

# The Effect of Skills Development Programmes and Leadership Opportunities Brought by Transformation: A Case of the Durban University of Technology

Bethuel Sibongiseni Ngcamu<sup>1</sup> and Damtew Teferra<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), South Africa*

*Telephone: 021-460 3867, E-mail: ngcamub@cput.ac.za*

<sup>2</sup>*University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*

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**ABSTRACT** Dramatic changes are taking place in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South Africa. However, the poorly coordinated transformation programmes are being implemented by leaders who have limited capabilities. This study aims to investigate the influence of the skills development programme on the realisation of the transformation agenda and explores leadership opportunities available in the post-merger and incorporation era at this university. This study employed an exploratory method where in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 28 university leaders in middle and senior management positions. The study findings revealed that the majority of the research participants felt that the influences of the skills development programmes on transformation were accidental, as trainings offered were irrelevant and unresponsive to their particular needs. The research participants also claimed that there was no evidence of leadership development and succession planning, and no leadership opportunities in this university, as strategic positions were occupied by Indians, at this university which was a merger of a predominantly Indian and a predominantly White Technikons in 2002.

## INTRODUCTION

Rapid universal higher education transformation has left South African universities with un-transformed practices and limited competent leadership to meet the new standards. *Ad hoc*, uncoordinated and sporadic trainings have been delivered to university leaders without monitoring and evaluating their impact and outcomes. A study conducted by Leibowitz et al. (2015: 8) in eight South African universities revealed that the availability of funding, as a resource to make opportunities for professional development available, was identified by all institutions as necessary to ensure the uptake of professional development. Martin (2005) indicates that given the view of leadership as a process whereby individuals work together in order to foster change and transformation, new emphasis is now being placed on skills that are tied to relationships and inter-connectedness. However, there appears to be little agreement about the types of skills and competencies required of university leaders (Fielden 2009: 13). Many researchers (Grange et al. 2006; Louw and Zuber-Skiritt 2009, 2014: 241; Moraka and Mapasela 2009: 234) in HEIs have focussed solely on academic leadership development without looking at skills de-

velopment encompassing administrative leadership. Louw (2009: 237) suggests that leadership development in higher education is of vital importance to the South African future. In a study done in Poland, Mikulowski (2002) reports that the threat posed by lack of leadership competencies on the proposed incorporation of educational institutions was ameliorated when institutional leadership received training on leading the transformation process.

Universities in South Africa are said to be led by leaders with managerial ineptitude at all levels. This is attributed to the fact that people ascend to leadership positions without being prepared through management or leadership development programmes. A paradox that is prevalent in HEIs is the promotion of excellent academics who are leading scholars in their fields of research, but have few leadership or administrative capabilities, into administrative leadership positions. Furthermore, those who ascend to leadership positions are rarely prepared through management or leadership development programmes. Any programmes that are made available may have little relevance to their particular environments. Ortrum and Skerritt (2014: 1) posit that the main shortcoming of most aca-

demographic staff development programs in higher education, including Leadership Development Programmes (LDPs), appears to be the limits on their capacity to achieve sustainability.

Ortrum and Skerritt (2014) argue that leadership development programmes (LDPs) can reward higher education institutions and society at large, as well as individual academics, professionally and personally. Higher Education South Africa (HESA), now called Universities South Africa, developed and implemented the Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) Programme in 2003 (Mabelebele 2013: 5). The programme's underlying aim was to facilitate learning for the middle and senior managers in higher education institutions and to equip them with the skills to successfully grow into leadership and managerial positions, and while there, tackle the challenges confronting their institutions. At the same time, the University of the Free State (UFS) employed the notion of "Growing our own timber" (GOOT) as one of its strategies to address staff shortages and, thus, equity (Moraka and Mapasela 2009: 234).

The primary objectives of this study were to investigate the influence of skills development programmes on transformation and to explore leadership opportunities available (in this university) in the post-merger and incorporation era at the Durban University of Technology (DUT). Durban University of Technology (DUT), the study institution, was a merger of a predominantly Indian (ML Sultan Technikon) and a predominantly White Technikon (Natal Technikon) in 2002, hence the need for transformation.

