

Developing an Integrated Model for Policy Management in Private Higher Educational Institutions in South Africa

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KEYWORDS Intellectual Spaces. Critique. Dictatorship. Deliberate Iterations. Controversy

ABSTRACT Educational policy in South Africa is formulated at macro-level under the National Minister of Education by his/her department and has to be implemented by educational institutions at the micro-level within the parameters of the legislative mandates. This research investigated tensions regarding policy management at the micro-level about issues of funding, collaboration, quality, access and autonomy using a structured questionnaire to probe the perceptions of respondents from registered Private Higher Education Institutions. Inferential analysis of the data showed that these tensions had two underlying components namely aspects with potentially positive and potentially negative influences. The unique contribution of this research was the development of an integrated model allowing all stakeholders involved with providing higher education to become involved in a deliberative dialogue where the interactions between micro- and macro-levels of policy development can be considered.

INTRODUCTION

Research by Arshad-Ayaz (2008: 480) indicates that the major defining educational policies worldwide are the state, market and international agencies such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The main force behind these reforms is the World Bank, which has made its ideology of globalisation central to its statements on educational policy. Due to globalisation and the rise of the new economy, Dzvimbo and Moloi (2013:1) argue that boundaries among markets, state and higher education are blurred. In line with this thought, the National Development Plan of 2011 posits that the overall wellbeing of nations is vitally dependent on the contribution of higher education to the social, economic, political and cultural development. In this regard, Varghese (2009:2) argues that in Africa, relying on public institutions to expand higher education seems to have reached its limits. For Fronemanl (2009:35) in the South African environment, residential education is not viable since the majority of prospective students stay in rural areas and in underdeveloped settlements (townships).

Thus, the researchers argue that, Private Higher Education in South Africa was not established out of the goodwill of its governments, but in most cases it emerged and developed out

of a gap in the education system (Levy 2009; Cloete 2011:1). According to Mabizela (2004), South African private Higher Education developed from the inability of public Higher Education Institutions to cope with the demands of absorbing and providing Higher Education to the many students who wanted to access a system that could not absorb them. For example, in 2011 approximately 346 000 candidates qualified for degree, diploma or certificate studies, while the 23 universities had only made provision for 180 000 first-year students. In 2011, up to 37 percent of prospective first-year students could not succeed in registering with a university or college. The improved matriculation pass rate in 2012 means that even more prospective students will not be able to register for tertiary studies. The leadership body that represents the 23 public universities (HESA) released a press report on 12 January 2012 that pledged its support to any initiative aimed at providing a greater set of study opportunities for school leavers. They indicated that there was an urgent need for the development of a coordinated, flexible and differentiated post-school education and training system consisting of institutions such as teacher education colleges, Further Education and Training colleges, agricultural colleges, nursing colleges and universities. Furthermore they called upon all sectors of society, including gov-

ernment, business, universities, Further Education and Training college sector, civil society organizations and communities to offer constructive solutions to the admission challenge which had now reached alarming proportions.

The Higher Education Act of 1999 (SA 1999) can be perceived as an effort to intensify control of the Private Higher Education sector and granted the Minister of Education more powers to regulate it, which resulted in preventing these institutions from using the terms such as 'University', 'Technikon' or 'Higher Education College'. This situation can be interpreted as showing certain paranoia, suggesting the state had become obsessed with regulating everything in the sector, which results in perceptions of over regulation. It was perceived by the Private Higher Education Institutions as a clandestine systematic way of destroying them in the name of quality control and protection of innocent students, and of protecting the inefficient public institutions. According to the Council for Higher Education (CHE 2007: 163):

"The most important consequence of the changes in higher education - both those initiated by government (such as politically mandated mergers) and those forced upon government (such as growth of private higher education) - has been the changing role of the State and in particular possibly expanding State intervention in Higher Education".

The above statement clearly articulates the challenges facing the provision of Higher Education in the country. The exponential growth of the Higher Education sector was unexpected, and the government was inadequately equipped to deal with this phenomenal growth in demand for better education.

Most Higher Education Institutes in South Africa, prior to 1994, had enjoyed a measure of autonomy in their operations and governance structures. During the previous dispensation, the role of Private Higher Education had been designed to be 'elitist' and 'exclusive' in its offerings, and to accommodate only the affluent and privileged few. The National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE 1996) indicated that this was driven and sustained by underlying factors such as the exorbitant fees charged by the Private Higher Education Institutes, a state of affairs that created animosity against those who could not compete with these institutes for resources and sponsors. In addition the Nation-

al Commission for Higher Education (1996) reported that there were severe inequalities in terms of resources and funding mechanisms, with no foreign institutions to compete with (Badat 2010: 1).

The new dispensation in South Africa (SA 2002) had both positive and negative aspects for Private Higher Education. The major perceived threat was the series of policy regulations and control mechanisms enacted through the introduction of regulatory bodies such as the South African Qualifications Authority (SA 1995), the Council for Higher Education (SA 1999 as amended by the Higher Education Amendment Act of 2001), and later the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (SA 2010). The Private Higher Education sector had no choice but to confront the emerging hostilities that were perceived to arise from the new educational landscape, exacerbated by contestation for scarce resources. It had also enjoyed privileges during the previous dispensation and now found itself in the precarious position of having to comply with the new policies and regulations or face closure (Coomb 2001).

