resulting from breach of confidentiality.

Hedstrom (2002) outlines some of the research challenges in a digital dispensation. In particular, digital collections are vast, heterogeneous, and growing at a rate that outpaces our ability to manage and preserve them. There are no effective and cost-effective methods to preserve dynamic databases, complex websites, analytical tools or software for long-term retrieval. In addition, digital resources are impossible to interpret or use without accompanying tools for analysis and presentation. Besides, digital content can also not withstand some unspecified period of neglect without this resulting in total loss. There are questions of intellectual property rights, privacy and trust which must be addressed by researchers. Access to digital content sometimes experiences interoperability problems, especially across widely distributed and heterogeneous digital archives.

Most of the content providers of digital material are in the developed world, and they are increasingly moving away from the purchasing model to licensing, which often overrides conventional exceptions to copyright as contained in national legislations, such as fair use and fair dealing. This makes it difficult for the information provider to freely avail such information for academic use without breaching agreements of license, further alienating developing countries from mainstream information (Kiggundu, 2007). In addition, the high costs of access to external databases and for the procurement of digital information makes it increasingly difficult for libraries in the developing world to subscribe to new journals and books, or even maintain existing subscriptions.

Way forward and conclusion

O'Brien (2005) notes that since research is changing dramatically, i.e. becoming more multidisciplinary, more collaborative, more global, and more dependent on the capabilities offered through advanced networks and large data storage; there are new opportunities and challenges for information professionals within higher education. Actively engaging in strengthening partnerships with foreign colleagues and with the researchers within our own institutions is an important way to maintain relevance and be beneficial to the research endeavours of our institutions.

The evolving democratic and technological environment provides a window of opportunity for the universities in Africa to re-engineer themselves and reclaim their lost glory. But for universities to optimise the benefits they can accrue using technologies, a number of interventions are needed. Universities need to develop research strategies that will define resource needs; determine quality assurance measures; elaborate on ethical issues online; define peer review processes, collaboration and partnerships with industry and government; and define mechanisms for the commercialisation of research products, mentorship and complaint resolutions.

Scholars should be encouraged to self archive pre-prints and post-prints of their papers in open access archives or institutional repositories to help address the paucity of research materials that face African universities. Institutional

repositories can make significant contributions to the visibility and international standing of universities and research organisations in the realm of scholarly communication. Libraries have a critical role to play in digital scholarship. O'Brien (2005) observes that libraries have traditionally been central to the research endeavour by managing and preserving scholarly resources, now increasingly in digitised form, and making these resources accessible to the researcher, often through collaboration and partnerships with other libraries. Libraries have know-how not only in managing, providing access to, and preserving scholarly resources, but also in forming federations and collaborations to share published scholarly work. Moreover, libraries are responsible for developing mechanisms that perfect tools and procedures for enhancing easy access to e-information and e-content, such as portals, gateways, and hypertext links to resources.

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Some of the problems in first year students' academic writing in some SADC Universities

M.V. Mpepo[1]
Department of English, University of Zululand.
vmpepo@pan.uzulu.ac.za

There are many problems that confront English as a Second Language *(ESL) learners in academic writing in some Southern African Development Community (SADC) universities. Some observers and commentators have noted that most graduates from Historically Black Universities (HBUs) exhibit poor performance in English when compared to neighbouring countries like Lesotho and Swaziland. One of these problems is the low proficiency which manifests itself in numerous syntactic errors and inappropriate lexical selection in their use of the target language. The forms or varieties are simply mistakes or errors which can be eradicated by teaching. The learners need to learn and understand the structure and nature of the English language. The deviations and innovations arise owing to a number of processes which are sketched out in the paper. This article also argues that the problem stems from the fact that the burden has been placed on departments of English which seem not to want to abandon the literary tradition. It presents some of the problems that African learners of English in HBUs seem to exhibit in academic writing when they enter university education. It discusses what is done and what needs to be done for first-year students when they enter university in HBUs. In HBUs English language programmes are not mandatory or do not exist, as is the case with most SADC universities and some Historically White Universities (HWUs). The conclusion suggests that it becomes necessary to mount similar English language programmes at first year level in institutions which do not have these programmes. It is hoped that this would improve learners' language proficiency and hopefully competence as well as the way students acquire their education.*

Keywords: Students; academic writing; universities, SADC

Introduction

A serious and honest inquiry into our students' poor standard and performance in English, though not a new call or observation, is desperately needed. There are many reasons the situation should obtain. Graduates from departments of English are and should be looked up to as standard-bearers in the use of the language. They should be able to draft or edit scripts, letters, reports, memoranda, speeches, etc. and make decisions on ambiguous usage. They are expected to answer without hesitation 'which is right: X or Y?' from which an obvious follow-up question comes: 'Why?' The knowledge being sought here is not that of a linguist or a language practitioner.

Background

Discussions with language teaching colleagues in the SADC region indicate that a disappointing state of affairs seems to exist, particularly in respect of students and graduates of former Historically Black Universities (HBUs) in South Africa. There is a great deal of general discontentment out there. Language practitioners in the departments of English from school to higher institutions of learning should shoulder the blame to a large extent. The major problem is the lack of learning or under-preparedness of learners in Historically Black Universities (HBUs), and the responsibility of teaching or developing the English proficiency is shifted to departments of English, where in most cases there is no capacity or programme to deal with the task. It is an indictment of these departments that the burden of teaching the language placed on them has not the produced desired results.

Some of the problems

There seems to be a wide disparity in English proficiency among graduates within the SADC region. In South Africa the situation is serious and needs more urgent practical attention than the lip-service it sometimes receives. Those from HBUs are said to be very weak in English proficiency when compared to those from HWUs, such as University of Pretoria, University of Cape Town and the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Learners from countries like Lesotho and Swaziland are reported by Bloom (2008) to perform better than their South African counterparts on basic literacy and numeracy. The situation could be worse in under-resourced schools from where HBUs draw their students. Barkhuizen (1992) has made the point that "most high school teachers have had very little or no training at all in the structure of language." The background of Black learners of English is that of ill-trained or unqualified teachers (see also Buthelezi, 1995). Therefore, most first year students in HBUs are weak or under-prepared and the situation continues during their university education. Apartheid could still be a factor, in that students' segregated parents could not acquire enough skills in English to pass on to the immediate post-apartheid generations.

1. Musonda Mpepo is an Associate Professor in the Department of English, University of Zululand, South Africa

Graduates are reported to be very weak, if not lacking the most basic language skills, in this important official language. For example, they are reported to be unable to read and write competently, yet some of them have been awarded a degree which reports that they studied English at university level. Third year students or students in their final year of university study cannot write sentences, paragraphs, essays and dissertations, yet the expectation is that they have this skill.

Students feel that they need or are encouraged to register for English modules or courses to improve their English. More often than not, the students are disappointed to find that little if anything is achieved, however. The main weaknesses of twelve years of education are expected to be remedied in one term or a year's teaching in the Department of English.

It cannot be an exaggeration to state that the contact period between the lecturers and students at university is too short to make a major impact on the students' competency. It is an unrealistic expectation to expect lecturers, who are in most cases not trained language teachers, to remedy the problems the students bring to their university education.

It should not be forgotten that lecturers in departments of English are people who, in most cases, are not trained or certified language teachers, but individuals who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields of specialisation in literary studies and not in language studies *per se*.

The extreme end of the sad state of affairs is where disciplines that have nothing to do with language have been known to mount courses and label them *language* courses as long as they deal with writing skills or logical thinking. Philosophy, for instance, which requires the skills of writing and thinking, has been offered as a *language* module at the University of Zululand.

It is from this pool of graduates that teachers of English are drawn who prepare the first-year students that come to universities after passing matriculation, or O level examinations in some SADC countries. This seems to be a perpetually recycled problem as little or nothing appears to be done about it even at university level.

The challenge of English teaching arguably lies more decidedly in developing and improving the literacy and communicative competence of the learners rather than solely exposing them to the literary tradition. The learners need to understand the structure and nature of the language to be able to handle its literature with greater efficiency. Departments of English should deal with both language and literature and should take explicit responsibility for addressing language-related problems throughout the university.

These issues need to be raised within departments of English and should involve more knowledge about the structure of the language than is the case in the traditional context of English teaching where lecturers are steeped in the literary tradition. Young (1988:325) aptly points out the following:

> English graduates clearly know a great deal about English literature and literary criticism and are able to apply this knowledge well in their own teaching of school based literature. But there are obviously many other facets to 'English' in the school curriculum …These additional components of 'English' are embedded more in linguistic and sociolinguistic frames of knowledge than they are in literary ones. It is in these later two areas of understanding about language that we find graduates in English to be lacking in knowledge much needed in the classrooms, especially in the TESOL context.

Moyo (1995) has reported that the main problem which confronts second language learners (ESL) in academic writing is their low proficiency, which manifests itself in numerous syntactical and inappropriate lexical selections in the use of English: the Target Language (TL).

Forson (1992:48) observes that when degree courses in English were first introduced in South Africa's universities, almost all the students were native speakers of the language and the departments could afford to teach literature, justifiably assuming that there would be no language problems in the learners' way. Non-native speakers had attained a relatively higher proficiency in the language before being admitted to university. He further records that:

> now … things have changed: the majority of the students in …possibly all English departments in the country, are users of English as a second language: Indians, speakers of African indigenous languages and Afrikaans – who need to understand the structure and nature of the language to be able to handle its literature with greater efficiency.

According to Forson (*ibid*.:48)

> Student numbers in the departments of English at that time were relatively small, and lecturers in English literature, most of whom were native speakers, could at least perceive and "correct" errors in expression while marking exercises (even if they didn't, wouldn't, or most probably, couldn't assign reasons for the "correction" beyond the feeling that it "doesn't sound right …")

English language teachers expect that their students will write in fully formed sentences, with cohesive paragraphs, with a variety of lexical items, with tensed verbs and numbered nouns. Accordingly, they generally tend to correct the absence of tense or number markings on verbs and of determiners on nouns. The use of *phrases* or *fragments* instead of *complete sentences* and a lack of *paragraph development* are characteristic of students' work.

The Historically White Institutions (HBIs) may not have needed language programmes because their learners had the required competence when they entered university. In fact, these learners had studied the structure of the English language. Now the situation has changed. Native English speakers are in the minority among students in the English departments. There are more Black learners with weak proficiency in HWUs and also in HBUs. Most of these learners might not have studied the structure of the English language. However, it is ironical that Academic Development (AD) appears to have collapsed in HBUs, while it has remained at the University of Witwatersrand, the University of Cape Town and at Rhodes University.

The HBUs which previously admitted students without matriculation symbols have decided to close the doors to these and only admit student with a pass in English. The HBUs are no longer places where students who fail can get a chance for university education, but are competing with the best in terms of student admission. The unfortunate situation is that in these institutions the need for proficiency among the students has been recognised, but there are no practical measures in place other than lip-service and memorandum circulation.

Forson (1992:49) has pointed out that "most high school teachers have had very little or no training at all in the structure of language." The background of Black learners of English is that of ill-trained or unqualified teachers (see also Buthelezi, 1995). Therefore, ill-formed structures are passed on or taught to learners and become fossilised. Undoubtedly, these learners' competence is bound to be weak when they enter university education. Students exhibit deficiencies in academic writing owing to a lack of linguistic competence in terms of use of appropriate vocabulary and a lack of familiarity with the writing modes and skills concerned with effective conventions for written work.

Some examples of errors and mistakes

According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982:138:139) researchers have found that like L1 learners' errors, most of the errors L2 learners make indicate they are gradually building an L2 rule system. The most common are:

1. **Omitting grammatical morphemes**, which are the items that do not contribute much to the meaning of sentences, as in *He buy goat.*
2. **Double marking** is a semantic feature (e.g. past tense) when only one marker is required, as in *She didn't went back*.
3. **Regularising rules**, as in *womans* for women.
4. **Using wrong pronouns,** use one form in place of other, such as the use of ***her*** for both *she* and *her*, as in *I see her yesterday. Her dance with my sister.*
5. **Using two or more forms in random alteration,** even though the language requires the use of each only under certain conditions, as in the random use of *he* and she regardless of the gender of the person in question.
6. **Misordering,** items in constructions that require a reversal of word-order rules that had been previously acquired, as in *What you are doing?* Or misplacing items that may be correctly placed in more than one place in the sentence, as in *They are all the time late*.

The distinction between error and mistake

Sometimes researchers distinguish between errors caused by conditions such as fatigue and inattention (what Chomsky, 1965, calls "performance" conditions), and errors resulting from lack of knowledge of the rules of the language (what Chomsky, 1965, calls "competence"). In some of the language literature, performance errors have been called "mistakes" while the term "errors" has been reserved for the systematic deviations. It is claimed that the learner is still developing knowledge of the L2 rule system (Corder, 1967).

The distinction between performance and competence errors is extremely important. However, for our purposes we use **error** to refer to any deviation from a selected educated norm of language performance, no matter what the characteristics or causes of the deviation might be.

It is interesting to note that preliminary research has been carried out on some of the deviations and innovations of English in southern Africa. Studies such as those by Buthelezi (1995), Chisanga (1997) and Magura (1985) seem to suggest the existence of local varieties of English. However, Chishimba (1991) and Mpepo (2000), from a pedagogical point of view, argue that these forms within varieties of English are simply mistakes or errors which can be dealt with by teaching, even if it involves drilling. In fact, every speaker of any language would like to use the correct forms to be considered to be competent in the language.

Among the most common deviations and innovations in Southern Africa are:

Buggered (broken down or out of order) ***lekker*** (nice, good), ***braai*** (barbecue), ***baas*** (boss), ***robots*** (traffic lights), ***lobola/ed*** (brideprice), ***offed*** (switched off), ***oned*** (switched on). ***moveous*** (not staying in one place), ***now now*** (very soon, shortly), ***costive*** (expensive**), *gate crash*** (enter without authority), ***discuss about*** (talk about), ***too good*** (very good), ***emphasise on*** (elaborate on), ***cope up with*** (cope with), ***demanded for*** (asked for/demanded), ***requested for*** (requested/asked for /called for), ***somehow useless*** (somewhat useless), ***picked him to his house*** (took him to his house), ***putting on jeans*** (wearing jeans), ***borrow me*** (lend me).

These deviations and innovations arise owing to a number of processes:

1. **Lexical transfer**: there is no distinction made between the verbs **lend** and **borrow** in Bantu languages. Bantu languages have only one for both verbs. Consequently sentences such as these abound:

i. Can you borrow me your car? (lend)
ii. I can borrow you my pen. (lend)
iii. Please borrow me some money. (lend)
iv. Why did you borrow her so much money. (lend)

In fact the verb **lend** is hardly used in the colloquial Local Forms of English (LFE).

2. **Subject copying**

In Bantu languages in general, and in the indigenous languages spoken in Southern Africa in particular, a subject noun phrase must agree with the verb by means of an agreement prefix. This feature, which corresponds to a subject pronoun in English, is carried over into the LFE, as illustrated below.

i. Sipho he is going to town. (Sipho is going to town.)
ii. These people they cheat a lot. (These people cheat a lot.)
iii. Children these days they misbehave. (Children these days misbehave)

3. **Question formation**

The following structures illustrate a general pattern of question word which is kept in conformity with the syntactic structures of the Bantu languages.

i. People are how? (How are people?)
ii. You want to go with who? (Whom do you want to go with?)
iii. You are leaving when? (When are you leaving?)
iv. You are going where? (Where are you going?)