### Conceptual Framework

The term "leadership" has many definitions, but for the purpose of this study, the term encompasses and refers to university managers to lead, drive and influence transformation. Olasupo (2011: 163) contends that leadership is a process for social influence; that a leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach the institutional goals. Kouzes and Posner (2002) view leadership as a process used to bring forth the best from themselves and others. While Kotter (1996) considers leadership to be a means to inspire people to realise the institutional vision, Scott et al. (2008: 3) maintain that leadership should be

seen as having its main focus on setting and motivating new directions.

This study recognizes the rich interpretations and understandings of the term *leadership* and invokes, as relevant, the vast discourse as understood by numerous authorities. As the relationship between skills possessed by leaders and transformation is seldom discussed in HEIs, this study, in recognition of this deficit, attempts to link the influence of leadership skills to transformation.

The term "transformation" can assume multiple meanings and definitions depending on its context (from which it emerges) (Seedat et al. 2014: 69). Researchers in South Africa have defined transformation in terms of race (Francis and Hemson 2010); efficiency (Ntshoe 2004; Seedat et al. 2014, 70); change (Meyer and Botha 2004; Ngara 2003) and change of organizational strategy and structure, systems and processes, measurements and controls, culture and expectations, costs and capabilities (Oloyede 2007). Ncayiyane and Hayward (2007: 23) indicate that transformation includes institutional funding, student financing, curricular reform, student access and success, academic research, institutional culture, as well as equity and gender issues. Transformation is one word that captures the social, economic and political imperatives and aspirations that followed the collapse of apartheid and the onset of democracy in South Africa (Wangenge-Ouma 2010: 481). For the purpose of this study, transformation is not seen as a total metamorphosis, however, it is seen as totally linked to leadership skills that have a direct influence on shaping institutional transformation.

### South African Skills Development Act of 1998 (Act 97 of 1998)

The purpose of the South African Skills Development Act (SDA) of 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) is to provide an institutional framework to forge and implement national, public and private sector workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce. These workplace strategies should be integrated within the ambit of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) in the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act of 1998 (Act 58 1995) to provide learnerships that lead to recognised occupational qualifications. Section 2(1) (a) of

the SDA further stipulates that its purpose is to improve the quality of life of the South African workforce, their prospect of work, labour mobility, competitiveness, to improve productivity in the workplace and to improve the delivery of social services. There are structures that have been established to ensure that the SDA achieves its objectives of improving the skills of the South African workforce such as the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). Skills Development Facilitators are critical in the implementation of the SDA in the sense that they are responsible for assessing the skills needs of the organisation and for drawing up and properly administering the skills plan. Lee (2002: 4) is of the opinion that the private and public organisations consider the SDA as just another system of taxation. This study is aligned to the provisions of the SDA, however, relevance and alignment of the skills development on the realisation of the transformation agenda of this university is also investigated.

### Literature Review

Hassan (2011: 476) highlights that it has been well documented that academics are ill-prepared to cope with the challenges of educational transformation, yet training and development opportunities that would provide the appropriate support to meet the demands of educational transformation, are often neglected. This has been echoed by Hemsall (2014: 390) that the traditional career pathways leading into management and executive roles in higher education were often not planned, and many academics did not undertake any formal education on how to manage and lead others. People were often promoted into positions of leadership on the basis of their demonstrated expertise in research rather than their specific ability to lead and manage others. The study conducted by Mapasela and Hay (2005) presents the outcome of a case study that was undertaken in a historically White Afrikaans university to investigate the implications of change and transformation on academic staff. They report that as far as staff development was concerned, there were not enough staff development opportunities for staff to be involved in. The university did not even have a policy to guide the development of academic staff. At the time of this investigation, staff development occurred on an *ad-hoc* basis within the faculties

and departments, and there was no uniformity in addressing the training needs of academics. Another concern among the academic staff was that oftentimes, the well-intended development programmes were irrelevant to their needs. The lack of funding and time for academics to participate in staff development activities were also identified as major causes for concern among academics. In addition, academics felt that the quality of staff development programmes offered was low and thus the programmes should be improved accordingly (Mapasela and Hay 2005: 729). The study conducted by Moraka and Mapasela (2009: 242) at the UFS found that the university lacked coordinated management development programmes. The study on LDP conducted by Louw and Zuber-Skiritt (2009: 241) for women academics in SA during 2000 and 2001 identified various benefits, particularly through promotion, including growth in their research capability, predominantly through publication. The above findings by various researchers inform this study although further investigations are conducted based on the relevance of the skills development programmes offered to university leaders and their impact on the realisation of the transformation agenda.