The registration process of Private Higher Education was characterized by complexities caused by the government's poor knowledge of this sector, particularly its size, nature and impact. This also created much confusion amongst the Higher Education providers, because the government was using the public Higher Education standards to benchmark the Private Higher Education sector, thus creating tension between the government and the providers of Private Higher Education (Coomb 2001). This led to mounting tensions within the Higher Education sector and much mistrust between government and Private Higher Education Institutes, instead of creating a climate in which state and private institutions could work collaboratively (CHE 2007). The major challenge was for all the stakeholders in public and private higher education to remove or reduce these tensions.

Clearly the present public higher education system is not capable of meeting the demands of the number of students who qualify for tertiary studies and it is here that Private Higher Education can play an important role in eliminating this gap in the Higher Education system. There is thus an urgent need for the development of an integrated model which is capable of resolving the demands of accessing the higher educa-

tion system. At the very heart of such a model is the present way in which educational policies and laws are formulated. At the present time the ruling party (African National Congress) gives vision, goals and direction to issues pertaining to education at its annual national conference. A policy outlines what a government ministry (Department of Higher Education and Training) hopes to achieve and the methods and principles it will use to achieve them. So, policy sets out the goals and planned activities of a ministry and department but it may be necessary to pass a law to enable government to put in place the necessary institutional and legal frameworks to achieve their aims. It is the responsibility of the executive branch of government to develop new policies and laws. During this time, the government ministries will draft discussion documents, called Green Papers and White Papers on the policy or law to allow for debate and comment. Public Management Service members are often used as resource people for this process. Various parliamentary and select committees in national Parliament and in the National Council of Provinces, as well as portfolio committees in Provincial Legislatures provide opportunities for public participation in debating the proposed policy or law. The latest example of a Green Paper is that published by the Department for Higher Education and Training (DHET 2012). In the paper there is confirmation of the right to establish and maintain independent educational institutions. No evidence could be found of collaboration between the DHET and the private providers and the main concern expressed was

with the erratic data supply received from the private sector and a need to control the quality of the programmes offered by the private sector. This process which the researchers perceive as having collaborative deficiencies can be visualised as part of a system as presented in Figure 1.

Further complicating factors regarding private higher education are aspects such as the impact of quasi-market approaches, managerialism as a means of enforcing regulations to control the private higher education sector and the massification of education (Khatle 2012). In the light of the above tensions the researchers attempted to determine the current prevailing perceptions of the Private Higher Education Institutes (PHEIs) with respect to the various legislative mandates. The findings were used to propose a policy management model for resolving or diffusing the tensions facing the PHEIs in South Africa.

Statement of the Problem

The problem investigated in this research was the development of an integrated policy management model for Private Higher Educational Institutions in Gauteng South Africa. In order to research the problem comprehensively it was expedient to first identify a number of more specific research questions:

- ♦ What are the various management tensions concerned with implementing policies and procedures regarding the management of Private Higher Education in Gauteng?

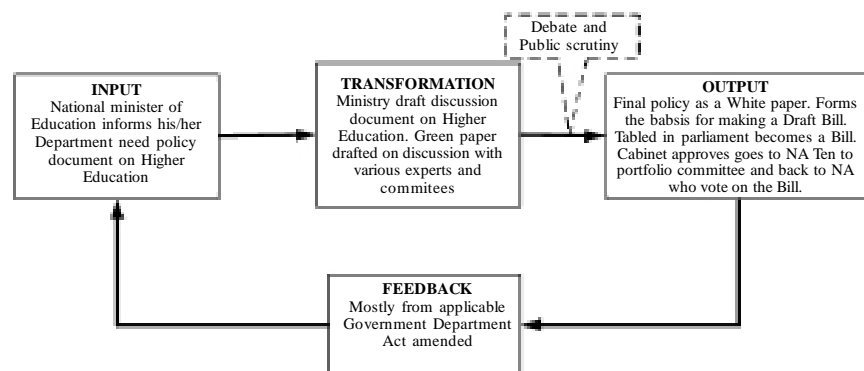


Fig. 1. A simplified representation of policy formation using the system approach

- ♦ What are the perceptions of senior management and staff in Private Higher Education regarding the identified tensions around policies and procedures pertaining to the management of their institutions?
- ♦ How can an integrated model facilitate policy management amid the tensions identified in the PHE sector in Gauteng?

Aim of the Research

The main aim of this research was to investigate the perceptions of the Private Higher Education (PHE) staff and management regarding the development of a policy framework or model for the PHE sector in Gauteng South Africa. In order to accomplish this general aim, the following secondary aims are to:

- ♦ Determine the various management tensions involved with the provision of Private Higher Education.
- ♦ Determine the perceptions of the PHE providers in the Gauteng province regarding the tensions around the policies and procedures within the PHE sector.
- ♦ Develop an integrated model in terms of the management of policy implementation in the PHE sector in Gauteng.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers applied all ethical considerations in line with the requirements of the University. This is amongst others upholding the participants' confidentiality, their trust and integrity at all times (Creswell 2005: 201). There was also an obligation not to publish any information that would betray their trust, including information that would compromise their dignity, by not divulging any information that may compromise the respondents and their institutions. The researchers at all times strove to seek the necessary permission of respondents and re-assure them that their responses would not be used adversely against them. The research was conducted with objectivity and minimal bias. The research data were tested for validity and reliability (Heiman 2001: 61; Field 2009: 11). The consent of participants was sought before proceeding with the process, and participants were reminded of their inherent right to refuse to participate if they deemed their continuation might be harmful or detrimental to their situation. The

researchers complied with the terms and conditions of the research. A covering letter was attached to the questionnaires, informing respondents that their anonymity would be maintained and respected; including conclusions would not identify any institution by name. Respondents were requested to provide their candid opinions to ensure the authenticity of this research.