4. **Overgeneralisation of the –ING form**

Here, the progressive form is often extended to stative verbs, as shown below.

i. "He goes about condemning corrupt practices when his own back yard is stinking (stinks) (Schmied, 1996:312).
ii. I am loving this person (I love this person).
iii. She is having a problem (She has a problem).
iv. They are having an examination (They have an examination).
v. I am having a new friend, Nkosi (I have a new friend, Nkosi).
vi. This is stemming from lack of news. (This stems from lack of news).
vii. You are having my dictionary. (You have my dictionary)

5. **Number and gender**

The distinction between the pronouns *he* and *she* does not exist nor inflect verbs for the third person singular. This is because Bantu languages, which mark the syntax of the students, do not have these features. This feature is, therefore frequent, as can be seen in the following sentences, where *she* and *her* refer to masculine nouns, *my father* and the *man*, respectively.

i. My father is going to the States and she (he) *will come back next year.*
ii. The man stays (lives) *with a girlfriend who is not her* (his) *wife*.

Number is sometimes marked where it is not needed, and vice versa, as illustrated below.

i. Otherwise, why is the President (of Malawi) and his ministers waste (wasting) *their time preaching what they do not practice.* (Schmied. 1996:312).
ii. He talk (speaks) *English all the time.*
iii. Everyday he play (plays) *soccer.*
iv. My feets (feet) *hurt.*

6. Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs such as ***apply to/for***, ***look for***, ***look after***, and similar others are commonly used without their respective particles; while ordinary verbs such as ***reverse***, ***return***, ***seek request*** and ***discuss*** are often used with a particle, e.g. ***back***, ***for*** and ***about***. Platt *et al*. (1984) observe that such usage may be influenced by verbs such as 'talk' and 'ask' which take the preposition 'about' and 'for'. Thus it is not unusual to find structures such as the following:

i. We discussed about *the performance of the team in the World Cup.*
ii. *The farmer requested* for *more money* at *the bank to buy cattle.*

7. Adjectives and adverbs

In the English of the student under discussion, there seems to be no distinction between some types of adjectives, such as ***long*** and ***tall***, ***alone*** and ***single***, ***good*** and ***well***, as illustrated below.

i. When I met her she told me she was ***alone*** (single). *Now I've discovered she is a married woman.*
ii. Vusi is ***moving with*** *your sister.* (dating)
iii. She is ***moving*** *with bad boys.* (socialising)
iv. Will you please ***escort*** *me to Durban.* (accompany)
v. They ***bounced*** *at your room.* (They went to your room but you weren't there.)
vi. My father is ***late.*** (dead)
vii. *Listen here my friend and listen* ***good***. (well)

The above example could also indicate the inability to distinguish between American and British English.

The expression a ***tall person***, for instance, is sometimes rendered as a ***long person***. Again, this is because in most Bantu languages no distinction is made between these two adjectives, ***long*** and ***tall***.

What is done and what needs to be done?

Students entering university are expected to be at an advanced level in English. They should have passed with a credit in English (see Schmied.1991). In countries like Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland students would rather fail in their mother tongues though they speak them fluently than fail to pass English with credit. The importance of English worldwide is obvious and a lot of literature has dealt with this matter.

In South Africa, however, it is not uncommon to find people, particularly students, who think that the knowledge of English is not that important as they consider it not to be their mother tongue. This is a very weak excuse and would be very hard to defend. It would be interesting to investigate the competence levels in people's and students' mother tongues before issues of bilingualism or multilingualism are considered. Nevertheless, the demand for a good command of English, particularly at university level of study, is inescapable.

The question of *mother tongue* or *native speaker* is controversial as it raises concerns of ownership of the language. At the same time, there has to be concern and desire to liberate the non-native speaker from the dominance of the native speaker. No one owns a language not even a *mother tongue* or *native speaker*, as what matters is the question of competence or expertise in a language.

Writing about the English usage, Roberts (1956:1-2) maintains that people differ in the use of the language not only in speech, but also in the words and the forms that words have. It is obvious that Americans differ in their usage of English from the British English.

Adendorff and Savini-Beck (1992: 242) recognise that variation is inevitable among speakers of English, because people "desire to signal information about their group and individual identity, and where their loyalties lie."

Some writers, for example Loveday (1982), have expressed the view that the phenomenon of intermixing linguistic codes, and perhaps sociocultural patterns, indicates inadequacy or incompetence in any single communicative system. Contrary to this view, Chinua Achebe (1975:61-62) states that:

> If … you as: can [an African speaker of English as a second language] *ever learn to use it [English] like a native speaker?* I should say, I hope not. It is neither necessary, nor desirable for him to be able to do so. The price of a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use … I have been given

> this language [English] and I intend to use it … I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings.

The need to liberate speakers of English as a second language seems to have been underplayed if not sacrificed on the altar of "Anglo" or American varieties of English.

KirkPatrick (2000:2) records the following:

> … As Tommy Koh, a senior minister in the Singapore government, put it … "When I speak English I want the world to know I'm a Singaporean."… Japan's … teaching goals are that learners should become American English speakers. This is unrealistic and damaging to the cause of ELT. Students are fearful of speaking because they falsely consider themselves to be poor speakers unless they sound like Americans.

As noted earlier, there has been some research in the development of varieties of English (see Buthelezi (1995), Chisanga (1997) and Magura (1985)). However, what is urgently needed is to know what cultural and discourse conventions are being exhibited in the new varieties.

That varieties of language can be used creatively and effectively and the conclusion that there has to be the acceptance of language varieties is by no means new in contexts where the purpose of teaching and learning is to enable learners to communicate successfully in English for personal, social and educational purposes.

In this regard, it becomes clear why radical steps have been taken by some universities in some SADC countries and some universities in South Africa to recognise the importance of English and to support the improvement of English proficiency in students.

Even if students obtain a credit in English, for most SADC countries, such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, they still have a programme of English at university level, which students need to pass or they do not graduate.

In South Africa, Historically HWUs, such as the University of Pretoria, the University of Cape Town and the University of KwaZulu-Natal each have a programme for a first year English course to deal with second language speakers of English.

First year students in HBUs exhibit serious problems in English language. Admittedly, this is to be expected as most of them come from a very weak background academically. They have been taught mostly by untrained English language teachers and may arrive at university without any matriculation exemption. Knowledge of the structure of language is not there, which leads to the use of inappropriate lexical items. Logical development of points in the written work is hampered e.g. lack of cohesive devices, such as **nevertheless**, **therefore** and **however**. The result is weak or poor incoherence in written work, apart from the problems of language proficiency highlighted in this paper.

The problems raised in this paper are not incurable. The extent to which the departments in Historically Black Universities (HBUs) will address these problems will depend on the extent to which the teaching staff will transform. The English programmes will need to be redesigned to focus more on speaking, the structure of English or grammar and writing.

Other skills such as asserting and negotiating will also need to be covered. Young (1988:324) argues as follows:

> … the teaching of English at school level can no longer be understood in its traditional sense of transmitting a culture of literature, aesthetic sensibilities and English values to a predominantly white elite [sic]. The immediate future and challenge of English teaching arguably lies more decidedly in improving the literacy and communicative competence in English of over seven million black [sic] children who have English as a medium of instruction in their daily schooling.

Definitely, the redesigned English programmes will better serve the weak and under-prepared students by turning them into a confident and effective useful work force for the development of South Africa.

Conclusion

This article has presented some of the problems that confront *English as a Second Language* (ESL) learners in academic writing in some SADC universities. One of these problems is the low proficiency which manifests itself in numerous syntactic errors and inappropriate lexical selection in their use of the target language. It has argued that the major problem is the lack of or under-preparedness of learners in HBUs and the responsibility of teaching or developing the English proficiency is shifted to departments of English, where in most cases there is no capacity or programme to deal with the task. The article has discussed some of the problems that African learners of English seem to exhibit in academic writing when they enter university education. These problems are not incurable. It has presented what is done and what needs to be done for first year-students when they enter university. The suggestion is that what is done in most of the

SADC countries and HWUs be implemented. They can be dealt with by effecting similar English languages programmes in universities such as the University of Fort Hare, the University of Limpopo, the University of Venda and the University of Zululand.

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The vexed "colour problem": Doris Lessing and the "African Renaissance"

Patricia Louw[1]
Department of English, University of Zululand
plouw@pan.uzulu.ac.za

The question of an African Renaissance is drawing increasing debate among African scholars as they aspire for African unity and the revitalization of African cultures. This involves looking back to Africa's past and evaluating traditions and customs in order to learn how to shape the future. In this paper it is argued that Doris Lessing, in her African Stories, anticipated post-liberation issues such as the protection of Indigenous Knowledge Systems which have become the cornerstone concepts of the African Renaissance today. She exposes the threat posed by colonial society to African traditions and thereby subverts colonial discourse.

Keywords: Doris Lessing; African Renaissance

Introduction

I am going to begin with a quotation from a recent article in the journal *Rethinking Marxism:*

'One of the major critical issues of debate in Africa is the question of revitalising African cultures. In South Africa, this has been given the name of African renaissance, and it is perceived as a continental ideology. However, debates are mired in essentialisms that have obscured rather than clarified the potentially unifying effect of the notion in Africa' (Vambe, Taonezvi Zegeye, Abebe, 2008: abstract). This quotation emphasises the importance of the aspirations of African people in the quest for African unity and the revitalisation of African cultures. Their argument emphasises looking towards the future rather than the past. However, it is difficult to escape references to the past and in particular to precolonial Africa when speaking of renaissance. In fact, in order to revitalise a culture, one must surely look back to see what vitalised it in the first place. So while not disputing the importance of aspirations, I argue that looking back to Africa's past is an important part of the notion of African renaissance.

The central reason for the need for an African renaissance is the damage done to African culture by colonialism. Indigenous African culture is suppressed and degraded while westernised culture is imposed. Part of this process involves the construction of meaning. In particular, the meaning of history and culture is constructed by colonial discourse during the colonial period. Edward Said explains in *Orientalism* that it is possible "for many objects or places or times to be assigned roles and given meanings that acquire objective validity only *after* the assignments are made" (Said, Orientalism (1978) 202). It is, therefore, important for Africans to resist the meanings assigned to their culture by colonial discourse and to re-establish the meanings that they had before the advent of colonialism.

Antony Chennells explains that "an obvious form of anti-colonial resistance to these constructions of a colony's meaning is to deny their truth: the periphery insists on its rights to draw meanings from itself not as periphery but as centre. Resistance to colonialism is possible, this argument implies, only because the indigenous culture remains intact and therefore possesses its own incontrovertible authority" (1999:113). Indigenous culture is by definition connected to the past, and the system of knowledge that describes that culture is what we now call IKS or Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Thus IKS is an important tool in the restructuring and revitalising of African culture in the African Renaissance.

How then is Doris Lessing connected to Indigenous Knowledge Systems or the African Renaissance? Indeed, one may on the surface think that she represents the colonial 'other' as the stories that she writes about Africa are set during the colonial period in Zimbabwe – then Rhodesia, and reflect the settler community. The crucial question is: what meaning does she assign to African culture? Does it support colonial discourse, or does it subvert and undermine it?

When I was teaching Lessing's *African Stories* to a class of black students at the University of Zululand during the time of the old, Apartheid South Africa, I found that students were initially resistant to these stories. They reacted against what they perceived to be racism in her use of terms, such as "kaffir", even though this term was used in a non-derogatory way, to describe objects such as the 'kaffir orange' tree and the kaffir path. They also objected to her representation of black people in menial relationships to the whites, in master-servant roles. I took these criticisms seriously, and as we were studying protest literature, I suggested that we look more carefully at her representation of black people in the stories to see whether she was in fact making a protest against the colonial discourse, and if so, what kind of protest it was.

1. Patricia Louw is a Lecturer in the Department of English, University of Zululand, South Africa

We studied interviews with Lessing herself and various critical articles and one of the main points that came up was that Lessing puts the "colour problem" in a wider context than its colonial African context. She says in an interview with Eve Bertelsen in 1986:

> About this colour bar thing: the point I was making was that it's not just the white man's attitude towards the black, but people's attitudes to each other in general – all over the world you'll have a dominant group despising the rest. This is the pattern. This is what interests me more and more. I've found it very limiting when people say 'you are a writer about colour bar problems'. I wasn't writing only about colour bar problems. Not even my first volume was only about colour bar problems, there were a lot of other themes in it (1986: 138).

This broader cognitive framework enabled the students to distance themselves slightly from the emotive force of the terms and to accept their use as being a reflection of the way people spoke at that time. However, the danger of a broader framework is that it can lead to over-generalisation. Eve Bertelsen is concerned that making it a universal problem 'lets the colonialist off the hook' as it were. She asks Lessing, 'I wonder whether when you ask the reader to take a general meaning out of the stories you are downplaying the historical particulars – the fact that there were specific policies that caused the suffering and problems in Rhodesia at that historical time?' Lessing's reply to this, apart from the above quotation was, 'what you want me to do is to write didactic novels.' (1986:139) Bertelsen of course denies this but it is exactly what the students would probably have responded to. They wanted the criticism against racism to be clearly defined and unequivocal. When Lessing depicts characters in her stories making racist remarks or behaving in a condescending or paternalistic way towards Blacks, she is showing what the settlers were like. Her views are different. The distinction between Lessing's own viewpoint and that of the characters in the stories was not immediately evident to the students, however, and it took some close examination of individual stories for the students to be able to see that Lessing's criticism of racism was more subtle and nuanced than what the students had come to expect from other, more simplistic and indeed caricatured representations of racist attitudes, and also novels with a high level of didactic content.

The students' objection to seeing blacks being portrayed as servants is reinforced by Eileen Manion, who acknowledges that Lessing's representation of black people in her African fiction is restricted. She says, 'Within her African novels and stories, there are few educated Africans, and the predominating relationship between whites and blacks is that of master and servant … Seldom do we see in her fiction Africans and Europeans forming friendships, having (non-exploitative) love affairs, or uniting in political action' (1982, 435).

However, what we discovered was that even within this restricted framework, Lessing portrays black people as being in some way superior to the whites. Their power is limited within the colonial system but nevertheless has an impact on the whites and it points to the value of their indigenous culture while simultaneously showing up the arrogance, paternalism or rude behaviour of the whites. Stories which illustrate this point are "The Old Chief Mshlanga", "A Home for Highland Cattle" and "No Witchcraft for Sale."

"The Old Chief Mshlanga" is a well-known story which has received considerable critical attention. The story has autobiographical elements in it and the focus of criticism has mostly been on the young white girl and her slowly evolving consciousness about the way colonialism affects the lives of the black inhabitants of the land. This is prompted by an unexpected meeting between her and Chief Mshlanga on her father's farm. What needs to be highlighted here in terms of the African Renaissance is that the reader is given a glimpse of the precolonial order in the person of the Chief. Significantly, he behaves with grace and dignity in the face of the arrogant young girl, heir to the land he has lost. The narrator (as retrospective "I"), acknowledges this as she describes the meeting:

> A Chief! I thought, understanding the pride that made the old man stand before me like an equal – more than an equal, for he showed courtesy, and I showed none.
>
> The old man spoke again, wearing dignity like an inherited garment, still standing ten paces off, flanked by his entourage, not looking at me (that would have been rude) but directing his eyes somewhere over my head at the trees (1994:16).

The girl violates the code of politeness which forbids that a young girl address a chief by his name and asks him directly what his name is. One young man of his entourage answers for him, thus rescuing him from further humiliation. Later in the story she again breaks the social codes by going to his homestead to see him there. Again we as readers are allowed an opportunity to see the style and beauty of the traditional African architecture. This makes the outcome of the story more shocking as the homestead falls to ruin after the Old Chief is forced to leave his land, thus underlining the displacement of the indigenous people during colonialism. However, the traditional African culture is held up as something to be admired and tragically mourned for as it is destroyed and humiliated in this story. It is captured iconically in the picture of the Old Chief when he comes to see the farmer (the narrator's father) at the end of the story to discuss the damage his goats have done to the land.

> He arrived at our house at the time of sunset one evening, looking very old and bent now, walking stiffly under his regally-draped blanket, leaning on a big stick. My father sat himself down in his big chair below the steps of the house; the old man squatted carefully on the ground before him, flanked by his two young men (1994: 23).