The sporadic, irrelevant trainings that are unaligned to university needs, offered to university leaders in South Africa, are not playing a pivotal role in influencing or contributing to the realisation of the institutional transformation agenda. Personal Development Plans (PDPs) could be used by the university strategists to address competency deficiencies which can immediately lead to leaders being capable to drive transformation initiatives and programmes.

PDPs can also be used as a resource to ensure individual focus (Browell 2000: 57). The researchers state that this situation will result in continuous growth and development for individuals, as well as the institution. Strydom and Strydom (2004) assert that up-skilling, education and training of staff should, thus, be recognized as a complex developmental learning process and not an event or a singular exercise. Global changes in higher education have greatly affected the academic work environment (Steward 2007; Altbach 1999). At an institutional level, people development is widely articulated as a key priority of the university in this case study. However, staff development, as a reality, remains largely an individual choice (Shackle-

ton et al. 2006: 576) and effort. This study questions such assertions by investigating whether skills development programmes provided by the university prepares leaders to positively respond to the transformation of the university. This is due to the fact that leaders in HEIs offer training to staff members primarily for the purpose of compliance with the training and development legislations, without any long-term objectives associated with the outcomes on the sustainability of the university. Although this study is partly developed from the above perspectives, it also explores the training and development mechanisms influencing the transformation agenda in the post-merger and incorporation era at DUT.

Fielden's (2009) study commissioned by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) provides a detailed collation of leadership development activities and programmes in a wide range of jurisdictions. The author indicates that management training for senior university personnel is being increasingly recognised by governments and other funding bodies as of great importance because the majority of individuals who reach the level of vice chancellors have no formal development or training on management issues. Leitch (2006) reviewed skills and highlighted the pivotal role of higher education in addressing the perceived 'leadership deficit' within the British industry, and in June 2007, a number of government departments were restructured to create the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills. The dramatic changes seen in the higher education sector in England suggest that the leadership crisis in this sector (in South Africa) requires integrated leadership or management development and governance programmes that prepare potential leaders for their positions of power. The above-mentioned perspectives are further investigated in this study by exploring the skills development programmes and leadership opportunities that have a potential to influence transformation in this university.

On the other hand, researchers such as Filan (1999) and Raines and Alberg (2003) mention that for the past few years, very few academic members of staff in the higher education environment have been required to function as managers, and therefore, those few academics who have been placed in managerial positions (such as Head of Departments (HODs)) probably do

not have the necessary skills. According to these authors, it is a matter of concern that many universities provide little or no formal training for HODs and others in different levels of leadership and management. It has become clear from the literature that most HODs with no prior experience of management assume their role without the benefit or advantage of any leadership or managerial training. This could result in a lack of clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as of role conflict and stress (Gmelch 2004; Hare and Hare 2002; Raines and Alberg 2003). Aziz et al. (2005: 82) posit that higher education institutions are experiencing a need for managerial training as the majority of managers only occupy their positions as a result of their academic qualifications and/or length of service.

This has been echoed by Moraka and Mapasela (2009: 234) that capacity development, a core issue of human resource management and development, may take various forms, including the development of all staff. Competencies offer a useful tool for leadership development (see, for example, McDaniel 2002). Hollenbeck et al. (2006) suggest that an organisation might start by identifying 5 to 10 of the most important leadership roles in that organisation and designing a leadership model for each role, specifying the mix and interactions of the competencies that are most likely to lead to success. Concerning the ways in which leadership competencies can be developed in HEIs, it is clear from the research that leadership development interventions need to begin far earlier in the careers of those who work in academia so that success is built from below, rather than from above (Spendlove 2007: 414). Zide (2010) is of the view that a leader who fails to affirm people and fails to let them grow and develop is an affront to the transformation agenda of an institution, let alone the transformation agenda of the country. This study is guided by the arguments presented above and further interrogates leadership competencies to ensure that transformation succeeds in the post-merger and incorporation era.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study embraced the interpretivist perspective as prescribed by Saunders et al. (2007: 103) since it is investigating the perspectives on the skills development and opportunities for

transformation in the post-merger and incorporation era at a higher education institution. The preference for this methodological discourse was made as it was deemed relevant to help explore, analyse and investigate the views and perspectives of leaders in the case of management research, particularly in the field of organisational development.