Brief Clarification of Concepts

In an effort to create a similar or common understanding of certain key concepts pertaining to the topic of this research and in order to obtain clarity regarding the mutual understanding of the various concepts and constructs used in this research, the researchers will now endeavour to explain the concepts contained in the research title.

Development of a Management Model

Management can be ascribed as the process of organizing and coordinating activities of an institution, business or enterprise in accordance with certain policies, with the aim of accomplishing certain objectives (Ivancevich et al. 1994). Management's task is thus to combine, allocate, coordinate and deploy resources or inputs in such a manner that the organization's goals and objectives are achieved as productively as possible (Smit and Cronje de J 2000). The development of the integrated policy management model for Private Higher Education was guided by the systems approach, which defines a system as a conglomeration of different parts that function independently to achieve a common objective or goal. In this research Higher Education refers to the system as a whole with private and public Higher Education Institutes comprising different parts of the system, operating in different areas but with similar goals and objectives, namely empowering students with tertiary education (Ivancevich et al. 1994).

Integrated Development

The process of integration in Higher Education is aimed at creating a balance between the provisioning of Higher Education on a larger scale while maintaining diversity within various Higher Education Institutes. As argued above, it is a complex and dynamic process character-

ized by tension and contestations between macro-level designers of educational policies and persons at the micro-level who implement these policies. The mandated mergers of the 21 universities and 15 technikons referred to above was such an example. Furthermore the traditional view of collegiality in tertiary institutions has come under attack from the emerging developments of governments interested in the governance and management of Higher Education Institutes and their role in society (Hoyle and Wallace 2005). It would also be extremely difficult to balance the provisioning of issues with institution diversity and autonomy while there is a distinct perceived movement towards centralisation of educational provisioning by the present educational authorities.

Hypotheses

During this stage of the investigation the hypotheses will be explained in broad terms only, as they will be further explained in detail when the data is analyzed with regard to development of a framework or model for the Private Higher Education sector:

The Null Hypotheses (Ho): There is statistically no significant relationship between the various groups of respondents (independent

variables) and their extent of agreement with the factors involved in policy management in private higher education (dependent variables)

The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceptions of the various groups of respondents (independent variables) and the extent of their agreement with the factors involved in policy management in private higher education (dependent variables)

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research was formulated by using a combination of theoretical perspectives, including Ritzer’s theory of micro-macro integration (2008), the structuration theory of Giddens (1984) and the social systems theory (Daresh and Playko 1995: 95). In using Ritzer’s theory model, which supports an integrative micro-macro approach, it can be contended that the policies are designed at the macro-objective level of influence. For examining all subsequent levels at the micro-subjective level, especially with the private Higher Education Institution’s (staff), Giddens’s theory (1984) of the relationship between agency and structure has been found beneficial in that it is closely linked to that of Ritzer’s. The macro-micro level model is displayed in Figure 2.

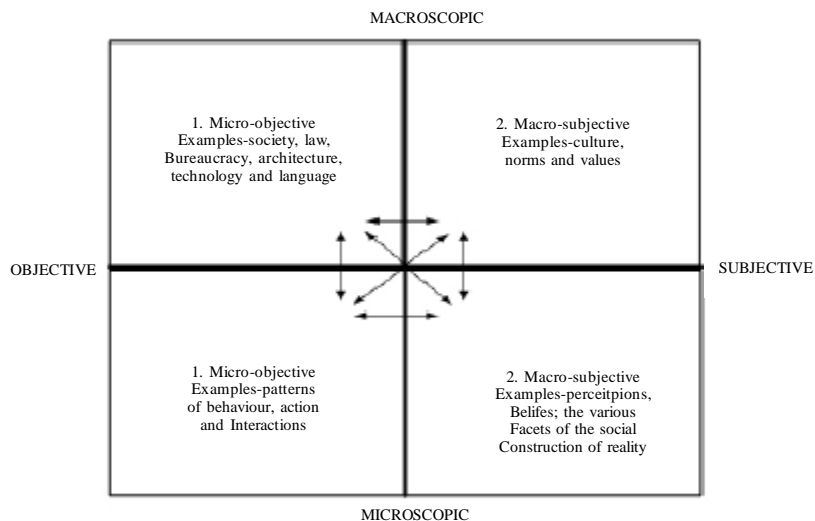


Fig. 2. Ritzer’s macro-micro levels of social analysis

As Higher Education is a public issue the model presented in Figure 2 could be used to explain some of the various interactions that are present in the Higher Educational System. For example the macroscopic objective level indicates the various legislative mandates enacted by the state and that these intersect with the culture, norms and values of society at the macro-objective level. As such the Higher Education Act of 1999 had to be designed within the parameters of the Constitution of South Africa (SA 1996). The Constitution, which includes the Bill of Rights, in Section 29(3) makes provision for the right to establish and maintain, at own expense, independent educational institutions. Such independent educational institutions need to be registered with the state and need to maintain standards comparable with similar public institutions. The legislative mandates of the state thus provide the structural arrangements within which educational legislation must be implemented. Compliance to these legislative mandates is overseen by the various Departments of Education and as such they can be seen as the macro-level agencies of the State. Compliance to macro-level mandates by persons at the micro-level often leads to contestation and tensions between the macro-and micro-levels of systems.