The Old Chief has no power in this situation – colonialism has robbed him of his power but the sad picture of his "regally-draped blanket' is a poignant reminder of his once powerful position in society. The father sitting in his big chair, comfortable and superior while the chief squats in a menial position is surely one of the lasting and memorable pictures Lessing has created in these stories of colonial power, while the narrator looks on, helpless to prevent it but describing the 'pathetic, ugly scene, doing no one any good.' In situations like this, where the white settler is wielding power over the black inhabitant, Lessing often shows that the power relations damage both sides. There is a sense of impotence and hopelessness in the narrator's reaction. She deplores the harm that is being done to the Chief and his people, but must also accept that harm has been done to her father as well, since his fields have been damaged by the Chief's goats. It's a situation where no one wins and the chief's last statement rings out ironically today, when we know what the consequences of the settler appropriation of land has been in Zimbabwe.

Lessing shows us how traditional cultural values of African society are denigrated and degraded. It is partly due to colonialism and also due to urbanisation and poverty (which one could say is a result of colonialism). Lobola, for example, is treated with grotesque tragi-comedy in "The Home for Highland Cattle." The young, liberal-minded British couple, newly arrived from England, has a difficult time adjusting to the African experience. For Marina, it is the older British settlers she has the most difficulty with, as their conservative views clash directly with her liberal outlook. For Philip, it is the reality of working with black farmers in the bush. His intervention is that of an agricultural adviser as he is a soil scientist. Faced with the difficulties of the situation on the ground where there is over-grazing and soil erosion, he focuses on getting black farmers to reduce their herds. In a note to his wife he writes:

> Spent this morning as planned, trying to persuade these blacks it is better to have one fat ox than ten all skin and bone, never seen such erosion in my life, gullies twenty feet deep, and the whole tribe will starve next dry season, but you can talk till you are blue, they won't kill a beast till they're forced … Until all this mystical nonsense about cattle is driven out of their fat heads, we might as well save our breath (Lessing, 1994: 271).

Significantly, he does not mention the fact that the reason for overgrazing is that the land available to black farmers has been drastically reduced by the settler government. He chooses rather to belittle the custom as "mystical nonsense."

However, this view reflects no doubt a commonly-held opinion in settler society. Lessing satirises this young couple and is ironic about their liberal ideas which seem to get whittled away quite quickly.

Later in the narrative, Marina intervenes in her servant Charlie's lobola problems by giving him a painting of Highland Cattle to use instead of real cattle. She and Philip then transport Charlie and the painting to his prospective father-in-law's shack in an informal settlement outside the city. The ludicrous inappropriateness of the gift illustrates the extent to which colonialism imposes its stamp on the culture and traditions of Africa.

The grotesque humour of the scene changes to a tone of deep sadness and loss as the narrator reports the man's reminiscences. He tells the young people about "the long courting, according to the old customs, how, with many gifts and courtesies between the clans, the marriage had been agreed on, how the cattle had been chosen, ten great cattle, heavy with good grazing" (Lessing, 1994: 293). The narrator writes, "He was asking them to contrast their graceless behaviour with the dignity of his own marriages, symbolised by the cattle, which were not to be thought of in terms of money, of simply buying a woman – not at all. They meant so much: a sign of good feeling, a token of union between the clans, an earnest that the woman would be looked after, an acknowledgement that she was someone very precious, whose departure would impoverish her family – the cattle were all these things, and many more." (1994:293).

His words bring out the nostalgia for the pre-colonial times when the customs were respected and the land was available to graze enough cows. By satirising the British couple, Lessing undermines their views, whereas by lending beauty and poignancy to the words of the man talking about lobola, she counteracts the effect of Philip's dismissive tone and brings out the true value of the African traditions.

Another aspect of African tradition that Lessing demonstrates the value of is that of indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants. This is the central issue in the story "No Witchcraft for Sale": one of the most ironical of her stories. Irony is encapsulated in the title, in what Chennells refers to as "the constituting gaze of the metropole" (113) the denigrated term, 'witchcraft' is used to denote the superstitious, primitive side of 'savage' life in Africa. It carries with it all the nuances of the superiority of western society, their rationality and scientific and technological superiority. It contains the way in which Africans were viewed by the white colonisers. But the irony is that it is this very "witchcraft" which saves little Teddy Farquar's eyes when he is spat at by a poisonous snake. Western medicine is powerless to help him.

In this story, Gideon saves the eyesight of a little white boy, Teddy, who is the only son of Gideon's employer, Mrs Farquar. Gideon has a double identity. He works as a servant in her kitchen but is also one of the most famous medicine

men of the district. His knowledge of indigenous plants enables him to quickly find a plant in the veld which is an antidote to the snake's poison. This story demonstrates the superiority of indigenous knowledge as opposed to western scientific knowledge. However, Lessing does not leave the story there. She continues to demonstrate how imperialism reaches over the realms of indigenous knowledge.

The news of this healing spreads through the district and as a result a scientist visits the farm in order to find out about the plant that was used. A conflict then ensues between Gideon and the whites as they try to persuade him to show them the plant. Eventually he seems to give in: "He lifted his head, gave a long, blank angry look at the circle of whites, who seemed to him like a circle of yelping dogs pressing around him, and said: 'I will show you the root'"(1994: 41).

What he does, however, is to lead them through the bush in the hot afternoon sun for two hours, and then finally pick a random plant "that had been growing plentifully all down the paths they had come" (1994: 41). In this way Gideon manages to stave off intervention from western science and rotects the sacred knowledge which had been passed down to him by his forefathers. The whites are punished for trying to force the knowledge out of him, and the knowledge remains intact and secret, hence the title.

This story shows that Doris Lessing was aware of the problems related to the protection of intellectual capital and indigenous knowledge systems long before the topic became popular. What the colonial discourse denigrated as Africa's weaknesses, "Negritude valorized as sites of power and as superior ways of being and knowing" (Chennells, 1999: 113). What Lessing does is to show that Africans such as Gideon possess such "superior ways of being and knowing" and that these are in fact under attack from the whites – or under from the colonial centres of power and knowledge. They wish to incorporate these into their own systems which have been shown to be lacking when it comes to experiences of Africa.

Through these stories we have seen that Lessing shows respect for certain African customs and traditions: for the traditional structures of African society such as the Chief, and the dignity that such a position can carry with it; for the traditional system of lobola and what that represents, and lastly for the knowledge and power of indigenous plants and their medicinal value. She gives them value through the narrative and in this way supports the notions of African Renaissance and Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

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Open access: challenges and barriers to African scholars[1]

Johannes Britz[2]
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
University of Pretoria
britz@uwm.edu

Introduction

The price of journals (referring here to e-journals as well as hard copies) has risen dramatically over the past three decades, to the point that they can hardly be afforded by academic libraries in rich countries such as the USA. This evidently has even worse implications for academic libraries in Africa, and most of Africa's scholarly community therefore remains marginalized in terms of access to the global body of knowledge.

The introduction of the Internet, accompanied by the ability to digitize and manipulate information, has not only changed the knowledge and information landscape permanently, but also changed the publishing industry. It has, for the first time, become possible to reproduce and distribute information products and services at nearly zero marginal cost (Anderson, 2006). The only requirement is access to a computer, the Internet and relevant websites. This new model has led to the global Open Access (OA) movement, whose main aim is to distribute scholarly journals free of charge to its end users. For the first time, there is therefore a real opportunity for African scholars to gain, free of charge (or at least at a very affordable cost), access to digital scholarly journals and the scholarly works of others. The OA movement has, however, not led to the free flow of information on the African continent. While expectations have been raised, there are still many stumbling blocks prohibiting African scholars from fully participating in and benefiting from the OA movement.

This paper will highlight some of these stumbling blocks, discussed within the moral framework of the right of access to information. The paper is structured in the following manner: First, the notion of OA will be discussed. Following this, I will elaborate on the right of access to information, thereby establishing the moral framework. The third and final part will address some of the challenges and obstacles facing African scholars regarding access to scholarly work via OA.

Understanding the moral context: the right of access to information and the right to communicate

The OA movement is in essence about providing scholars access to the works of others free of charge (as end-users). It operates on the basic principles of the economics of information, allowing the reproduction and distribution of information products and services at nearly zero marginal cost (Evans and Wurster, 1997). It is, however, driven by a moral imperative that scholars have the right to the works of others, or in other words, the right of access to information, the right to communicate and the right to know. There is further a strong sense that these should be enabling (or affordable) rights. In the following paragraphs I will elaborate on these information-related rights.

Above all, communication is an essential human process that makes both individual expression and societal structure possible. Habermas (1989) and Fisher (1982) view access to information as a fundamental and necessary precondition for personal development and socio-economic participation. Benkler (2006) further argues that access to information and the ability to communicate are central to human freedom and human development. The new economics of information, introduced by modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), have furthermore made it possible to communicate beyond face-to-face interaction and reach the entire globe by means of modern inventions such as electronic journals and e-mail. This is also the reason why Hamelink (2003) argues that we should move beyond information and knowledge societies towards communication societies. He argues that the current set of human rights as defined by the UN needs to be updated to reflect these developments.

The argument that access to information is an instrumental and individual as well as social right not only implies the protection of this right, for example in a constitution and by means of legislation, but also the enabling of this right. Based on Sen's capability approach (1993) one can further argue that society has a moral obligation and social responsibility towards creating an accessible information infrastructure together with a legal regime that would allow citizens not only the protection of this right, but also the means and ways by which they can exercise it. This is particularly true of Africa where there is a lack of such a policy framework. Article 28 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized" (United Nations, 1997).

1. This research is partly based on published doctoral research done by the author.
2. Johannes Britz, PhD, is Professor and Dean School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA. He was the Key Note speaker at the Conference

Based on these moral premises, it can therefore be argued that the distribution of scholarly journals in digital format should not be restricted by the current intellectual property regimes or by an economic model that does not support affordable access thereto.

What is Open Access?

Before I elaborate on the obstacles that African scholars face with regard to OA, it is important to understand what is meant by open access. From an economic as well as legal perspective, OA does not mean the free flow of free information, nor does it promote 'illegal' intellectual property-related activities. The Budapest Open Access Initiative defines OA as follows: "There are many degrees and kinds of wider and easier access to this literature. By 'open access' to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public Internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the Internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited" (*http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml*).

Peter Suber (2007) provides an excellent overview of open access that is published on the website (*http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm*). I summarize the most important aspects of OA based on his description.

- OA literature is mostly confined to scholarly publications and can be in any digital format, including text, movies and images;
- It is free of charge and also free of most intellectual property-related restrictions, including copyright and licensing. It does, however, protect the moral rights of authors as well as conditions for use – normally under the Creative Commons License;
- OA is therefore compatible with intellectual property regimes;
- It is not a new business model aiming to make money – it simply removes the pricing barrier faced by the end user of information;
- It recognizes the fact that there are still production costs involved;
- It is "royalty free literature". This is a concept coined by Peter Suber to capture the notion that authors make their works available without the expectation of payment or any other form of compensation;
- As with scholarly journals, OA is peer–reviewed;
- The main focus of OA is to make available, for free, tax-payer funded research;
- The two primary vehicles for the distribution of research articles are OA journals and OA archives and/or repositories;
- OA is not the same as universal access. There are still many restrictions in the OA environment, some of which include language barriers, censorship, lack of access to the Internet and handicap-related access barriers (Suber refers here to the fact that many websites still do not accommodate handicapped people); and
- OA serves the interest of many people and groups, including but not limited to users, authors, governments, funding agencies and libraries.

Challenges facing OA in Africa

In many ways, OA can provide the necessary solutions to the educational challenges faced on the African continent – in particular the much needed access to high quality academic journals. For example, African academic libraries can subscribe to free OA journals, and scholars and researchers can access free content (be it in OA journals or OA repositories) on the Web.

There are, however, significant problems facing African academics regarding access to OA scholarly information. I mention a few.

Information infrastructure challenges

The first, and probably most important, is the lack of well developed information infrastructure on the continent. There is general agreement amongst economists and politicians that the backbone of any advanced country operating in the global knowledge society is well-developed and maintained information infrastructure, i.e. infrastructure that not only enables the communication and sharing of information, but also the ability to participate in global, digital, economic and socio-political activities. Such information-based infrastructure must allow "…the spread of national, international and genuinely global information exchanges between banks, corporations, governments, universities and voluntary bodies…" (Webster, 2002:10).

A well developed and maintained information infrastructure covers of course a variety of issues that ranges from the traditional provision of libraries, publishers and booksellers, to the distribution of open access literature via the Internet.

Naisbitt (1984:28) correctly points out that "…the computer technology is to the information age what mechanization was to the industrial revolution".

The problem is, of course, that many countries in Africa lack such sophisticated information infrastructure. This has led to dire consequences for many of these countries as they are prevented from effectively participating in the global information-based economy and are in many instances excluded from unhindered access to OA literature. Kularatne (1997:118), critique on the developing world namely: "Whether a coordinated and organised national information policy exists in a country or not, there are certain fundamental inadequacies in the information infrastructure of many Third World countries" is still applicable in many cases today. Castells (1998) predicted a particularly bleak future for countries in sub-Saharan Africa. He referred to Africa's technological apartheid at the dawn of the information age caused by a lack of infrastructure or human capacity to deploy and utilize technology. It is worthwhile quoting Castells (1998:95) at length:

> "Because of the inability of African countries to produce/use advanced technological equipment and know-how, their imbalance of trade becomes unsustainable, as the added value of technology – intensive goods and services – continues to increase vis-à-vis the value of raw materials and agricultural products, limiting their capacity to import inputs necessary to keep their commodity production systems in operation. It follows a downward spiral of competitiveness, as Africa becomes increasingly marginalized in the informational/global economy by the leap of technological change. The disinformation of Africa at the dawn of the Information Age may be the most lasting wound inflicted on this continent by new patterns of dependency, aggravated by the policies of the predatory state".

Much of what Castells wrote and predicted in 1998 was still a reality in Africa in 2004. This was confirmed by a survey that was done in 2004 by the New Economic Partnership for Economic Development (NEPAD) in Africa. One of the main priorities of NEPAD (2004) is "… the building and improving infrastructure including ICT". As a direct outcome of this priority NEPAD launched a survey on the current status of ICT use and policies in Africa. An alarming, but not surprising finding of the study was that enabling laws to drive e-strategies in Africa are nearly non-existent. Mauritius was mentioned in the report as an exception. According to the findings of the survey the country has a good e-strategy in place to become a "cyber island". The study also concluded that in those countries where projects such as e-learning, e-health and e-commerce are started it is mostly done without a policy framework. As a direct outcome of these findings NEPAD adopted a recommendation of a broad and comprehensive continental ICT survey. Such a survey will help to identify current technical and regulatory obstacles that can jeopardise the development of a coherent ICT plan and infrastructure in Africa. An envisioned outcome of this initiative will be the development of a comprehensive database on ICT in Africa that will form the backbone of a ICT master plan for Africa (Baradu, 2005). It is not known to what extend this plan was put into practice by NEPAD.

There is however a political will in Africa to address these challenges. As a commitment to NEPAD's broadband infrastructure network project, Communication Ministers, representing various African countries, will sign a policy and regulatory framework protocol for a number of ICT infrastructure development projects, including the Eastern Africa Sub-marine System (EASSy) cable. This cable system will integrate intercontinental communication by connecting ICT infrastructure initiatives across Africa. This will enhance Africa's broadband connectivity largely (Fin24.com, 2006).

Another positive trend that will support access to OA journals is the exponential growth of ICT, both in terms of implementation and applications, on the African continent. This exponential growth is mainly due to huge financial support from amongst other the World Bank, the G8 countries as well as the United Nations. Up to 1995 only six countries in Africa were connected to the Internet. In the year 2002 nearly all the countries on the continent were connected in some or another way to the Internet (Ya'u, 2002:8).