This study employed an exploratory element where in-depth qualitative interviews (Bloemberg et al. 2005) were conducted. The qualitative aspect of this study employed a non-probability purposive sampling to survey 28 university leaders in middle and senior management positions. In-depth interviews were conducted with 28 academic and non-academic leaders from Peromnes Grades (salary level) 1 to 5 as well as key stakeholders, including trade unions and the Student Representative Council (SRC). These included a Vice Chancellor and Principal, 3 Deputy Vice Chancellors: Academic, Research and Administration, 6 Faculty Deans, 4 Executive Management members, a Registrar, and a Director: Human Resources and Finance. Furthermore, 6 academic Heads of Departments, a Research Director and a Director for Quality Directorate and Marketing and Communication were interviewed. Moreover, in-depth interviews were conducted with 2 presidents and secretaries of trade unions and 2 SRC representatives. The race profile of the respondents include 18 Indians 6 Africans, 2 Coloureds and 2 Whites. The NVivo software (version 10) was used for organising, analysing and sharing qualitative data.

Piloting a study is one widely recognised and accepted method of dealing with reliability and validity-which this study has undertaken. The data and information collected during the course of the pilot help in the assessment of reliability and validity of the survey tool. For the interview and qualitative data, as per Mays and Pope (1995: 10), the “main ways in which qualitative researchers ensure the retest reliability of their analyses is in maintaining meticulous records of interviews and observations and by documenting the process of analysis”. All interviews in this study were recorded.

### **Measuring Instruments**

Although all participants were competent, responses to questions were recorded by the

researcher. The in-depth interview questionnaire had two leading questions investigating whether skills development programmes encourage leadership to positively influence the transformation of the university. This question was informed by various authorities (Fielden 2009; Louw 2009; Mabelebele 2013; Martin 2005; Mikulowski 2002). Another question which emanated from the following researchers (Moraka and Mapasela 2009; Hemsall 2014; Aziz et al. 2005) interrogated leadership opportunities brought by transformation within this university.

### **The Role of Researchers and the Recording of Data**

Permission was requested and granted from the DUT ethics committee to conduct the study, and consent was formally obtained from the participants. Furthermore, the confidentiality of participants was maintained at all times and guaranteed, and their participation remained anonymous.

### **Reliability of the Interview Data**

Several strategies that ensured the reliability of data were employed. The Babbie and Mouton (2001) method was applied to achieve credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Thus, reliability was achieved by triangulation, debriefing and purposive sampling. A triangulation method is, typically, a strategy (test) for improving reliability of research or evaluation of findings (Golafshami 2003: 7). Furthermore, qualitative findings were triangulated by different questions being posed to several research participants who were at different leadership levels and to a variety of stakeholders.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **The Response of Skills Development Programmes to the Transformation Agenda**

The response by the research subjects to the question on whether skills development programmes positively respond to transforming the university has been mostly negative. Very few research participants mentioned that internal training programmes had contributed to the transformation of the university. This includes having their training needs identified, advancement in the technical and management skills and

networking with other leaders from other institutions through HESA leadership development programmes. This sentiment is echoed by the research participant who said:

*“Skills development is a waste of time and energy as in 2012, we were asked to fill our training needs including the quotations and costs and nothing was done. I had staff members who wanted to do skills courses through UNISA and the skills development office declined it. The skills development office promotes academic staff to grow vertically, and administration staff is allowed to attend. Trainings are accidental and programmes I’ve attended I sourced them myself through skills development fund. People become fatigued in attending these trainings and no-trainings must happen as routine and must be an integral part as managers”*

Furthermore, external trainings and development programmes under HESA have also been mentioned by the interviewee, saying:

*“[There are a] Number of initiatives that have been in place to attend skills development programmes under HESA and there are training leadership development; HESA offers it with no direct effect, and evaluating on the effect does not exist”*

### **Leadership Opportunities Brought by Transformation within the University, Post-merger and Incorporation**

The responses of interviewees to the question relating to leadership opportunities within the university were divided into those who agreed that there are opportunities and those who said there are none. Those who agreed mentioned internal and external opportunities citing internal leadership opportunities as being those attained through academic promotions. As one interviewee explained:

*“Eligible academic staff could be promoted to junior [lecturer], lecturer, senior [lecturer], Associate or Professor, Faculty Dean/Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic or Vice Chancellor positions”*

The respondents emphasized that academic leadership opportunities are available, provided the availability of the requisite skills:

*“If you are educated with requisite skills, yes there are opportunities”*

The majority of the research participants maintained that there were no opportunities for

leadership in DUT. These participants cited the fact that academic and non-academic positions, including those of the Deans, HODs, and Directors were occupied by Indians, and there were no opportunities available for other racial groups. One asserted:

*“That dependence on the whole structure itself, you won’t know the opportunities that you have until transformation, maybe, is endorsed and the Organogram is revisited, then you will know, and you can’t say you are Black and you have got opportunities and need to be educated. If faculty deans, HODs and Directors are Indians and what opportunities are available”*.

Some respondents indicated that the hierarchical academic structure allowed limited leadership opportunities within the university. This is exemplified by the response below:

*“Personal growth happens accidentally, no management development programmes, and lack of succession planning”*

The qualitative findings revealed that internal opportunities (employees serve on boards, committees, structures, and tutorial coordinators in departments) were available to staff members. This was particularly mentioned by the research participant who said that:

*“Employees serve on boards and committees and in the university structures”*

External opportunities seen by the research participants involved international and national leadership exchanges, Higher Education South Africa (HESA) leadership placements, collaborations and invitations to staff from different universities. An illustration of this thinking is reflected below from the research participant saying:

*“[There are a] Number of initiatives that have been in place to attend skills development programmes under HESA, and there are training leaderships; HESA offers it with no direct effect, monitoring and evaluation tools are non-existence”*

### **Major Findings of the Study**

#### **Skills Development Programmes and Their Influence on Transformation**

The study revealed the disproportionately high number of research participants who were of the opinion that skills development pro-

grammes have had no influence on transformation in this university in the post-merger and incorporation era. The respondents indicated that they organise trainings themselves because the available trainings are a routine and unresponsive to the needs of managers. The research participants mentioned that external trainings were available through HESA, but they had no impact because monitoring and evaluation of managers, post-training, was not conducted.

#### ***Leadership Opportunities Brought by Transformation, Post-merger and Incorporation***

The majority of the research participants saw no leadership opportunities in this university. The participants mentioned that academic and non-academic leadership positions were mostly occupied by Indians narrowing the opportunities for other racial groups. The respondents cited that personal growth happens accidentally with no management development programme or succession planning in place. Very few interviewees saw leadership opportunities in this university. They mentioned that employees served on university boards, committees, structures and coordinating departmental tutorials. The respondents also indicated that leaders were involved in international and national leadership exchanges through HESA initiatives. However, the respondents indicated that the impact of these programmes was not seen, as monitoring and evaluation of the impacts were not conducted.

### **DISCUSSION**

This study investigated the influence of skills development on transformation and explored leadership opportunities available in this university, in the post-merger and incorporation era. This study found similar sentiments shared by participants that irrelevant and unresponsive skills development programmes had no effect on transformation in this university. Research participants expressed similar views on a rather limited leadership opportunities in the university due to lack of leadership development programmes and, the domination of such positions by Indians. A race profile of the senior management team was dominated by Indians with 11 members followed by four Africans and two Coloureds. Ad hoc and impertinent trainings received by the university leaders is contrary with

the findings of Hassa (2011) and Mikulowski (2002) that in the merged and incorporated institutions, incompetency is ameliorated when institutional leaders receive training. At the same time, the accidental and irrelevant trainings offered to the university leaders concurred with the findings of Mapasela and Hay (2001) that staff development occurred on an *ad-hoc* basis within faculties and departments, and that there was no uniformity in addressing the training needs of the staff members in a university in South Africa. Zide (2010) considers this situation to be an affront to the transformation of an institution. The research participants in this study expressed similar views regarding the skills development programmes and the opportunities available through HESA leadership development exchange initiatives. The objectives of the skills development programmes and opportunities available to the university leaders in this university concur with those stated by Mabelebele (2013: 5) that HESA's HELM programmes aim to facilitate the ability of middle and senior managers (in order) to facilitate their growth in leadership positions and tackle challenges confronting their institutions.