The various educational institutions operating at the micro-level are concerned with the implementation of the educational legislation. Unfortunately this legislation is often cascaded down from macro- to micro-level in a way that is dominated by the ruling party present in parliament and hence in the various Departments of Education as they are macro-level agents of the government. The perceptions of people concerned with the implementation of legislation at the micro-subjective level are important as they can be seen as agents at this level who have to cope with the unintended consequences that the legislative structures often produce. Private institutions are also subject to these structures which is always both constraining and enabling (Giddens 1984) and while they enable private higher institutions in providing higher education they also constrain them in that they have to implement them alongside a bureaucratic hierarchical educational system that is often painstakingly slow with respect to decision-making and compliance procedures.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The design of this research project is quantitative, between groups and between subjects, manipulating quasi-independent variables by using different participants (Field 2009), who were assigned particular conditions or positions for which they inherently qualified, such as for example gender. As such the respondents indicated their responses on a structured questionnaire, allowing the researchers to determine whether various independent groups of respondents differed statistically significantly from one another with respect to the dependent variables, which in this research were the factors obtained from the analysis of the items in Section B of the questionnaire. The selected unit of analysis was the Private Higher Educational Institutes affiliated to the Association of Private Providers of Education, Training and Development (AP-PETD), registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and accredited by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).

The Population and the Sample

The sampling frame used was obtained from the Department of Higher Education and Training and comprised 79 of the 105 (82 fully and 23 provisionally) registered Private Higher Education Institutes under the Department of Higher Education and Training. The 79 were mostly affiliated to the Association of Private Providers of Education Training and Development (AP-PETD), which represents 75.2% of the population of fully registered Private Higher Education Institutes. The sample was further stratified by allowing for the different post levels as enforced in these institutes. The questionnaire allowed for six categories of post levels and 500 questionnaires were distributed to the institutes asking them to complete one questionnaire for each of the categories of post levels provided. Of the 500 distributed 320 were returned of which 306 were suitable for further analysis.

Research Instrument

The structured questionnaire that was used to collect the data consisted of two sections, namely Section A, which contained 16 questions

asking respondents to provide certain biographical and demographic details, which served as the independent variables in the research. Section B contained 50 questions, requesting respondents to indicate their extent of agreement or disagreement with items posed regarding the management of policy implementation in Private Higher Education Institutions. The researchers used the latest version of Norusis (2009), which is the PASW Statistics 18.0 guide to data analysis. The data was firstly subjected to a frequency analysis, which is shown in detail under the descriptive statistics. The data in section B was subjected to the process of factor analysis again using PASW 18.0 (Norusis 2010). The resulting factors were analyzed for normality (Norusis 2010) and possible differences between factors mean scores were investigated using t-tests or Analysis of Variance tests (Norusis 2010). Where it was found necessary non-parametric tests were also used (Norusis 2010). The various tests used in the analysis are discussed in detail in the study.

Pilot Study

A pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted in order to determine the reliability and validity of the procedure by subjecting it to a pilot study. The researchers selected 10 Private Higher Education providers who were not part of the sample but who were privy to the questionnaire, and their views were solicited in designing this questionnaire. This process included academics from various institutions of the Private Higher Education sector countrywide. This process included senior officials from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Council for Quality Assurance in South Africa (UMALUSI), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA), to test the content validity and importance of each item in the research instrument. Their input included experience in education rather than Private Higher Education, which is only a decade or two old. The researchers amended the questionnaire based on their advice in consultation with the statistical consultant.

Descriptive Analysis of the Sample

There were 146 male respondents and 153 female respondents giving a ratio of 0.95 males for every one female. In the public higher educa-

tion sector the gender ratio is 0.80 females to every male (D of BE 2009). The sample is thus slightly over-representative of female respondents with respect to the public higher education system.

The original groupings related to the present position occupied was collapsed to two groups namely management and lecturing staff. There were 43.7% of respondents who occupied management positions and 56.3% of respondents who were lecturers or trainers. The sample is thus over-representative of persons in management positions. Regarding the highest educational qualification groups, 22.3% had less than a degree, 32.1% had a degree and 44.7% had an honours or higher qualification.

There were 28.7% of respondents who regarded Nguni as their mother tongue, 33.1% who indicated Sotho, 26.6% who indicated that English was their mother tongue and 11.6% who indicated Afrikaans. According to the 2001 Census data it is only the English mother tongue respondents that are over-represented in the sample. Private Higher Education with its business orientation has traditionally been the enclave of the English mother tongue group. For this research the four groups were collapsed to two namely the majority group (Nguni and Sotho) and the minority group (English and Afrikaans). Thus 61.8% belonged to the majority group and 38.2% were from the minority group with respect to mother tongue. In Gauteng the Nguni and Sotho mother tongue groups compose 68.8% of the population while 26.8% are English and Afrikaans speaking (D of BE 2009). The sample categorised into majority and minority groupings is thus fairly representative of the population of Gauteng with respect to mother tongue.

Regarding the Socio-economic Status (SES) there were 37.6% of respondents who indicated that their students had an above average to affluent status, while 56.6% perceived their students as coming from an average socio-economic status background. Only 5.8% indicated that their students come from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

Inferential Analysis of Data

The researchers used the literature to design items appropriate to the management of educational policy implementation in the private higher education sector (Section B). However, the items formulated would mostly also be applica-

ble to public higher education as the public and private sectors are interwoven regarding the implementation of legislation. The process of factor analysis was used to see how many sub-dimensions or factors were present in policy management in the Private Higher Education sector.