Telecommunication costs

Although OA does not charge the end user, there are still production and communication costs involved. Accessing OA journals presupposes the availability of an Internet connection. The problem is that the cost of telecommunications in Africa is the most expensive in the world. This is mainly due to the lack of affordable and regular access to the Internet and insufficient policies regulating the telecommunications sectors. Broadband access tends to be unavailable, and when available, is a luxury that cannot be afforded by most people. In support of this argument, I quote part of a report released by ResearchICTAfrica.net on the Internet costs in Africa:

> "In most countries in Europe and in the U.S.A., the prices of high speed Internet connections have declined dramatically in the last few years. Where ASDL technology is available, the cost per month for a 512 kbps. line is 25 to 40 USD per month. Dial-up lines cost about the same, if you include telephone charges for 15-25

> hours per month. In Africa, the cost of a dial-up connection is similar or often more expensive than in Europe, but only gives half the performance. A shared fixed line – often called a VPN (Virtual Private Network) – will often cost 300 to 500 USD, for a very mediocre performance. If you also consider the vast difference in incomes between most African countries and Europe, the difference becomes even greater. Measured as the number of hours you must work to pay for an Internet connection, a user in Africa is disadvantaged by a factor of 100 or more" (ResearchICTAfrica.net, 2005).

South Africa serves as a very good example of the high cost of telecommunications. Telkom has been the sole, fixed-line telecommunications operator in South Africa since 1991. In 2006 Telkom serves only around 2.4 million residential customers – out of a population of more than 43 million and their corporate customers include "more than 200 of the country's largest financial, retail, manufacturing and mining companies with domestic and international operations and approximately 550,000 large, medium and small businesses" (Telkom, 2006:4). Telkom has used this monopoly to its advantage – since the year 2000, its operating profit margin increased from R1.54 billion to just over R9 billion in the fiscal year ending in 2007. It is therefore no surprise that the telecommunications' costs in South Africa is currently one of the highest in the world, and studies have found that Telkom's pricing is excessive (Efficient Research, 2004; Genesis Analytics, 2004).

There are however some exiting developments in South Africa that will hopefully reduce the cost of telecommunication. A second fixed line telecom operator has been introduced in August 2006 which will hopefully bring the necessary competition to lower fixed line communication costs in South Africa. VOIP was also deregulated in 2005, opening up the possibility for cheaper calls and cheaper broadband access to the Internet. Vodacom and MTN, two mobile operators in South Africa, have also introduced a "third generation" mobile technology that can deliver broadband access to laptops. These new developments will hopefully allow more South Africans to communicate and be part of a global dialogue. The concern however remains: will it be affordable? According to Storm, a telecom firm operating in South Africa, some telecommunication costs in South Africa was in 2006 still on average 30 times more expensive that in the liberalised markets – in particular the USA and EU (Economist, September 2006:56). Even in 2009 telecommunication costs in South Africa are very high in comparison to the developed world.

This has had a severe effect on the financial ability of many scholars and universities to access OA journals online.

Lack of knowledge

One of the problems facing the OA movement is the fact that many researchers and scholars are not fully aware of the existence of OA journals, and in cases where they are, couple this awareness with mistrust. There is a perception that OA journals are not of the same academic value as 'traditional' journals. This has a two way effect: scholars are reluctant to publish in these journals and are also reluctant to use these journals as part of their research. Currently, there is a worldwide initiative to change this perception of OA journals.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that OA journals provide an ideal opportunity for African scholars to gain access to the global body of scholarly research. OA journals offer a much better economic alternative than the current pricing structure of traditional publishers, and allow access online to anyone that has access to the Internet wherever they are in Africa.

As cited, there are, however, certain barriers to OA journals, and OA can certainly not be equated to universal access. The conclusion drawn from this is that African scholars are still in many ways marginalized when it comes to the access and use of OA scholarly materials.

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Drawings as a method of evaluation and communication with bereaved children

Nomahlubi V. Makunga[1]
and
Lindiwe O. Shange[2]
Department of Psychology, University of Zululand
nmakunga@pan.uzulu.ac.za

There is much concern over childhood grief when death strikes in the child's immediate environment. If the experience of bereavement can be reliably measured in children, insight into their painful experiences will be gained and appropriate treatment strategies will be established.

This study aimed to explore whether projective drawings could provide a reliable method of exploring the world of a black bereaved child. The Human Figure Drawing (HFD), Self Portrait, Kinetic Family drawing (KFD) and Own Choice/ spontaneous Drawing techniques were administered with a group of 20 bereaved children and a control group of 20 non bereaved children. In general, more emotional indicators were identified on HFDs and Self Portraits of the Bereaved Group. Results showed statistically significant differences between the two groups on four indicators in HFDs (big figure; teeth; monster/grotesque; hands cut off) and on two indicators in Self Portrait (slanting figure and hands cut off) KFDs and Own Choice Drawings could not statistically differentiate the two groups but were found to be of assistance in gaining insight into the family dynamics and for improving grief work respectively, in the bereaved group. Composite analysis of the four projective drawings provided more insight into the world of the bereaved child

Keyword: Drawings; method; evaluation; communication; bereaved children, psychology.

Introduction

This article is motivated by the concern as to whether children complete the grief process when death occurs in their immediate environment. This concern relates to the popular assumption that children do not really understand death, the belief that children should not be involved in situations which concern death and the consequent neglect that chidren may experience during times of bereavement (McMahon, 1992; Hemmings, 1995, Siegel, Mesagno & Christ , 1990; Worden, 1986).

Research suggests that children do present with grief reactions in the form of behaviour following attachment loss (Bowlby, 1980; Worden, 1986; Case, 1987; Forrest & Thomas, 1991). Forrest and Thomas (1991) have documented that the emotional pain experienced by bereaved children may at times be unrecognized and therefore unresolved. Christ, Siegel, Mesagno and Langosch (1991) suggest that psychosocial development and mental health of children may be affected by the death in the child's family or immediate environment. Thus, helping children deal with the suggested emotional pain caused by bereavement will improve childhood health and lead to long term psychological well being in adulthood. Mental health professionals, psychologists in particular, can contribute towards identifying and assisting bereaved children through the implementation of effective intervention strategies.

Children often find it very difficult to articulate their feelings verbally (Worden, 1986; McMahon, 1992). Research (Siegel, 1960; Forrest & Thomas, 1991) has shown that many children express painful experiences effectively through drawings, a medium of expression experienced as easier than verbal articulation. Supporting the notion that drawing is a natural mode of expression, Koppitz (1983) stated the following: "During the elementary school years boys and girls can express their thoughts and feelings often better in visual images than in words" (p.2). Much research has recognized the value of using drawings to help children express problems and worldly-views (Burns, 1982; Golomb, 1992; Koppitz, 1968; Klepsch & Logic, 1982; Winnicott, 1971). Therapists introduce drawings to facilitate communication, expression, and assessment. Kelly (1984; 1985) argues particularly for human figure drawings as emotional assessment indicators to identify trauma in young children, who are unable to verbalize their feelings. Cantlay (1996) suggests that both distress and trauma can be expressed and identified in drawings.

In addition to helping children express their feelings of grief, drawings assist the process of healing. The overall purpose of this study was to identify bereaved feelings expressed in children's drawings.

1. Nomahlubi Makunga, D Litt et Phil, is Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Zululand, South Africa.
2. Lindiwe Shange completed her PhD in Community Psychology in the the Department of Psychology, University of Zululand, South Africa

Method

Aim

This study had three aims: firstly to report findings concerning grief which children experience when they lose an immediate family member; secondly to clarify the relationship between projective drawings and expressions of an affective meaning in life and thirdly, to assess the inner world, individual feelings and personality structures of bereaved children through drawings.

Hypothesis

It was expected that children's drawings would provide sufficient information about emotional states to distinguish the bereaved children's group from a matched control group

Participants

Forty children who attended primary school in the KwaZulu-Natal province participated in the study. All participants were Zulu speaking (one of the largest Southern African language groups). Group A (experimental) consisted of 20 bereaved children and a matched group B (control) consisted of 20 non-bereaved children.

The larger sample was chosen to extend earlier research done using projective drawings with small samples of children (Siegel 1960). None of the 40 subjects had any significant history of psychological disorder. For the total sample, ages ranged from 8 to 12 years. Inclusion in the experimental group meant that the bereaved child had lost a parent or sibling in the past six months.

The present study used a non-probability convenience and purposive sample (Bailey., 1978; Reaves, 1992; Schweigert, 1988). As suggested by Bailey (1978), research projects, often use non-probability samples despite the drawbacks that arise from their non-representativeness. This is due to the fact that they are less expensive, easier to use and are adequate for non-generalizing purposes.

Measuring instruments

The data were collected using a series of qualitative individual interviews and psychological assessments. Literature by Harris, (1963); Koppitz, (1968) and Mayekiso, (1982) has emphasized the importance of using individual assessment together with projective drawings, as individual assessments provide a more thorough observation and understanding of the individual during the drawing process and allow for the opportunity to clarify questions about the drawn figures. As suggested by Koppitz (1968) an attempt was made to provide an environment that was comfortable and uncluttered. No pictures were placed on the walls as this could have served as models which the children may have copied.

Well known psychological instruments which have been used extensively with children were utilized. They were easy to administer and were well tolerated by all participants. The interviews and assessments took place over a period of six months. Informed consent was obtained from each participant's parent/guardian. Letters of informed consent were written in Zulu to accommodate the overwhelming majority of the parents who were Zulu speaking and mostly with a primary school education. All interviews and instructions with the participants were given in Zulu to prevent any misunderstanding. The research design incorporated the use of both descriptive and inferential analyses.

According to Hammand and Grantt (1998) art work (including projective drawings) produced by clients should be protected in the same confidential manner as verbal communication. Protocols were therefore not identified by name and the parents were assured of confidentiality.

Questionnaires and informal interviews were conducted with teachers who provided a case history and information on the participants, which was very relevant to the study. The projective drawings used in this research were the human figure drawing (HFD), self-portrait (SP), kinetic figure drawing (KFD) and own choice drawing (OCD).

Procedure

The following sequence of drawings was conducted by each participant

1. Human figure drawing (HFD)
2. Self-portrait (SP)
3. Kinetic family drawing (KFD)
4. Own choice drawing (OCD)

Results

Qualitative data collected was scored, coded, checked and responses were tabulated in the following frequency tables:

Human figure drawings (HFD)

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the emotional indicators on the HFD's by the experimental group (A) and control group (B).

Table 1 Emotional Indicators on HFD's of the experimental and control group

N=40		
Emotional Indicators	**Group A**	**Group B**
Poor integration	1	0
Shading of face	1	1
Shading of body , limbs	0	0
Shading of hands, neck	0	0
Asymmetry of limbs	2	1
Slanting figure	3	1
Tiny figure	3	0
Big figure	4	0
Transparencies	1	4
Tiny head	0	0
Crossed eyes	0	0
Teeth	4	1
Short arms	6	4
Long arms	0	0
Arms clinging to body	0	0
Big hands	0	0
Hands cut off	4	1
Legs together	0	0
Genitals	0	0
Monster, grotesque	4	0
Three figures	0	0
Clouds	0	0
No eyes	0	0
No nose	1	1
Big Mouth	1	1
No body	0	0
No arms	0	0
No legs	0	0
No feet	1	0
No neck	2	1

Table 1 indicates that six of the items (poor integration, tiny figure, monster, teeth and no feet) were found exclusively in the protocols of the experimental group. Five items (asymmetry, slanting, short arms, hands cut off and no neck) were found in both experimental and control groups' protocols but were more frequently validated by the experimental group participants.

The frequency of three items concerning shading of face, no nose and no mouth was equal for both groups' protocols. Transparency indication was found more often on protocols of the control group than the experimental group. Fifteen HFD items were not present on either the experimental or control group protocols.

The four items of big figure, teeth, hands cut off and monster/grotesque were found to be more common on protocols of the experimental group than the control group.

According to Koppitz (1968), emotional indicators must be considered compositely for diagnostic significance. Thus the total number of emotional indicators for each subject's HFD was considered important. Table 2 shows the number of emotional indicators on HFDs of the experimental group in comparison to the control group.

Table 2 shows that only one (5%) of the 20 participants in the experimental group had no emotional indicators compared to nine (45%) control group participants. In the experimental group five participants had more than two emotional indicators compared to none (0%) in the control group.

Table 2 Number of emotional indicators on HFDs of experimental group and control group. N-40

Number of Emotional Indicators	Group A	Group B
0	1	9
1	8	6
2	6	5
3	3	0
4	1	0
5	1	0
	20	20

Self-portrait (SP)

Table 3 shows emotional indicators of the experimental group and control group on self portraits. N=40

Table 3 Emotional indicators on self portraits of the experimental group and control group.

Emotional Indicators	Group A	Group B
Poor integration	1	0
Shading of face	1	0
Shading of body , limbs	1	2
Shading of hands, neck	0	1
Asymmetry of limbs	2	0
Slanting figure	4	1
Tiny figure	3	0
Big figure	1	0
Transparencies	0	4
Tiny head	0	0
Crossed eyes	1	0
Teeth	3	1
Short arms	6	3
Long arms	0	0
Arms clinging to body	1	0
Big hands	0	0
Hands cut off	5	1
Legs together	0	1
Genitals	0	0
Monster, grotesque	3	0
Three figures	0	0
Clouds	0	0
No eyes	0	0
No nose	0	0
No Mouth	0	0
No body	0	0
No arms	0	0
No legs	0	0
No feet	1	0
No neck	0	0

Table 3 shows that nine of the items (poor integration, shading of face, asymmetry, tiny figure, big figure, crossed eyes, arms clinging to body. monster/grotesque and no feet) were found exclusively in protocols of the experimental group. Four items (slanting figure, teeth, short arms and hands cut off) were present in both groups' protocols but more common on the experimental group protocols. Transparencies and shading of hands and neck were found exclusively on the control group protocols.

Table 4 Number of emotional indicators on self portraits of the experimental group and control group, N-40

Number of Emotional Indicators	Group A	Group B
0	3	11
1	5	5
2	9	4
3	2	0
4	0	0
5	1	0
	20	20

Eleven of the 20 participants (55%) in the control group had no emotional indicators on their protocols compared to three (15%) in the experimental group. Twelve (60%) of the experimental group participants displayed two or more of the emotional indicators on their protocol as compared to only 4 (20%) in the control group.

HFD and Self-portraits analysis

In protocols for both HFDs and SPs the number of protocols with two or more emotional indicators was always higher in the experimental group than in the control group. The total number of protocols from the experimental group with no emotional indicators was 4 (10%) as compared to 20 (50%) protocols in the control group. The total number of protocols with one emotional indicator was found to be 13 (33%) in the experimental group with 12 (30%) in the control group. As discussed by Koppitz (1968) the presence of only one emotional indicator implies absence of serious emotional problems. For two or more emotional indicators, a difference between the two groups was evident. The total number of protocols with two or more indicators was 23 (58%) for the experimental group and only 8 (20%) for the control group. As discussed by Koppitz (1968) two or more emotional indicators are suggestive of emotional problems including interpersonal problem.

Kinetic family drawings

Analysis showed that it was easier to differentiate between the two groups as they were found exclusively in protocols of the experimental group participants. These variables included compartmentalization, unexpected description of figure actions, no face and position of figure with respect to safety. As revealed in this study, these variables could be regarded as an important screening measure when assessing for psychopathological family dynamics, which can occur in bereaved families.

Own choice/spontaneous drawings

The measured own choice/spontaneous drawings was not effective in differentiating the experimental from the control group participants.

In this study the spontaneous or own choice drawing served the purpose of relieving tension or relaying wishes rather than differentiating between the experimental and control groups. Davies's (1995) view is validated, in that drawings can serve as a mechanism of distraction from grief work.

Discussion

The findings of this study provided evidence that children do indeed go through a process of grief. Grief symptoms reported by bereaved children were confirmed by parental reports. The emotional indicators on human figure drawings and other variables on kinetic family drawings, reflected symptoms that characterized bereaved individuals.