Racial inequality, at tactical and operational leadership positions, with Indians occupying almost all leadership positions in some universities is supported by Kulati (2010: 178). The researcher cites a key challenge to transformation as the redressing of racial inequalities in South Africa, and a lack of capacity and political will to redress these racial imbalances. The issue of Indians occupying strategic positions concurs with Kulati's (2010: 178) views that South Africa is yet to address its historic racial imbalances. This is also in agreement with Badat (2001), Hemson and Singh (2010) and Soudien Report (2008: 54) that in higher education institutions dissatisfaction, amongst staff from a variety of posts emanating from racial imbalances. Hemson and Singh (2010: 942) allude that a more pervasive sense of anger characterised the responses of African staff, who identified lack of access to resources, social distance from other staff, and favouritism. The noteworthy finding on the lack of management development programmes in this university coincides with those of SARUA (2009) and Kulati (2010: 188) that South African HEIs are facing a leadership capacity challenge. Although one of the above findings on racial inequality by Kulati (2010) is in agreement with the

findings of this study on Indians dominating leadership positions, the link between racial inequality and dominance in leadership positions is not clear as the Kulati (2010) relates to universities in general.

### CONCLUSION

This study observed that the university does not see leadership development as a strategic tool that can be used to drive and achieve the transformation agenda. This study further observed that the trainings offered by the university were accidental, sporadic and not informed by the training needs revealed by the skills audit or personal development plans for university leaders. This research shows that there is a misunderstanding or a lack of knowledge on the part of the university leaders: they consider that the HR department, rather than themselves, is responsible for determining their training needs and identifying their skills deficiencies and those of their subordinates. This clearly indicates that the university leadership lacks knowledge on their roles and legal obligations to train and develop their staff members: at present, they rely on the HR department to fulfil these responsibilities. This study concludes that internal trainings were sporadic, and those external ones attended through HESA had no impact, as monitoring and evaluation was not conducted. The study findings highlight the keen efforts on the part of the senior executives at DUT and the Department of Higher Education and Training in addressing skills development and leadership opportunities. The realisation of the transformation agenda in this university is currently encumbered as existing positions are already occupied by a single racial group. This makes it difficult for all race groups to be equally and equitably involved in and committed to achieving the transformation agenda of the university. Finally, this study explicitly shows that the bottlenecks in the promotion ladder mentioned above are confirmed by the absence of the planned management development programme and succession planning in this university.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

For the university leaders to achieve the transformation agenda through training and development, the following recommendations may be considered:

- ♦ A university training and development strategy aligned to institutional policies and systems should be developed. This will enable employees of the institution to benefit from trainings responding to identified deficiencies;
- ♦ The Human Resources department Training and Development Department should develop an all-inclusive and consultative leadership development programme at all leadership levels. These leadership development programmes should be tailor-made to satisfy the university needs. Such programmes should have different categories: a programme for supervisors aspiring to move from junior to middle or senior levels, and an executive leadership programme;
- ♦ Line managers should ensure that trainings are planned through the budgetary cycle informed by the personal development plans;
- ♦ The Skills Development Committee should ensure that a skills audit is conducted by the HR department, making sure that it includes all employees within the university. This will allow for the trainings offered to leaders being responsive to the deficiencies identified during the audit;
- ♦ Line managers should be empowered and their roles and responsibilities clarified regarding their development and that of their subordinates. This will assist line managers to understand that they are an extension of the HR department and that they are employed to perform certain HR duties, including those of facilitating the career development of their staff members;
- ♦ Line managers should ensure that leaders who attend external leadership development programmes are monitored with regards to their behaviour and the contribution that they make in their departments; and
- ♦ The university community, as a whole, should be trained and sensitised on diversity management and celebrate diversity. This will assist the university community to further appreciate that meritocracy should supersede racial equity when appointments are made.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Failure to interview all senior leaders who occupy critical positions, (including Finance and Maintenance), limited the study findings. There



was a dearth of published literature on the institutional factors, as regards leadership, influencing transformation in higher education institutions in South Africa particularly in the aftermath of mergers and incorporations.

### FUTURE STUDIES

Future research should focus on structured questions within an interview schedule and focus groups in order to triangulate the aforementioned findings. This study should be replicated at other merged universities in South Africa as a way to develop a remedial comprehensive plan, where commonalities exist in terms of challenges. Future studies could investigate how internal responsive training and developmental programmes could respond to and realize the transformation agenda of the university and that of the society.

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