Factor Analysis of Section B of the Questionnaire

The 50 items dealing with policy management issues in Private Higher Education Institutes were subjected to factor analytic procedures with varimax rotation (Field 2009; Tabachnick and Fidell 2007). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the measure of sampling adequacy $KMO = .734$, with 14 items with Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) values <0.6 and communalities <0.3 removed. The remaining 36 items were tested against the Monte Carlo Principal Component Analysis (PCA) for parallel analysis (Pallant 2007) which indicated that five factors be accepted. They explained 40.0% of the variance present. These five first-order factors were subjected to a further factor analytic procedure (PCA) and the KMO of 0.703 and $p=0.000$ indicated that fewer factors could be formed. Two second-order factors were formed that explained 62.4% of the variance present. The five first order factors regarding the various

aspects that influence policy management in Private Higher Education Institutions can be summarized using a diagram as indicated in Figure 3.

As the two second order factors (FB2.1 and FB2.2) both had Alpha Cronbach Reliability coefficients greater than 0.7 they were deemed sufficiently reliable for inferential testing procedures. Non-parametric tests were also used. As the aspects in the items all have the potential of having a positive or negative influence depending on how they are implemented, provision was made for this in the names of the two factors. The items were operationalised by using an interval scale with polar opposites of strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5).

Testing for the Significance of Differences in the Factor Means between Two Independent Groups

When testing for significant differences between the means of the factors between two independent groups the Levene's t-test was used. Levene's test is used to see whether the variances are different between the two groups involved. If the variances are similar ($p>0.05$) then equal variances are assumed and if they are significantly different ($p<0.05$) then equal variances are not assumed. Only the independent

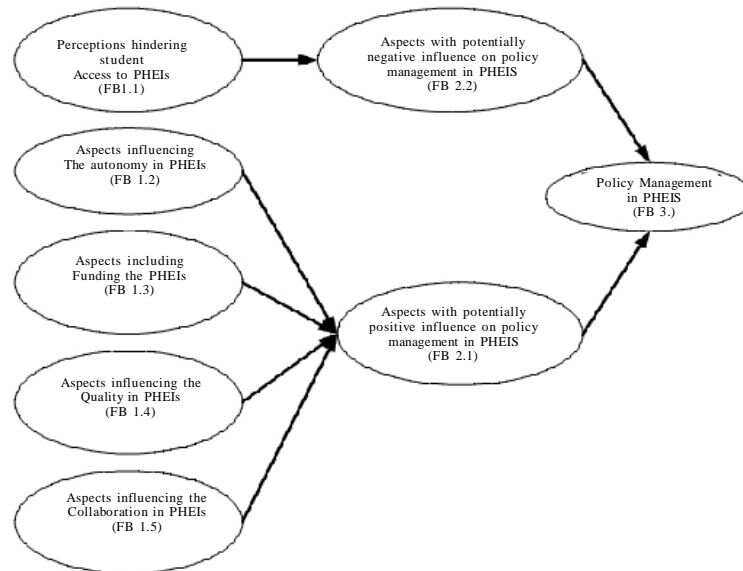


Fig. 3. A summary of the factor analytic procedures used regarding the aspects that influence policy management in Private Higher Education

groups where statistically significant differences were found are shown.

Mother Tongue Groups

The various mother tongue groups were firstly grouped into the four main ethnic language groupings namely Nguni, Sotho, English and Afrikaans. Subsequently these four groupings were reduced to two only namely Nguni and Sotho together and English and Afrikaans together. The hypotheses for these groupings were:

- Hot:** There was statistically no significant difference between the mean scores of the two mother tongue groups in respect of each of the following factors taken separately:
- Hot.FB1.1:** Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS.
- Hot.FB2.2:** Aspects with potentially negative influence on the policy management in PHEIS.
- Hat:** There was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores in respect of the two mother tongue groups in respect of each of the following factors taken separately:
- Hat.FB2.1:** Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS.
- Hat.FB2.2:** Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS.

The data in Table 1 indicates that both the null hypotheses cannot be accepted. With respect to the aspects with potentially positive

influences on the Private Higher Education Institutions the English and Afrikaans mother tongue language group had a statistically significantly higher factor mean score than did the Nguni and Sotho mother tongue group. The English and Afrikaans mother tongue groups thus agree more strongly with the factor. If the items in FB1.1 are arranged according to their loading then the items which refer to funding, quality and policies rank the highest. They all have factor loadings greater than 0.5 and hence explain more than 25% of the variance and are substantially important to the factor (Field 2009). Although there may be many reasons for the difference in factor means the most likely contributor to the difference is probably cultural in the sense of the Hofstede dimensions of national cultures (Hofstede 1991) with English and Afrikaans groups aligning more closely to the individualist dimension and Nguni and Sotho groups with the collectivist dimension (Hofstede 1991; Sewlall 1996). These dimensions could probably be considered for their influence at the macro-subjective level (see Fig. 2).

With respect to the aspects with potentially negative influence on the management of Private Higher Education Institutions (FB2.2) the Nguni and Sotho mother tongue group agree more strongly with this factor than do the English and Afrikaans group. The items arranged according to factor loading indicate concerns about quality, funding and student access to Private Higher Education Institutions. The Nguni and Sotho groups were among the more economically disadvantaged groups in the previous political dispensation and hence agree more strongly with the items in this factor. Also in a collectivist group ideologies of equality are more likely to prevail over ideologies of freedom. Although both may be considered to be important

Table 1: Significance of differences between the two mother-tongue groups with respect to the following factors

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Factor mean</i>	<i>t-test (p-value)</i>	<i>Effect size (r)</i>
Potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	Nguni/Sotho	4.04	0.000**	0.24
	English/Afrikaans	4.15		
Potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.2)	Nguni/Sotho	3.75	0.005**	0.20
	English/Afrikaans	3.96		

** = Statistically significant at the 1% level ($p \leq .01$)
Effect size – 0.10 Small; 0.3- Moderate; 0.5 Large

in politics there is an inescapable trade-off between them (Hofstede 1991) as can be seen from the political past (apartheid) and future (equity) of the South African scenario. The tension between equality and freedom is also visible in the present ANC government in South Africa between the three main groupings in the ANC namely the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Communist party. This again can be traced back to the dialectical tension between capitalism and socialism as both these ideologies are contained in the tri-partite alliance of the African National Congress. As such these tensions are also likely to feature in the policies which frame the educational system as these policies are designed by the administrative arm of the governing party namely the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). These differences in perception were measured at the micro-level and indicate the interaction between macro-and micro-levels.