Findings also supported the concept that grief is a unique process (Hemmings, 1995). While grief symptoms were similar in most of the bereaved children, the grief process was not identical in nature.

This study was able to support the assumption that children's drawings provide sufficient information on emotional state to distinguish a bereaved child from a child who is not suffering from grief. As noted by Malchiodi (2001) children's drawings can reveal thoughts, feelings and psychological wellbeing reflecting the child's persona.

As discussed by Cobia and Brazerton (1994) projective drawings are amongst the most commonly used assessment tools for socio-emotional assessment. As revealed in this research, the human figure drawings (HFDs) and self portraits

(SP) were able to distinguish the bereaved group participants from the non-bereaved group participants. Big figure, teeth, monster/grotesque figure, hands cut off and slanting figure were the emotional indicators which indicated a large difference (when HFDs and self portraits were separately considered). Those emotional indicators found exclusively on the experimental group protocols were found to be diagnostically important and they could assist in the understanding of the inner world of a bereaved child.

The kinetic family drawings could not significantly differentiate the experimental from the control group but were found to be invaluable in providing insight into the family dynamics. Variables identified, such as omissions, were consistent with psychopathological interpersonal relationships within bereaved families.

Own choice/spontaneous drawings also could not significantly distinguish experimental group from control group participants.

Conclusion

The following conclusion can therefore be drawn from the research. Human figure, self portrait and kinetic family drawing provide a composite picture for gaining primary insight into the inner world of the bereaved child and the bereaved child's family dynamics. Own choice drawings can be administered to assess a child's feelings toward bereavement once this has been identified.

Projective questions following completion of any projective drawing were an invaluable additional form of assessment. When in doubt, check information out by asking the child directly. The current research revealed that projective drawings have an important role in psychology. Projective drawing research is often criticized for selective reporting, where only significant results are found (Garb, Wood & Nezworski, 2000) and distortion in analysis, where indicators are not clearly defined (Abraham in Lev-Wiesel, 1999). In this study results are shown, guidelines for scoring used, and technique indicators were clearly defined. Since the sample for the present study was small and confined to a limited geographic area, future studies exploring similar concepts with larger samples would allow for the generalization of results. Future studies should have independent raters for human figure drawings, self portraits and kinetic family drawings to increase reliability.

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The nexus between sustainable livelihoods and ecological management of the World Heritage Sites: lessons from iSimangaliso World Heritage Park, South Africa.

A.T. Nzama[1]
Department of Recreation and Tourism, University of Zululand
atnzama@pan.uzulu.ac.za

This paper explores the suitability of the ecological management approach to the management of the world heritage sites with an aim of linking sustainable livelihoods of local people and the protection of the resource. There are eight World Heritage Sites in South Africa; two of these, UKhahlamba Drakensberg and iSimangaliso Wetland Park are located in KwaZulu-Natal. The communities that live within and around these World Heritage Sites depend on the sites for their livelihoods through various tourism related activities. There is therefore a need for an approach that integrates biodiversity conservation with local and regional development which ensures sustainable livelihoods for local communities that depend on the resource for their survival. The objectives of the study were four-fold: (a) To explore the possibility of introducing and implementing ecological management at the world heritage sites, (b) To establish the local communities' understanding of the impacts of human-use on ecosystems and biological resources, (c) To assess the extent to which local communities are involved in biodiversity conservation programmes and (d) To find out if the programmes currently in place are directed at integrating social, economic and environmental issues of the study area. The findings of this study indicate that people living inside and on the buffer of iSimangaliso Wetland Park are aware of the activities that may lead to the degradation of the ecosystems. They are also willing to learn more about the ways in which the resource can be optimally used for their economic survival but at the same time protected from overuse. The findings of the study further indicate that with the common understanding between the site authorities and local communities it is possible that ecological management can be introduced and implemented within the World Heritage Sites.

Keywords: Sustainable livelihood; ecological management; world heritage sites; iSimangaliso world Heritage Park; South Africa

1 Introduction

Ecological management is one of the approaches that has been seen to have a potential of linking nature conservation and people's livelihood to a point where there is a symbiotic relationship between the two. Ecological management refers to the management of human activities so that ecosystems, their structures, function, composition and the physical, chemical and biological processes that shape them, continue at appropriate temporal and spatial scales. This approach is sometimes referred to as ecosystem management or an ecological approach to management. The implementation of the ecological management approach requires the involvement of all stakeholders to ensure that they understand the status of the species and genetic composition of the resources in ecosystem. It is therefore important to develop comprehensive and detailed inventories of the biodiversity found within each ecosystem and to establish its capacity to withstand utilisation for the sustenance of livelihoods of the local communities.

This paper explores the suitability of the ecological management approach to the management of the world heritage sites with an aim of linking sustainable livelihoods of local people and the protection of the resource using Isimangaliso Wetland Park as a case study. The world heritage sites are in most cases seen as tourism resources and yet by their nature, these sites are sensitive environments that need protection from any form of degradation. Tourism has proved to have a potential to positively contribute to socio-economic and cultural environments, but at the same time it may cause degradation of the environment and loss of local identity (Wanhove, in Pigram and Wahab, 2004).

In KwaZulu-Natal there are two World Heritage sites, uKhahlamba Drakensberg and Isimangaliso Wetland Park. ISimangaliso Wetland Park was the first site in South Africa to receive the World heritage status in 1999 based on three main characteristics (1) its unique ecological processes, (2) its superlative natural phenomenon and (3) its exceptionally rich biodiversity (Mkhize, 2007). Due to its world heritage status, iSimangaliso has become one of prime tourism destinations in KwaZulu-Natal. With an increase in the number of tourists who have diverse consumption patterns, iSimangaliso Park Authorities had to explore sustainable approaches to resource management that would address social justice issues while meeting nature conservation objectives of the country. This assertion highlights the need for an approach that integrates biodiversity conservation with regional development which ensures sustainable livelihoods for local communities that depend on the resource for their survival. It is, after all, incumbent upon the authorities to orient tourism growth towards meeting its conservation and socio-economic objectives (Pigram and Wahab, 2004).

1. Thandi Nzama, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Recreation and Tourism, University of Zululand, South Africa

2 Background to the study

One of the focal points of this paper is to explore the potential of the ecological management approach in forging a symbiotic relationship between conservation of ecosystems and sustainable livelihoods of local communities. In South Africa, generally, and specifically iSimangaliso Wetland Park, ecotourism and conservation are deemed as regional drivers for economic development and poverty alleviation (Zalomous, 2007, 2008). This pronouncement implies that iSimangaliso Wetland Authority has to align itself with the shift in national priorities from a strong focus on conservation to a new approach that integrates biodiversity conservation with regional development. This shift also necessitates that opportunities and policies have to be created to support sustainable tourism development that encourage new uses of the biodiversity that might provide new diversification and investment which would contribute to the improvement of the lives of the local communities.

In line with the democratic changes in the country, the tourism and conservation policy framework has brought positive changes to the South African tourism landscape. Rogerson & Visser (2004) argue that these changes necessitated the integration of all activities by government, the private sector and the individual members of the local communities that are aimed at promoting sustainable tourism development. While the government is mainly responsible for developing policies that support tourism development, local communities are expected to participate actively in conservation as well as in tourism development and also to take advantage of the entrepreneurial opportunities created by the private sector (Rogerson & Visser, 2004).

Many communities and individuals have a wealth of knowledge that is relevant to the conservation and diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources. This knowledge may relate to harvesting resources, plant crops, and using natural herbs and other materials for medicinal purposes etc. Traditional knowledge can provide an excellent basis for developing programmes and policies that integrate social, economic and environmental issues and which would benefit both the environment and the local communities.

Isimangaliso Wetland Park stretches northwards from Mapelane Nature Reserve and incorporates St Lucia Game and Marine Reserves, False Bay Park, Cape Vidal, Sodwana Bay, Mkuze Game Reserve and the Maputaland Marine Reserve covering 230 000 hectares. Four sites of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are registered as wetlands of international significance under the Ramsar Convention. Besides the unique 38 000ha expanse of St Lucia Lake, islands and the estuary, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park incorporates a variety of ecosystems ranging from the Lebombo mountain ranges to grasslands, forests, wetlands, mangroves, dune forests, massive stretches (nearly 200km) of unbroken white beaches and off-shore coral reefs as well as the largest estuary in Africa (refer to Figure 1).

Figure 1 The location of the study area, the iSimangaliso wetland park world heritage site

Source: Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (2005)

Local people depend on this resource for their livelihood and therefore there is perpetual conflict between users and the custodians of the park. All these various ecosystems have to managed such that there is optimal benefit for local communities who depend of the land for subsistence and at the same time making sure that the resources id protected from degradation. The main threats as identified by the Wetland authority include (a) land claims (b) the prevalence of evasive alien plants (c) large scale commercial afforestation in endemic grassland and water catchment (d) land use and land tenure (e)degradation due to the closure of the mouth of the St Lucia estuary.

An increase in the number of tourists not only heightened the expectations of the local communities to reap benefit that accrue from tourism development but also necessitated stringent management strategies that would ensure that the ecological integrity of iSimangaliso Wetland Park is protected from degradation.

3 Objectives

There are many interesting aspects of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park that need to be understood as source for sustainable development, however, for the purpose of this paper some objectives are put forwards to make them stand out as the broad intention of the paper. The objectives of the paper are four-fold:

- To explore the possibility of introducing and implementing ecological management at the world heritage sites.
- To establish the local communities' understanding of the impacts of human-use on ecosystems and biological resources.
- To assess the extent to which local communities are involved in biodiversity conservation programmes.
- To find out if the programmes currently in place are directed at integrating social, economic and environmental issues of the study area.

4 Theoretical framework

Studies have indicated that an increase in the number of tourists is accompanied by an increase in the consumption of the biodiversity and negative impacts on the form and structure of natural as well as socio-cultural environments of the local communities are inevitable (Dowling & Page, 2002; Hunter & Green, 1997; Perrow & Davy, 2002; Pigram & Wahab, 2004). This means that since iSimangaliso Wetland Park has become a prime tourist destination changes in the natural environment mainly the structure and form of ecosystems are inevitable if there is no proper management of the resources and users. The users include both local people who use the resource as a source of their livelihood e.g fishing, creating products for tourists such art and craft using local grass and wood and the tourists who use the resource to derive quality experiences (Zalomous, 2007, 2008). The real challenge is to manage the risk to biodiversity posed by community encroachment on the park and overuse by the tourists. Ecotourism management is, therefore one of the approaches that can be used to address this challenge.

The conflict between tourism and protection of the biodiversity has a long history stretching back from the 1960s when it became clear that the natural environment is an exhaustible resource (Bosselman, 1978; Dowling & Page, 2002; Farrell & McLellan, 1987; Holden 2000; Pearce, 1985; Young, 1985;). In most cases this conflict indicates inequality in the ownership, management and the flow of benefits from use and conservation of resources (Furze, de Lacy & Birckhead, 1997). Gunn (1978) maintains that the demand for tourism rather than cause conflict with conservation, requires the tourist attraction to a destination should not be degraded.

In the case of iSimangaliso, the main attraction is the quality of resource itself which led to it receiving the world heritage status. iSimangaliso Wetland Park like many other protected areas has a dual mandate of being the protector and conserver of biodiversity and of acting as a catalyst for local and regional tourism development. Managers of such protected areas find themselves faced with a dilemma because they have to execute both the protective and the economic development functions (Furze, de Lacy & Birckhead, 1997).

Ideally, tourism development and ecological sustainability should be complementary and mutually reinforcing (Pigram & Wahab, 2004). WRI *et al* (in (Furze, de Lacy & Birckhead, 1997: 21) identifies six fundamental causes of biodiversity loss. These are (a) the unsustainably high rate of human population growth and natural resource consumption (b) the steadily narrowing spectrum of traded products (c) economic systems that fail to value the environment and its resources; (d) inequity in the ownership, management and flow of benefits from both use and conservation of biological resources; (e) deficiencies in knowledge and its application and (f) the legal institutional systems that promote non-sustainability. Some of these causes apply to the study area. As an example the South African Tourism Growth Strategy is founded upon five objectives:

- To increase tourism volume at high and sustainable rates.
- To increase the total spending by tourists in South Africa.
- To optimise the length of stay in order to maximise revenue yield.
- To improve the volume of spending and distribution of revenue throughout the year.
- To improve activity and spending patterns to enable transformation and promote black economic empowerment.

Consumption of these resources would of course be good news for local communities but may be detrimental to the conservation of biodiversity.

Furze, de Lacy & Birckhead (1997: 28) summarise the threats to protected area as follows: (a) conflict with local people (b) lack of policy commitment at national and provincial levels to adequately protect the systems (c) ineffective management by trained staff of individual protected areas (d) insufficient funding and (e) inadequate public support. In the

case of ISimangaliso Wetland Park it is the commitment of the national government to conservation issues that led to the conflict with local small business owners.

The concerns of the local business community therefore required creativity on both the government and the local communities that would forge a symbiotic relationship between nature conservation and tourism development. Pigram & Wahab (2004) maintain that a key to tourism success is the ability and willingness of the stakeholders to recognize the change and use it to their advantage for long term sustainable growth. The government had to come up with policies that would protect the environment and simultaneously encourage sustainable and responsible tourism development. Local residents and business people living in and around iSimangaliso Wetland Park questioned sustainability in the face of their collapsing businesses which translated to the elimination of the two major benefits of tourism which, according to Vanhove (2004), are income creation and generation of much needed jobs.

Pigram & Wahab (2004) maintain that while natural attributes form distinctive advantages for developing nations, the use of human intelligence and creativity can make the difference. Creativity comes into play when new approaches have to be followed in an attempt to adapt businesses to the environment. Environmental adaptability is seen by many as a means of economic competition (Aronsson, 2000). Faced with these changes it is important to adapt to the new circumstances and find ways that would lead to new uses of biological resources and identify new opportunities which might serve as incentives private landowners and other stakeholders to become involved in biodiversity related programmes as well as identify areas where new uses of biological resources may provide the basis for further economic diversification that would allow them to compete favourably within the tourism industry.

5 Methodology

With a view of addressing the main objectives of the study, a random sample of 226 respondents was drawn from the study area. The sample consisted of officials from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, the custodian of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, and local community members that live within and around the Park. Person to person interviews were conducted on selected days using structured questionnaires. The distribution of the respondents was as follows:

Sample distribution of respondents

Respondents	Freq	Freq %
Ezemvelo KZN Officials	28	14
Local community members	198	86
Total	226	100

6 Analysis and findings

The questions that were asked revolved mainly around three issues (a) local communities understand the impacts of human-use on ecosystems and biological resources (b) the possibility of introducing and implementing ecological management at iSimangaliso Wetland Park (c) the extent to which local communities are involved in biodiversity conservation programmes, and (d) whether the programmes currently in place integrate social, economic and environmental issues of the study area.

6.1 Impacts of human-use on ecosystems and biological resources

In an attempt to enhance a balance between maximising the sustainable use of the environment and protection thereof, it is imperative that local people understand the impacts of human use and issues that relate to the relationship between the protection of the biological diversity, tourism development and management within the park [Refer to Table 1]. Local people should understand the significance of promoting the sustainable forms of tourism that have the capacity of integrating nature conservation and sustainable livelihoods for all communities living within and around iSimangaliso World Heritage Park (Pigram and Wahab, 2004). The respondents were asked to express their opinions based on their understanding of the impacts of human use on the ecosystem.

The findings indicated that the majority of the people who live and work at iSimangaliso Wetland Park, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Officials and local community members have a good understanding of environmental issues as well as the impacts of human use on biodiversity. The latter is reflected in the scores shown in Table 1, with an average 69% for officials and 51% for the local community. These responses indicate that people living inside and on the buffer of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are aware of the activities that may lead to the degradation of the ecosystem which they need for their own survival. These responses indicate that people living inside and on the buffer of iSimangaliso Wetland Park are aware of the activities that may lead to the degradation of the ecosystems. They are also willing to learn more about the ways in which the resource can be optimally used for their economic survival but at the same time protected from overuse.

Table 1 Impacts of human use on the biodiversity [%]

Statements	Ezemvelo KZN wildlife officials	Local community members
Protecting the ecosystem is everybody's responsibility	62%	58%
There should be more education and training programmes about the ecosystems	65%	54%
There should be a limit to the harvesting of resources	74%	53%
Harvesting periods should be specified and adhered to	68%	63%
Alien evasive plants should be removed	82%	62%
Cultivation should be done in ways that do not dehydrate the wetland	67%	61%
Care should be taken of sand dune stabilization	68%	48%
Degraded habitats should be rehabilitated	61%	47%
Cultural heritage should be protected	73%	68%

To reduce the impact of human use on the ecosystem, the government introduced legislation which led to the banning of the use of 4X4 recreational vehicles at the beach in the study area. The respondents were asked to respond to the question of whether there were any observable signs of environmental recovery since the banning of the 4X4 recreation**al** vehicles at the beach in December 2004. The responses of the two groups of respondents indicated that, even though they live and work at the same area, their observations are quite different [Refer to Figure 2].

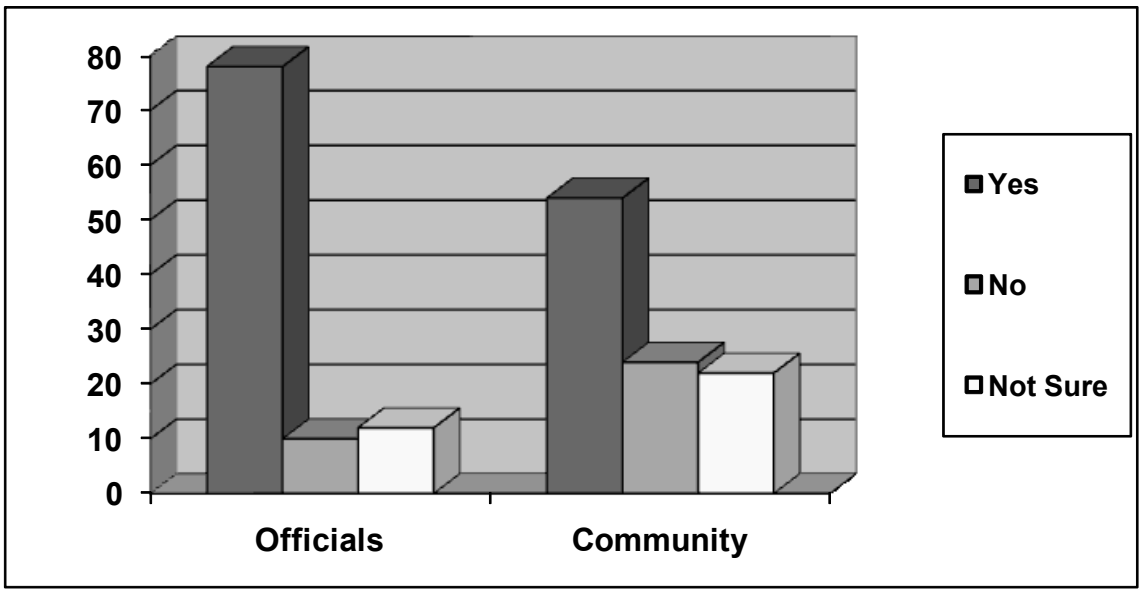

Figure 2 Responses on the observable signs of environmental recovery

The KZN Ezemvelo officials [78%] mainly those who have worked in the same area for a long time and have had an opportunity to observe the natural environment before and after the 4X4 vehicle ban regulations were implemented expressed themselves as follows:

- The ecosystem has recovered and blossomed; (88%)
- There are more loggerhead and leatherback turtles; (82%)
- More crabs can now be observed crawling at the beach; (76%)
- Species that breed at the beach are more protected; (67%)
- Plants along the beach show signs of recovery; (54%)
- Observable sand dune stabilization; and (53%)
- Beach users are no longer interrupted by vehicles. (49%)

Responding to the question of whether the 4X4 vehicle ban regulation be upheld or not, the majority of the local community members (62%) indicated that the regulation should not be upheld mainly due to economic reasons, while the majority of the KZN Ezemvelo officials (56%) felt that it should be upheld so as to protect the ecological integrity of the park.

Table 2 The necessity to uphold the 4x4 vehicle ban

Responses	KZN Ezemvelo Officials	Local Community Members
Yes	56%	24%
No	35%	62%
Not sure	09%	14%
Total	100%	100%

The reasons that were advanced by those who felt that the regulation should be upheld include the following:

- The natural environment should be protected for iSimangaliso Wetland Park to maintain its world heritage status;
- The removal of 4X4 vehicles from the beach will promote new forms of tourism such as ecotourism;
- New forms of tourism will open new domestic and international markets; and
- New types of tourists will demand new forms of products.

The reasons that were given by those who felt that the regulation should not be upheld include the following:

- The regulation reduces the number of tourists who stay longer and buy in bulk from local businesses;
- There are other ways of protecting the turtles and the crabs such as putting the tape around sensitive areas such as those where there are eggs of turtles;
- The regulation is too drastic and robs local people of their livelihood;
- Destruction of the socio-economic environment;
- Destabilisation of the local communities;
- Closure of some businesses;
- Increase in the crime rate; and
- Increase in poverty.

From these analyses it could concluded that local community members, whose livelihood is dependant on the use of the resources, would like to see the banning of the 4X4 regulation upheld.

6.2 The introduction and implementation of ecological management.

The implementation of ecological management approach requires integrated planning that involves local communities. Integrated planning should incorporate ecological, social, cultural and economic objectives and accommodate public and stakeholder participation to prevent and resolve conflicts among various resources users (Wahab & Pigram, 2004). Integrated planning processes can be applied in several ecosystems by providing opportunities for multi-stakeholder participation to determine resource use and conservation approaches. The activities currently observable at iSimangaliso Wetland Park indicate that Park Authorities are striving to put in place the mechanisms that could lay a foundation for the introduction of the ecological management approach. In this regard respondents were asked to indicate their involvement in conservation and tourism planning and development processes.

Table 3 Community's understanding of ecological management processes

Statements	Yes	No	No Sure
All human activities should be managed	52%	26%	22%
Tourism related activities should be controlled and monitored	38%	43%	19%
The integrity of ecosystems should be maintained	57%	39%	04%
Use and consumption of the resources should be balanced	56%	28%	16%

iSimangaliso Wetland Park authorities have continually attempted to involve local communities in the biodiversity management processes. The results reflected in Table 3 are an indication that local communities have embraced the notion of ecosystem protection and management. The majority of the local communities reflect an understanding of ecological management of the study area. Based on these finding it may be concluded that the iSimangaliso Wetland Park authorities can have the support of the local community to introduce and implement the ecological management

approach in the study area. The findings in Table 3 therefore indicate that iSimangaliso Wetland Park has adapted its management activities and thus it is amenable to the use of the ecological management approach

6.3 Involvement of communities in biodiversity related programmes

The successful implementation of the ecological management approach requires the involvement of the local communities to ensure that there is a link between nature conservation and people's livelihood. World Heritage sites such as iSimangaliso Wetland Park need to empower local communities to progressively share in the responsibility of managing the biodiversity of the site. The government imperative for these sites is that there should be broad participation of local communities in management, sharing of economic benefits and conflict resolution mechanisms (Rogerson & Visser, 2004). As shown in Table 4, local communities showed some level of reluctance to participate fully in biodiversity related programmes in the study area.

Table 4 Community involvement in tourism planning and development processes

Statements	Yes	No	No Sure
Involvement in planning and development	48%	42%	10%
Participation in tourism planning and development	45%	37%	18%
Attendance of environmental awareness workshops	42%	37%	21%
Attendance of training sessions on ecological management	33%	43%	24%

The emerging conclusions reflect that despite the fact that regular outreach workshops are held to foster communication between iSimangaliso Wetland Park and the communities, participation in planning and development activities is still limited. This reluctance can be ameliorated by the introduction of incentives that would motivate the community to engage in activities that lead to conservation and sustainable use of the resources. It is also worth mentioning that the iSimangaliso Wetland Park authorities have taken strides to involve local communities in the planning and development of conservation and tourism activities in the park**.** There are various programmes that are run by the Parks' Authority in partnership with the local communities and the private sector (Zaloumis, 2007, 2008). These programmes are aimed at enhancing the local communities' understanding of the ecosystems and enable them to determine the impacts of human use of resources on biodiversity.

With regard to community involvement in tourism planning and development, it is evident that there is still a need for more awareness programmes aimed at reaching out to those local community members who are still operating at the periphery of the biodiversity discussion platform. Engaging and educating as many people as possible is imperative to achieving a broad based participation of local communities in the protection and management of the world heritage resource. The Park authorities have also created opportunities that allow community members to participate in activities that are aimed at enhancing their understanding of functioning of the ecosystem such as the community based natural resource harvesting programme; removal of invasive alien plants programme, projects on planting of indigenous trees, etc. This understanding has led to entrepreneurship creativity and innovation in terms of creating a variety of eco-products most of which make use of the resources that are harvested within the park.

6.4 The integration of socio-economic and environmental issues

Ecological management approach encourages the integration of socio-economic and environmental planning of the utilisation of cultural and natural resources. On being asked, the majority [58%] of the respondents indicated that they were aware of various programmes that integrate social, economic and environmental issues of iSimangaliso. The respondents [55%] further indicated their awareness of the programmes that focus on creating job opportunities through infrastructural development and on capacity building. These programmes are aimed at empowering local communities through specialised training and equity partnerships in tourism development.

Some of the respondents [38%] attested that new entrants in the small business sectors are provided with training and mentoring to ensure the sustainability of their businesses. In addressing historically sensitive social issues, such forced removal and land claims, both local communities [52%] and park authorities [58%] indicated that most of the land claims which presented a challenge to sustainable development of the park have since been settled. Capacity building programmes were provided in order to introduce the land claimants to the sustainable forms of resource use and management. ISimangaliso also hosts mobile outreach workshops with key community partners, as part of its "people and parks programme" to enhance communication with the local communities within and on the buffer zone of the park (Isimangaliso News, August – October 2008)

7 Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of this study have indicated the significance of the symbiotic relation between the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection thereof. Integrated planning should form the basis for the implementation of the ecological management approach and enhance the effectiveness of environmental assessments. These assessments are useful in determining any adverse impacts of economic developments on the ecosystem, species and genetic resources and to recommend appropriate mitigation measures. Ecological management ensures that communities such as those living inside and around iSimangaliso Wetland Park which depend mainly on tourism for their survival participate in discussions that will enhance their understanding of the nature and structure of the ecosystems that support their livelihoods.

Finally, it is important to state that the fundamental objectives of this study relating to: relating to: (a) local community's understanding of the impacts of human-use on ecosystems and biological resources; (b) the introduction and implementation of ecological management systems; (c) the local community's involvement in biodiversity and conservation programmes, and (d) the integration of socio-economic and environmental problems, have been thoroughly addressed.

Based on the objectives of this study the following recommendations were made.

- The ecological management approach should be considered for implementation at all world heritage sites because of its capacity to integrate social, economic and environmental imperatives of the resource, and
- World heritage sites authorities should articulate the ways by which local communities would be encouraged to participate fully in activities and programmes that would enhance their understanding of the nature and structure of the ecosystems of the site.

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Barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of combating the spread of HIV and AIDS: the case of the University of Zululand and Mangosuthu University of Technology

Blessing Mbatha[1]
Department of Communication Science, University of South Africa
mbathbt@unisa.ac.za

This article explores and identifies the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS in tertiary institutions in KwaZulu Natal, namely, University of Zululand and Mangosuthu University of Technology. This article is informed by the Satisfaction Theory which emphasises the importance of product or service marketing as it determines whether a customer will continue using a product or service or not. The theory indicates that if a customer is satisfied with the service offered by an organisation or a company, then the client may continue using the company's product or service. However, if a client is dissatisfied with the service offered, he or she may decide to discontinue using the particular product or service. The research problem of this study is articulated through the following research questions: why is the pregnancy rate high in tertiary institutions, whereas condoms are freely available? Why is the spread of HIV escalating in tertiary institutions, whereas information on HIV and AIDS is available? And why are precautionary measures to scale down HIV and AIDS less effective? The study targeted only students in two purposively selected tertiary institutions. The quantitative method and stratified random sampling was used. Data was analysed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel. The study established that there are many barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS in these tertiary institutions. The study further established that precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS such as condoms are freely available in these tertiary institutions. However, they are not easily accessible as they are only distributed at the clinics. This article recommends that condoms be distributed all over campus, more especially in students' residences because that is where students spend most of their time. In addition, the clinics are not always opened as compared to students' residences.

Keywords: HIV; AIDS; University of Zululand; Mangosuthu University of Technology

1 Introduction

This article aims to explore and identify the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS in institutions of higher learning in KwaZulu Natal. In essence, the problem investigated in this research pertains to the fact that much has been said about HIV and AIDS and its dangers, however, less has been said about the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS. In addition, this article seeks to provide researchers and health professionals with information that may assist them in their decision making processes and take appropriate actions in the intervention programmes. Furthermore, this article intends to promote, sensitize, and foster research on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in tertiary institutions and nationally.

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is a medical condition. A person is diagnosed with AIDS when his or her immune system is too weak to fight off infections. On the other hand, HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It should be noted that viruses such as HIV cannot grow or reproduce on their own; they need to infect the cells of a living organism in order to replicate (make new copies of themselves). The human immune system usually finds and kills viruses fairly quickly, but HIV attacks the immune system itself, the very thing that would normally get rid of a virus (Avert, 2009). The latter document further reveals that with around 2.7 million people infected with HIV in 2007, there are an estimated 33 million people around the world who are living with HIV, including millions who have developed AIDS. Since AIDS was first discovered in the early 1980s, an unprecedented number of people have been affected by the global AIDS epidemic. AIDS is caused by HIV, a virus that can be passed from person to person through sexual fluids, blood and breast milk. Certain types of behaviour carry a higher risk of HIV transmission. People particularly vulnerable to HIV include injecting drug users, sex workers and men who have sex with men. In many people's minds, HIV and AIDS are closely linked with these groups, which can also lead to greater prejudice against people already treated as outsiders (UNAIDS, 2009 & Avert,2009).

Despite these factors, it is reported that a vast majority of HIV infections are transmitted through sex between men and women. Nearly half of all adults living with HIV are female. Many Western countries, such as the United Kingdom, have increasing rates of HIV transmission through heterosexual sex. In America, where more than a million people are

1. Blessing Mbatha is a Lecturer in the Department of Communication Science, University of South Africa, South Africa

living with HIV, heterosexual sex accounts for one third of new diagnoses. As a sexually transmitted infection, HIV particularly affects adolescents and young adults. Deaths of young adults have an especially damaging impact on their families and communities: skills are lost, workforces shrink and children are orphaned. In some African countries, life expectancies have fallen below 40 years, whereas they would have been above 60 without AIDS. There are around 15 million living children who have lost a parent to AIDS (UNAIDS, 2009 & Avert, 2009).