To What Extent Does the Private Higher Education Sector Contribute towards the Education System in South Africa? (A16)

The original scale of item A16 allowed for five possible answers namely from to no extent

at all (1) to a very large extent (5). These subsequent groupings were to a moderate to no extent and to a large and very large extent. The data from the respondents is summarised in Table 2.

The data in Table 2 indicates that the group who had the perception that Private Higher Education contributes to a large to very large extent towards the Higher Education system in South Africa had also agreed to a statistically significantly greater extent with the items in the potentially positive influence on policy management (FB2.1) in Private Higher Education Institutes. The effect size was small. This finding seems to be logical as the variables, extent of agreement and potentially positive influence, correlate with one another ($r=0.161$; $p<0.01$).

Present Position Occupied (A4)

The original six categories in this variable were collapsed to two namely, management (G1) lecturing staff (G2). The data from the sample is summarised in Table 3.

The data in Table 3 indicate that the null hypothesis for aspects with a potentially negative influence on policy management in Private Higher Education Institutions shows that the lecturers agree to a statistically significantly greater

Table 2: Significance of differences between the extents of the two group's contribution towards the higher education system with respect to the following factors

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Factor mean</i>	<i>t-test (p-value)</i>	<i>Effect size (r)</i>
Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	Moderate/No extent	4.04	0.006**	0.21
	Large/Very large extent	4.15		
Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.2)	Moderate/No extent	3.89	0.51	-
	Large/Very large extent	3.85		

** = Statistically significant at the 1% level ($p \leq .01$)
Effect size – 0.10 Small; 0.3- Moderate; 0.5 Large

Table 3: Significance of differences between the two present positions occupied groups with respect to the following factors

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Factor mean</i>	<i>t-test (p-value)</i>	<i>Effect size (r)</i>
Aspects with potentially positive influence on the management of PHEIS (FB2.1)	Management	4.13	0.73	-
	Lecturing staff	4.10		
Aspects with potentially negative influence on the management of PHEIS (FB2.2)	Management	3.73	0.000**	0.25
	Lecturing staff	4.00		

** = Statistically significant at the 1% level ($p \leq .01$)
Effect size – 0.10 Small; 0.3- Moderate; 0.5 Large

extent with the items in the factor than management do. The lecturers and trainers are closer to the students and probably receive more feedback from the students relating to managing policy implementation and perceptions of access and funding in Private Higher Education Institutions than do management.

Testing for the Significance of Differences in the Factor Means between Three or More Independent Groups

When testing three or more independent groups for possible significant differences then one can make use of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). If differences are found among all three groups taken together then post-hoc tests can be used to make a pair wise comparison. Only those independent groups where significant differences were found are analysed.

A2. Teaching Experience Groups as Independent Variable

Possible hypotheses were:

HoA: There is statistically no significant difference between the mean scores of the three teaching experience groups in respect of each of the following factors taken separately:

HoA.FB2.1: Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS.

HoA.FB2.2: Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS.

HaA: There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the three teaching experience groups in respect of each of the following factors taken separately:

HaA.FB2.1: Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS.

HaA.FB2.2: Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS.

Hypotheses for pair-wise comparison were:

HoS/DT3.FB2.1: There is statistically no significant difference between the factor mean scores of the three teaching experience groups when compared pair wise (A vs. B, A vs. C and B vs. C) with respect to the two factors.

HaS/DT3.FB2.2: There is a statistically significant difference between the factor mean scores of the three teaching experience groups when compared pair wise (A vs. B, A vs. C and B vs. C) with respect to the two factors.

The data obtained from the respondents is provided in Table 4.

The data in Table 4 indicates that the group with 16 -24 years of experience had the highest factor mean with respect to aspects with a potentially negative influence on policy management in Private Higher Education Institutes and they differed statistically significantly from the group with the least experience. The effect size was small. A cross tabulation indicated that 56% of the lecturers in the sample fell in the 16-24 years of experience category and they thus agree most strongly with the items in the potentially negative aspects of policy management in Private Higher Education Institutes.

How Would You Rate the Quality of Tuition Offered by the Private HEIS Compared with the Public HEIS? (A14)

There were three categories namely average to poor, good, excellent. The data is provided in Table 5.