Djarova (2003) advances the aforementioned views by describing AIDS as a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Thus, its transmission is via body fluids that harbour the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). It should be noted that HIV and AIDS are diseases that can affect anyone at any time. It is not a disease for gays, African people, or intravenous drug users. Moreover, it is not even exclusively sexually transmitted as it is widely believed, because there are a number of cases of HIV and AIDS due to blood transfusion. Furthermore, Djarova (2009) points out that HIV and AIDS is the most dramatic, pervasive and tragic pandemic (global epidemic) in recent history. Hubley (1995:01) and Smith (2002) lucidly define AIDS as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. As the name implies it is a disease caused by a deficiency in the body's immune system. Hubley (1995:02) and Smith (2002) add that it is a syndrome because there are a range of different symptoms which are not always found in each case. Furthermore, they state that it is acquired because AIDS is an infectious disease caused by a virus, which is spread from person to person through a variety of routes. It is evident that barriers that impede the effectiveness of communication messages around HIV and AIDS do exist. However, their nature and scope require a rigorous investigation. Surprisingly, some of the students in tertiary institutions still find it difficult to practice safe sex, notwithstanding the fact that government provides more information and sufficient precautionary measures to combat the spread of HIV and AIDS. This has been confirmed by high pregnancy rates among students. This view is shared by the United States Agency for International Development (2000), which states that despite the efforts made by national governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Southern African populations have been slow to adopt safer sex practices.

2 Literature review

This article is informed by the *Satisfaction Theory*. Satisfaction refers to a customer's "cognitive state of being adequately or inadequately rewarded for the sacrifice they have undergone" (Kim, Yeon & Park, 2002:11). It is an important aspect of product or service marketing because it determines whether a customer will continue using a product or service or not. When a customer is satisfied with the service(s) offered by an organisation or a company, the customer is more likely to continue using that company's products or services. However, if a client is dissatisfied with the service offered, the client may decide to discontinue using that particular product or service. Students will therefore prefer not to take precautionary measures if they are not satisfied with them. According to Hayashi, Chen, Ryan and Wu (2004:1), satisfaction was initially defined within the context of job performance as a "pleasure or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job". The two authors further define satisfaction from the context of consumption as: "The summary psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmation expectations is coupled with the consumer's prior feelings about the consumption experience". Both definitions highlight a psychological or affective state related to and resulting from a cognitive appraisal of the expectation-performance discrepancy (confirmation) (Hayashi *et al*, 2004: 2). Kort and Gharbi (2008:3) regard satisfaction as: "An ex post evaluation of consumers' initial (trial) experience with the service, and is captured as a positive feeling (satisfaction), indifference, or negative feeling (dissatisfaction). Therefore the consumer is satisfied when his affect is resulting from his experience fit with his expectation". Satisfaction therefore comes from the use.

2.1 HIV and AIDS globally

According to the statistics published at the end of 2007, around 33 million people were living with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Each year approximately 2.7 million more people (including adults and children) become infected with HIV and 2 million die of AIDS despite recent improvements in access to antiretroviral treatment (Avert, 2009). The document (Avert, 2009) further reports that although HIV and AIDS are found in all parts of the world, some areas are more afflicted than others. The worst affected region is sub-Saharan Africa, where in a few countries more than one in five adults is infected with HIV. The epidemic is spreading most rapidly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where the number of people living with HIV increased to 150% between 2001 and 2007. The document (Avert, 2009) further indicates more than 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981 and Africa has 11.6 million AIDS orphans.

Moreover, UNAIDS (2009) & Avert (2009) point out that at the end of 2007, women accounted for 50% of all adults living with HIV worldwide, with 59% in sub-Saharan Africa. Noteworthy, young people (under 25 years old) account for half of all new HIV infections worldwide. It is also important to note that in developing and transitional countries, about 9.7 million people are in immediate need of life-saving AIDS drugs and only 2.99 million (31%) are receiving the drugs.

According to Avert (2009), the number of people living with HIV has risen from around 8 million in 1990 to 33 million today, and is still growing. Around 67% of people living with HIV are in sub-Saharan Africa.

2.2 HIV and AIDS in Africa

Avert (2009) & UNAIDS (2009) are of the view that Sub-Saharan Africa is more heavily affected by HIV and AIDS than any other region of the world. An estimated 22 million people are living with HIV in the region which is around two thirds of the global total. In 2007, around 1.5 million people died from AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and 1.9 million people became infected with HIV. Since the beginning of the epidemic, more than eleven million children have been orphaned by AIDS.

The latter documents further point out that in the absence of massively expanded prevention, treatment and care efforts, it is expected that the AIDS death toll in sub-Saharan Africa will continue to rise. This means that the impact of the AIDS epidemic on these societies will be felt most strongly in the course of the next ten years and beyond. Its social and economic consequences are already widely felt, not only in the health sector but also in education, industry, agriculture, transport, human resources and the economy in general. The AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa threatens to devastate whole communities, rolling back decades of development progress.

2.3 The impact of HIV and AIDS in South Africa

Studies conducted by Avert (2009) & UNAIDS (2009) on the impact of HIV and AIDS in South Africa established that an estimated 5.2 million people were living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa in 2008, more than in any other country. It is believed that in 2008, over 250,000 South Africans died of AIDS. In addition, Avert (2009) notes that national prevalence is around 11%, with some age groups being particularly affected. Almost one-in-three women aged 25-29, and over a quarter of men aged 30-34, are living with HIV. HIV prevalence among those aged two and older also varies by province with the Western Cape (3.8%) and Northern Cape (5.9%) being least affected, and Mpumulanga (15.4%) and KwaZulu-Natal (15.8%) at the upper end of the scale (Avert, 2009 & UNAIDS, 2009). The latter document Avert (2009) cautions that HIV in South Africa is transmitted predominantly heterosexually between couples, with mother-to-child transmission being the other main infection route. Moreover, the latter document narrates that the impact of the AIDS epidemic is reflected in the dramatic change in South Africa's mortality rates. The overall number of annual deaths increased sharply from 1997, when 316,559 people died, to 2006 when 607,184 people died. This rise is not necessarily due solely to HIV and AIDS but it is young adults, the age group most affected by AIDS, who are particularly shouldering the burden of the increasing mortality rate. In 2006, 41% of deaths were attributed to 25-49 year olds, up from 29% in 1997. This is a strong indicator that AIDS is a major, if not the principal, factor in the overall rising number of deaths (Avert, 2009 & UNAIDS, 2009).

3 Research methodology

Through a survey, due to the diverse and enormous nature of tertiary institutions in South Africa, the study targeted only students in two purposively selected tertiary institutions in KwaZulu Natal, namely, University of Zululand and Mangosuthu University of Technology. Although it would be interesting to target all tertiary institutions in South Africa, this would require more time, resources and expertise, which can be an object of further study. The following strata were used to choose the population of the study: by gender, 63% females and 37% males; by age and by race, 97% indigenous Africans and 3% Indians. The study used a stratified random sampling to choose the population of the study. The population being sampled here was as follows: firstly, in 2002, the University of Zululand had a population of five thousand two hundred and twenty two (5222) students (the University of Zululand's Calendar, 2003). On the other hand, also in 2002, the Mangosuthu University of Technology had six thousand three hundred and eighteen students (6318) (Mangosuthu University of Technikon, 2003). One percent (1%) from the targeted population was chosen for manageability. The total number of students in both tertiary institutions was eleven thousand five hundred and forty (11 540). One percent of this total number is one hundred and fourteen (114). The scientific method applied is as follows: (n/ x * 100) *(number of respondents, divided by whatever number, multiply by one hundred)*. The same percentage was applied in both tertiary institutions in the following manner; the University of Zululand had 5222 students and 1% of this is 52, while Mangosuthu University of Technology was composed of 6318 students of which 1% is 63. The overall number of targeted students was 114. A self administered questionnaire that was largely closed – ended or structured (80%) was used to collect data. The response rate was 100% of 114 distributed questionnaires. Empirical data of the survey was analysed using largely descriptive statistics and with the help of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel.

4 Results

The main aim of the study was to examine the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS in two tertiary institutions in KwaZulu Natal. In order to fulfill the above aim,

many variables were considered in the collection of data. Apart from general background information regarding the respondents, a self administered questionnaire that was largely closed-ended or structured (80%) helped the researcher to capture data in the following broad areas: awareness of the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS; barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS; initial awareness created of HIV and AIDS; sources of information concerning HIV and AIDS; awareness of precautionary measures of HIV and AIDS; abiding by precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV; precautionary measures taken by the students not to contract HIV and AIDS; leading ways of contracting HIV; actions taken by tertiary institutions in combating the fuel of HIV and AIDS and strategies that should be applied by the government of South Africa in combating the spread of HIV and AIDS. The response rate was 100% of (114) distributed questionnaires.

4.1. Characteristics of the respondents

The majority of the respondents (58; 51%) were from the Mangosuthu University of Technology while (56; 49%) were from the University of Zululand. The respondents consisted of 63% females and 37% males. When it comes to age, majority of the respondents (72; 63%) were between 15 and 22 years of age. In as far as the race is concerned, the majority of the respondents (111; 97%) were indigenous Africans and only (3; 3%) were Indians.

4.2 Barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS

The respondents were asked to indicate the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS. The question was open-ended and provided the respondents with flexibility of expressing themselves freely. In addition, respondents were allowed to choose more than one option where necessary and were asked to indicate any other barrier not listed. It should be noted that the table below represents multiple responses.

Table 1 Barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of HIV and AIDS (N=114)

Barriers	Institutional affiliation		Total
	MT	UZ	
Conservative cultures	7	8	15
Male migration	13	23	36
Poor access to Condoms	37	42	79
Re-Marriage	14	10	24
Commercial sex workers	27	22	49
Poverty	21	18	39
Multiple sexual relationships	27	23	50
Living single sex quarters	17	16	33
Wealth & higher social status	22	29	51
Gender and prevalence of violence	10	8	18

The respondents were provided with the list of barriers to choose from as Table 1 above demonstrates. The majority of the respondents represented by 79 from both tertiary institutions felt that poor access to condoms is a major barrier (61). Male migration was considered to be a barrier and multiple sexual partners got high (50). Avert (2009) points out that it is usually not easy for people to sustain changes in sexual behaviour. In particular, young people often have difficulty remaining abstinent, and women in male-dominated societies are frequently unable to negotiate condom use, let alone abstinence. Many couples are compelled to have unprotected sex in order to have children. Others associate condoms with promiscuity or lack of trust. The document (Avert, 2009) adds that some societies find it difficult to discuss sex openly, and some authorities restrict what subjects can be discussed in the classroom, or in public information campaigns, for moral or religious reasons. In particular, contentious issues include premarital sex, condom use and homosexuality, with the latter being misconstrued to be illegal or seen as a taboo in many parts of the world. Marginalisation of groups at high risk – such as sex workers and men who have sex with men – can be a major hindrance to HIV prevention efforts. Authorities are often unwilling to allocate adequate resources to programmes targeting these groups. Safe male circumcision demands considerable medical resources and some cultures are strongly opposed to the procedure (Avert, 2009).

4.3 Awareness of precautionary measures of HIV and AIDS

The study sought to establish whether the respondents were aware of precautionary measures that can be taken to prevent contracting HIV and AIDS. In order to measure their responses, a binary choice of 1=Yes and 2=No was used. The findings are reflected in table 2 below.

Table 2 Awareness of precautionary measures of HIV and AIDS (N=114)

Tertiary institutions	Awareness		Total
	Yes	No	
	N %	N %	
UZ	56 (49%)	0 (0%)	56 (49%)
MT	58 (51%)	0 (0%)	58 (51%)
Total	**114 (100%)**	**0 (0%)**	**114 (100%)**

The table above shows that all the respondents (114; 100%) from both tertiary institutions were aware of precautionary measures that can be taken to prevent contracting HIV and AIDS. These findings are not surprising given the fact that the respondents were in tertiary institutions where information on HIV and AIDS is provided in abundance. According to the University of Zululand (2009) the Department of Education has defined the challenge posed by HIV and AIDS to the higher education sub-sector. In response to the challenge, a nationally coordinated programme has been developed with an aim of strengthening the capacity of South African higher education institutions to respond to the causes and consequences of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Much as the programme is an initiative of the Department of Education, it is effectively owned by the institutions. The University of Zululand recognizes that HIV and AIDS is not merely a health issue but a development issue that concerns the entire community. It is therefore committed to playing an active role in mitigating the impact of the epidemic both on its own constituency of staff and students and on society as a whole. As a result, the University of Zululand has set up an office for the HIV and AIDS programme whose vision is to create a working and learning environment that is supportive, sensitive and responsive to employees and students living with HIV/AIDS and that encourages employees and students to adopt positive and healthy lifestyles thus taking personal responsibility for preventing the further spread of HIV (University of Zululand, 2009).

4.4 Abiding by precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV

The study sought to find out whether the students do abide by precautionary measures for preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS. Respondents were provided with a list options to choose from and were asked to rate them on a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) through 5 (strongly agree) depending on how it applied to their situations. Table 3 below summarises the responses.

Table 3 Abiding by precautionary measures (N=114)

Variable	Institutional Affiliation		Total
	UZ	MT	
Strongly agree	39 (34.2%)	42 (37%)	81 (71.2%)
Agree	14 (12.2%)	13 (11.4%)	27 (23.6%)
Disagree	1 (0.8%)	2 (1.7%)	3 (2.6%)
Strongly disagree	2 (1.7%)	1 (0.8%)	3 (2.6%)
Total	56 (49%)	58 (51%)	114 (100%)

Table 3 above shows that a significant number 108 (98%) of the respondents from both tertiary institutions indicated that they do abide by the precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS, while only 6 (5%) do not abide by precautionary measures.

4.5. Precautionary measures taken by the students not to contract HIV and AIDS

The study sought to establish precautionary measures students were taking not to spread and contract HIV and AIDS. Respondents were provided with a list of precautionary measures to choose from, depending on how applicable it was to

their situations. In addition, the respondents were allowed to choose more than one option where necessary. Table 4 below summarises the responses.

Table 4 Precautionary measures taken by the students (N=114)

Precautionary Measures	Institution	
	UZ	MT
Condoms	44	47
Abstinence	35	22
Faithfulness	32	41
No sex before marriage	31	34
1 sexual partner	**33**	**23**

Table 4 above lucidly indicates that majority of the respondents represented by a significant number (91; 80%) from both tertiary institutions use condoms to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, while the rest of precautionary measures were used averagely. In support of these findings, Avert (2009) is of the view that condoms are the only form of protection that can both help to stop the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) such as HIV and also prevent pregnancy. On the other hand, AIDS.ORG (2009) points out that one can avoid any risk of HIV if he or she practices abstinence.

4.6 Leading ways of contracting HIV

Respondents were asked to indicate the ways which can lead a person to contract HIV. Respondents were provided with a list of different possible ways which can lead a person to contracting HIV and the respondents were allowed to choose more than one as was applicable to their situations. Table 5 below shows the findings emanating from the respondents.

Table 5 Leading ways of contracting HIV (N=114)

Variables	No of responses
Having unprotected sex with an infected person	114
Contact with infected blood	114
Using the same razor with an infected person	114
Sharing of needles with infected person	104
Kissing infected person	28
Sharing toothbrushes with infected persons	09
Bitten by mosquito with HIV	04
Swimming with infected person	00
Sharing food with infected	00

Table 5 above shows that all the respondents (114; 100%) were of the opinion that having sex with an infected person, contact with infected blood and using same razor with infected person are the leading ways to contracting HIV. Expectedly, none of the respondents said sharing food and swimming are leading ways of contracting HIV. AIDS.ORG (2009) concurs with these findings by pointing out that HIV is not spread easily. One can only get HIV if he or she gets infected blood or sexual fluids into his or her system. The document adds that HIV cannot be transmitted through mosquito bites, coughing or sneezing, sharing household items, or swimming in the same pool with someone infected with HIV.