Table 4: Significance of differences between teaching experience groups with respect to the following factors

Factor	Group	Mean score	ANOVA (p-value)	Scheffé/Dunnnett T3			Effect size (r)
				A	B	C	
Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	A	4.16	0.08	A			-
	B	4.06		B			
	C	4.11		C			
Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	A	3.74	0.01**	A	*		0.27
	B	3.98		B			
	C	3.89		C			

* = Statistically significant at the 5% level (p ≤ .05 but p ≥ .01)

A = < 15 years

B = 16-24 years

C = 25+ years

Effect size – 0.10 Small; 0.3- Moderate; 0.5 Large

Table 5: Significance of differences between rating the quality of PHEIS groups with respect to the following factors

Factor	Group	Mean score	ANOVA (p-value)	Scheffé/Dunnett T3			Effect size (r)
				A	B	C	
Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	A	4.04	0.002**	A	-	**	0.20
	B	4.09		B	-	-	
	C	4.21		C	**	-	
Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	A	3.95	0.239	A	-	-	-
	B	3.81		B	-	-	
	C	3.86		C	-	-	

* = Statistically significant at the 5% level ($p \leq .05$ but $p \geq .01$)

A = Average to poor

B = Good

C = Excellent

Effect size – 0.10 Small; 0.3- Moderate; 0.5 Large

The data in Table 5 indicate that all three of the respondent groups agree with the items in aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in Private Higher Education Institutes (FB2.1). This finding seems logical as both variables are significantly correlated ($r=0.14$; $p < 0.05$). The influences of positive perceptions about relative quality are important as they influence the climate present and staff morale and commitment.

Highest Educational Qualification (A5)

The three categories were less than a degree, a degree and more than a degree. The respondent's data is given in Table 6.

The data in Table 6 indicate that respondents who have a degree differ from the other two groups regarding aspects with potentially negative influences on policy management in

Private Higher Education Institutes. There were 48.7% of respondents who had degrees who belonged to the lecturing staff compared to the 15.8% who had degrees and occupied management posts. The lecturers are directly involved with implementation of the various policies and also agree to a greater extent with the potentially negative influences on policy management (see Table 3). Management is accountable to the Department of Higher Education and Training for managing the implementation of policy and as such they can also be perceived as acting as the agents of the macro-level designers of policies (Waghid 2009: 846). They also have to account for compliance by the staff often resulting in tensions.

Summary of Empirical Finding

Fifty (50) items regarding policies applicable to funding, collaboration, quality, access and

Table 6: Significance of differences between the highest educational qualification groups with respect to the following factors

Factor	Group	Mean score	ANOVA (p-value)	Scheffé/Dunnett T3			Effect size (r)
				A	B	C	
Aspects with potentially positive influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	A	4.14	0.34	A	-	-	-
	B	4.07		B	-	-	
	C	4.11		C	-	-	
Aspects with potentially negative influence on policy management in PHEIS (FB2.1)	A	3.73	0.002**	A	**	-	0.19
	B	4.04		B	**	*	
	C	3.82		C	-	*	

* = Statistically significant at the 5% level ($p \leq .05$ but $p \geq .01$)

Effect size – 0.10 Small; 0.3- Moderate; 0.5 Large

A = Less than a degree

B = Degree

C = Degree plus

autonomy surrounding higher education probed the perceptions of respondents from Private Higher Educational Institutions. The five first-order factors could be reduced to two second-order factors which were named aspects with potentially positive influences on policy management in Private Higher Education and aspects with potentially negative influences on policy management in Private Higher Education. These two factors constituted what was named policy management in Private Higher Education Institutes.

With respect to the potentially positive influences of policy management the English and Afrikaans mother tongue groups agreed more strongly with the items in the factor than did Nguni and Sotho groups. The group who believed that the Private Higher Education sector contributed to a large to very large extent to the Higher Education system also had the more positive perceptions regarding the potentially positive aspects factor. There was also an association between the quality of tuition offered by the Private Higher Education Institutes relative to the public Higher Education Institutes with the aspects of positive influence factors in the sense that the more highly the respondents rated the quality of the private institutions the more strongly they agreed with the items contained in the factor.

With respect to the aspects with the potential to negatively influence policy management in Private Higher Education Institutes the Nguni and Sotho mother tongue groups agreed more strongly with the items in this factor than did the English and Afrikaans mother tongue groups. Respondents who belonged to the lecturers group agreed more strongly with the items in the negative influence factor. Respondents with 16 to 24 years of experience agreed more strongly with the potentially negative influence on policy management as did respondents with a degree qualification.

In the light of the above literature and empirical discussions the researchers proposed an integrated model that could possibly be used to reduce some of the tensions involved in policy formulation. It is merely an attempt to visualise the extremely complex and dynamic political process involved in formulating educational policies and as such the researchers do not claim that all variables have been captured.

An Integrated Model for Policy Management in Private Higher Educational Institutions in South Africa

The tensions present in the higher education system seem to arise from the enactment of educational legislation via policy guidelines for transformation. At the macro-level government ministries draft a discussion document referred to as a 'Green Paper', which later becomes a 'White Paper' following debate and public hearings. This process is concluded after extensive consultations with all the relevant stakeholders, and thus a bill turns into policy and law after endorsement by cabinet. The process may appear to be democratic however the debates and public hearings seem to be reticent about the opinions and input from all stakeholders. There is also always a danger of the opinion of one group of stakeholders dominating the discourse because of weight of numbers. A classical example of this was the manner in which the recent "Secrecy Bill" was forced through parliament by an African National Congress majority despite wide public resistance against it (Hartley 2011). In addition the former president of South Africa Thabo Mbeki (2012) indicated that knowledge needed 'unrestricted freedom to express itself, able to challenge established and generally accepted truths including through the available media (Hogarth 2012). There is thus a tension between the majority party and public opinion regarding the present "Secrecy Bill" and the unrestricted freedom to expression and such tension is resolved by using the political force of numbers.

An argument can be made that the present educational system is a form of deliberative democracy (CHE 2007) as stakeholders do have the opportunity to discuss the relevant issues as outlined in the Green Paper. However, such input is only present after the publication of the green paper leaving the various stakeholders, particularly from the private sector, outside the Department of Higher Education at a distinct disadvantage as the blueprint for discussion has already been formulated. The numerous issues present at the macro-and micro-levels present in the institutes of higher education are not sufficiently exposed to trigger justifiable argumentation in a spirit of contestation, provocation and reflexivity (Waghid 2010:849). A discussion document should thus contain all relevant issues

pertinent to higher education and not just consist of aspects formulated by public service ministries. The envisaged model is provided in Figure 4

The proposed model makes provision for all stakeholders to Higher Education to provide an input at a stage before the Green Paper is designed. The suggestion is that the various stakeholders such as Higher Education South Africa (HESA), the Department of Higher Education and Training and all its controlling bodies as well as registered associations such as the Association of Private Providers of Education Training and Development (APPETD) and the Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) involved with the provision of higher education become involved in a deliberative and reflexive dialogue where the various possible interactions between the micro- and macro-levels of policy development are considered. These democratic iterations should then form the basis of the Green Paper whereby opportunities are created for all stakeholders to articulate their views (Waghid 2009: 847).

CONCLUSION

The findings advocate that the perceived gap between policy-makers at the macro-level of analysis and policy-implementers at the micro-level is still a matter of concern. All the stakeholders in Higher Education must consider collaboration for the greater benefit of all, garnering their different strengths towards improving access and addressing quality concerns in the Higher Education system. The stakeholders should offer the requisite skills that are both scarce and critical to boost the economic growth of the country.

The proposed model involves a movement away from the current way in which policies are formulated and developed and requires a more deliberative form of working together between the public and private higher education system. The opinions of Private Higher Institutes need to be considered at an earlier stage in policy formulation and development than presently is the case. The proposed integrated model makes provision for such a recommendation.

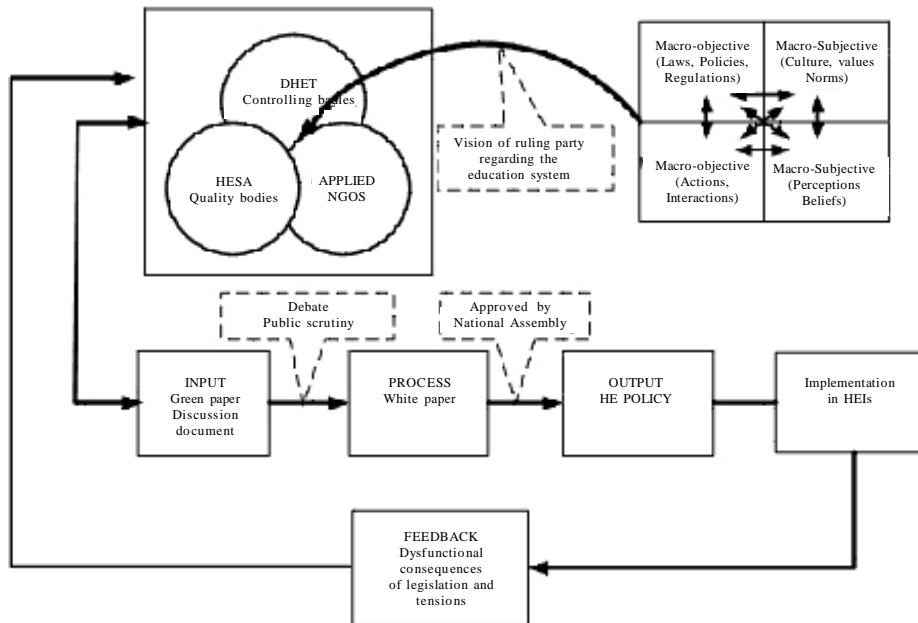


Fig. 4. An integrative collaborative model for policy formulation for HE in South Africa

RECOMMENDATIONS

The empirical research indicated that two factors formed the basis for aspects that influence policy management namely a factor with potentially positive and one with potentially negative influence. Similarly legislative mandates also seem to be a “double-edged sword” as they also have both positive and negative consequences. Furthermore the structures resulting from mandates can simultaneously be constraining, resulting in both positive and negative developments. It is thus important that the positive consequences of legislation with respect to student access, funding, quality control and institutional autonomy are managed in such a way that they facilitate the effective management of Private Higher Educational Institutes while minimising the negative consequences. Private Higher Education Institutes have the potential to play a meaningful role in the development of a coordinated, flexible and differentiated post school education and training system.

Higher Education South Africa (HESA) which represents the 23 public universities in South Africa as well as associations such as APPETD need to get involved at the start of the legislative process namely with the so called Green Paper. If only Government agencies such as the Department of Higher Education and Training and all their controlling bodies such as the Council for Higher Education (CHE), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) are involved with formulating the discussion paper then collaborative efforts are undermined. The discussion paper should contain the view of both public and private higher education institutions as well as any non-governmental organisations with interests in higher education to enable broad participation. Important decisions such as enrolment policies, funding formulae and quality control mechanisms need to be based on vigorous research and submitted to a process of dialogue and reflexive deliberation by all stakeholders. It is only through such a thorough process of scrutiny by the higher education sector that most of the dysfunctional consequences can be minimised and possibly reduce the volume of amendments and over-regulation as presently is the case. This could prevent perceptions such as “the Green Paper has already laid the table and the

plates are filled with food. All that now needs to be done is to arrange the knives and forks” as one respondent from the private sector indicated. Furthermore, no policy can possibly provide for all the dysfunctional consequences that arise on implementation of legislated policy and hence one is faced with amendments which negate the previous amendment.

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