4.7 Actions taken by tertiary institutions in combating the spread of HIV and AIDS

Respondents were asked to outline measures taken or provided in their universities in the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS. Respondents were allowed to mention more than one action as was applicable to their situations. The following responses emanated from the respondents:

Table 6 Measures taken by tertiary institutions (N=114)

Responses emanated from the respondents	
Actions	**Number of respondents**
Condoms are made freely available	109
Information on HIV & AIDS is provided	87
Students are taught about HIV & AIDS	41
There is a Research centre for HIV & AIDS	25
There are awareness programs for HIV	19
Students are encouraged to practice safer sex	13

*The table above represents multiple responses

Table 6 above reveals that the majority of the respondents (109) said that condoms are freely provided, 87 of the respondents from both tertiary institutions indicated that information on HIV and AIDS is provided to them, while only 13 out of 114 respondents revealed that students are encouraged to practice safe sex. In a nutshell, the results show that tertiary institutions under study are doing well in the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS. However, the issue of condoms distribution and accessibility remains a course for concern amongst the majority of the students. According to the University of Zululand (website), as a way of mitigating the spread of HIV and AIDS on campus, the University of Zululand was able to establish a voluntary counseling and testing site; establish a student peer education; train members of staff as HIV & AIDS Counselors; embark on mass communication campaigns and develop material that could be used in the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS.

4.8 Strategies that should be applied by the government of South Africa in combating the spread of HIV and AIDS

Respondents were asked to outline strategies that should be applied by the government of South Africa in combating the spread of HIV and AIDS. The following responses emanated from the respondents:

- Forming groups amongst students who are well trained to deal with HIV and AIDS to teach other students about the dangers of HIV and AIDS;
- Re-instate values and morals;
- More voluntary HIV test centers must be established where people may go for HIV test;
- Students should be taught how to use condoms;
- Both females and males condoms need to be distributed in places where there is a lot of foot traffic;
- New design of condoms should be introduced because students prefer something new, they are now fed-up with the condoms that are provided by the government and thus having a negative attitude towards them. According to the students, government's condoms are weak, therefore, they easily break during sexual activity;
- Students need to be encouraged to abstain, not only to use condoms because condoms are not completely safe;
- Invite severely infected people, those with glaringly obvious symptoms of HIV and AIDS to visit tertiary institutions and teach people about the dangers of HIV and AIDS;
- There should be a compulsory course on HIV and AIDS in all tertiary institutions, especially in first year; and
- Condoms should be distributed to all places where they can be easily accessible to many people at anytime;

5 Discussions and conclusion

The aim of this article was to explore and identify the barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS in institutions of higher learning in KwaZulu Natal. The study established that one of the major barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of combating the spread of HIV and AIDS is poor access to condoms. More especially, at the University of Zululand, condoms are not easily accessible as they are only distributed at the university's clinic. Noteworthy, the majority of respondents (109) indicated that condoms are made freely available in their institutions, however, their (condoms) distribution and accessibility are serious causes for concern. As a result, students suggested that condoms be distributed all over the campus, more especially, in the residences where

they spend most of their time. Moreover, students revealed that they are afraid to take condoms in front of other students. Above it all, students indicated that they are also afraid to take condoms in front of the nursing staff as some of these nurses are mother figures to them. The findings further revealed that male migration is also a major barrier in combating the spread of HIV and AIDS.

The review of related literature has indicated that there are precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS which are essential to protect one from contracting this epidemic. According to the findings, it can be concluded that the respondents are aware of the precautionary measures to be taken in order to combat the spread of HIV and AIDS. This is supported by the majority (79%) of the respondents who indicated condoms as precautionary measures they use in the fight against spread of HIV and AIDS. Surprisingly, the study established that majority of the students do abide by precautionary measures of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS. However, this is inconsistent with the statistics of students who are infected with HIV in tertiary institutions (Quality Statistics for VCT, 2008:02). In addition, even the pregnancy rate is high in tertiary institutions and it simply confirms that some of the students are not taking precautionary measures to prevent the unnecessary pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. It should also be pointed out that while the young may be the most vulnerable population, they are also the most receptive to prevention messages and will easily and readily adopt more responsible behaviours" (Centre for African Family Studies, 2001:10).

6 Recommendations

There is an urgent need for the provision of information for the purposes of protecting young people against HIV and AIDS. It is worth noting that besides the provision of information to support researchers' and decision makers' activities, there is a need to provide relevant information on HIV transmission to the youths. The study established that barriers that impede the effectiveness of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS do exist. However, their nature and scope require a rigorous investigation. Therefore, this article proposes the following recommendations for future research:

- Investigate the feasibility of rolling the study out to a wider cross section of tertiary institutions in order to build a database of HIV and AIDS information to assist with planning and decision making;
- Share best practice/experience between institutions regarding mechanisms/tactics/policies which are most effective in combating and controlling the spread of HIV and AIDS and promoting safe/protected sex; and
- Review current training provision for students in the recognition of precautionary measures of fighting the spread of HIV and AIDS.

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Language and the current challenges in the South African school system

Elliot Mthembeni Mncwango[1]
Department of General Linguistics, University of Zululand
emncwan@pan.uzulu.ac.za

The paper discusses the current challenges facing the school system in South Africa with regard to language, and the role schools can play to achieve the government's objective of multilingualism. Schools are viewed as the most fertile ground for the promotion of multilingualism, as they are attended by learners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
What obtains in many schools, especially former Model C schools, is that most of them have not included indigenous African languages in their school curricula. The few that have, offer them at second or third language level – just 'isiZulu for communication', etc. In this way, only the language for communication purposes is taught, which does not mean full literacy in the language, or cultural integration.
The argument is that with a willing heart on the part of the School Governing Body (SGB), as well as the School Management Team (SMT), language could be used as a tool to integrate learners. This, it is argued, does not obtain in the majority of urban schools. The paper is part of a study which was conducted in 2007. It is, therefore, underpinned by empirical evidence which was solicited from urban (English and Afrikaans medium), and rural (English and isiZulu medium) schools.

Keywords: Language, schools, South Africa, South African Schools

Introduction

This paper attempts to establish whether the government policy on multilingualism is effective, and whether schools are able to implement it. It also looks at whether schools can play a role in promoting the use of indigenous African languages. The current challenges in the South African school system are discussed, together with some suggestions.

The language situation in South Africa

To date, management of linguistic diversity in post-apartheid South Africa has been made problematic by the lack of a clearly defined language policy, leading to the use of English and Afrikaans as the most dominant languages in the socio-economic and political domains of our society.

The Language-in-Education Policy (2004) promotes the use of learners' first language and English as medium of instruction in most schools.

This is due to the strong awareness of the need to intensify efforts to develop the previously marginalised indigenous languages and to promote multilingualism if South Africans are to be liberated from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-indigenous languages as the dominant, official languages of the state.

What we observe in most schools is that linguistic diversity is not embraced. This is evident in the dominance of English and the absence of the African culture in schools with diverse cultures. The so-called African culture is neither practised nor heard of. For instance, youngsters are taught to look elders in the eyes – this in the name of keeping eye contact. When one goes for an interview one is expected to keep eye contact, to remain standing until one is offered a seat, etc. This is foreign to the African culture. In the African culture eye contact is avoided by the younger interlocutor in a conversation. This is also applied where the interlocutor is higher in status, although younger in age. These African cultural practices are downplayed in urban schools.

Semi-literacy in indigenous African languages

Most African learners in the former Model C schools can't read or write in their first languages, with the exception of those who study these languages in the schools where they are offered. This is not in line with additive multilingualism, as it entails, inter alia, that speakers of the languages are able to read and write in the languages, for literacy in the languages to be realised.

Indigenous languages are spoken widely in South Africa today, and have always been in the past, although they were not accorded the same official status as English and Afrikaans. Although the latter were minority languages, they were developed to the extent that much literature is available in these languages even today. The two languages had been and are still the languages of documentation in courts of law, hospitals, clinics, etc. Although some institutions, like a few banks, have started using indigenous African languages, others are still oblivious of the use of these languages by most of their customers/clients.

1. Elliot Mcwango is a Lecturer in the Department of General Linguistics at the University of Zululand , South Africa.

The promotion of additive multilingualism in schools

Although the government has expressed emphatically the call for the promotion of and use of indigenous languages nationally, there is no evidence that the policy on multilingualism is in force in schools. In fact, there seems to be no change at all aimed at increasing the developing indigenous languages or to accord them a status equivalent to that given to English and Afrikaans, functionally. The two have been languages of national use and as such have been developed to suit this purpose.

Before the first democratic rule in South Africa, English and Afrikaans were the only media of instruction, despite the fact that the majority of South Africans were not competent in them, which made education through these media an uphill struggle. Despite this fact, second language speakers had to compete with first language speakers of the language at interviews, etc. Worse still, these second language speakers came from disadvantaged backgrounds, where teachers had themselves received poor education, and were in many ways, quite frankly, ill-trained or unqualified to teach English or Afrikaans, or even to teach through these media. Buthelezi (1995) argues that under apartheid rule these schools had been run almost exclusively by Black non-native speakers of English who had often been unqualified or under-qualified for the task. In research conducted by Wildsmith (1992), cited in Buthelezi (1995), it was found that most non-standard features exhibited by the pupils were actually teacher-induced. All this resulted from the segregated and unequal education of the time, which actually limited the 'naturalistic environment' (Krashen, 1987) conducive to second-language learning by reducing the potential social interaction between second and first language speakers.

Banda (2000) reports that the Afrikaner nationalist government went on a deliberate campaign to uproot White English mother-tongue teachers from Bantu Education, thereby denying Black children authentic models of English and well-trained, experienced teachers. This still obtains, even today, as the problem of ill-trained teachers abounds in some schools, especially rural schools. As a result of this, it is not surprising that we get students who can't write even a coherent paragraph in English at university level.

Educational institutions in South Africa use mostly English as their medium of instruction, with some that use Afrikaans. Although this is done for socio-economic reasons, and to increase chances of employability, it denies indigenous languages a fair chance to be utilised as tools of wider communication in academic circles. The promotion of multilingualism in South Africa requires efforts that do not discount the knowledge that exists in societies where indigenous official languages are prominent (National Language policy Framework, 2002). If these languages cannot be fully utilised in South Africa, where will they be utilised? Roy-Campbell (2001) writes:

> Despite the overwhelming evidence that the use of foreign languages negatively impacts the acquisition of school knowledge by the vast majority of African students, throughout most African countries the foreign languages continue to be afforded dominance in the educational sphere. The colonial imposition of these languages as the languages of knowledge that should be valued and as the languages of cultural capital has contributed to the naturalisation of English, French, or Portuguese as an indispensable part of what it means to be educated in many African countries. Those who are considered the *knowers* speak the language of power – English, French, or Portuguese – while the knowledge of those who do not speak the language of power is devalued.

Although the status of indigenous African languages has been elevated to that of English and Afrikaans, there is the 'access paradox'. Janks (2000) questions how the education system can give all children access to the language of power, English, without also contributing to the dominance of English and the subsequent marginalisation of indigenous African languages.

Language and identity

More recently, many African children are said to struggle – both linguistically and in terms of their cultural identity – in previously White, Coloured and Indian English – medium schools (Young *et al*.: 1995). Luckett (1992) argues that these are both forms of subtractive multilingualism which occur when 'a second language is learned at the expense of the first language, which it gradually replaces.'

Also, some Afrikaans-only and English-only 'White' schools are now offering African languages such as isiXhosa or isiZulu as optional subjects. The token use of isiXhosa or isiZulu does not mean full integration of language groups. In practice, working-class children from Black and Coloured families cannot afford the high fees of these former 'Whites only' schools.

Also, contrary to the advocacy for multilingualism and the promotion of multilingualism, almost without exception, school application forms and other documents in South Africa have a 'Home Language' section. Ironically, despite the overwhelming evidence on multilingualism and government's additive bilingualism policy, it is still assumed and expected

that South Africans are typically monolingual, using a 'Home Language' in their neighbourhoods. The argument is sometimes used by a school to deny a child entry on account of his/her 'home language' if it is deemed to differ from the medium of instruction of the school. In such a situation a child is 'encouraged' to enroll in another school.

Language use and attitudes

Research has shown that for political, socio-economic and educational considerations, those South Africans whose first languages are indigenous African languages tend to be multilingual. This is despite the attempts by the apartheid regime to divide people into unique linguistic communities, each with its own 'mother–tongue' education. Research has also shown that English and Afrikaans first language speakers tend to be at most bilingual. In a nutshell, Blacks' preference for English Medium of Instruction (EMOI) could be due to their quest to attain personal achievement in formal and professional spheres so as to have attributes of status and power denied them during apartheid (Banda, 2000).

Fanon (1967) describes ways in which language and its uses serve to reinforce the subjugated position of the Black colonial subject. Within this vein, those Africans who continually invoke the inadequacy of their languages for use in certain domains are impugning Africans' importance as human beings with a culture worthy of respect. Fanon (1967) argues that in the colonial experience, European languages and cultures were presented as superior to everything African. It is within this context that formal education has come to be associated with the European languages. Afolayan (1978) maintains that because the use of a foreign language as the medium of education is the norm in most postcolonial African countries, scholars and policy makers tend to equate education for the African with the knowledge of the European language.

Resistance by some schools to transform in line with the prevalent diversity in South Africa

All schools were founded in order that a particular educational purpose could be fulfilled in a particular community. The study found that all schools were founded solely to serve the interests of the communities within which they were built. It is important to remember that during apartheid there was the Group Areas Act which prohibited racial integration in residential areas. Surely, these schools served well the interests of their respective communities and the residents of the relevant towns.

However, with the phasing out of the Group Areas Act, people of all races were allowed to buy property anywhere, and to become rightful residents wherever they chose to be. When this happened, there were changes in the composition of the communities within which the schools were situated. As a result of this, almost all urban schools are attended by learners from all racial groups, with diverse cultures and languages. This being the case, one would expect the schools to incorporate this kind of diversity and reflect it in their school curricula.

This could be done by introducing indigenous languages to cater for the needs of African learners who enrol in urban schools, and who have become part and parcel of the communities within which the schools are situated, and whose interests they should serve. On the other hand, the diverse communities should ensure that the schools serve their own interests, and fight hard for transformation to take place. This currently does not obtain in most schools in South Africa, as Black parents have to take or leave the package as it was designed ages ago, which was not designed with them in mind. Those with a dissenting voice are quashed easily at parents' meetings, as they are in the minority.

Another observation my study makes is that the culture in most former Model C schools does not reflect community diversity, both inside and outside the schools. Black learners and parents who now subscribe to such schools have had to adapt in order to fit into the culture and philosophy of the schools.

Conclusion

The paper has attempted to highlight the current challenges associated with language and multilingualism in the South African school system. The reluctance to effect and reflect changes in the school curricula in line with the changes in demographics within the school, and in the community surrounding the school has been highlighted. The token introduction of indigenous African languages in certain schools has been discussed, as well as the consequences of that practice.

Recommendations

Although progressive policies on multilingualism have been promulgated, their implementation is lacking. In order for policies to be effective, they need to be sanctioned by government. In this way it would be easy to penalise the schools that do not implement them.

Also, there needs to be racial integration in terms of teachers in each school, particularly in urban EMOI and AMOI schools. A considerable number of these schools do not have Black teachers. Even those that have introduced indigenous African languages as optional languages have done so without employing even a single Black teacher who could take

charge of the language, as well as other subjects. This does not mean that non-Black teachers who teach indigenous languages are not qualified to do so, or that only a native speaker of a language can teach it with success. As a matter of fact, there are many highly qualified teachers who are in rural schools, who can make a meaningful contribution in urban schools. All they need is an opportunity to unleash their potential. This, however, does not imply that good teachers are not needed in rural schools

Equal access to English and an indigenous African language must be given to learners, and conditions be created for learners to be able to utilise these languages post matriculation. This could be done, perhaps, by offering bursaries to students who wish to pursue studies in these languages at tertiary level. Of course, the languages would also need to be tied to employment, e.g. making it compulsory for doctors to know a dominant indigenous African language in the region where they wish to serve. This would be in addition to, not instead of English. The idea here is that unless learners see the functional value in learning African languages, they might not be as strongly motivated to study the languages as they are to study English.

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Address for submission